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ANG 6930 sec. 9535
Seminar in African Studies
Genealogies of Contemporary Africanist Ethnography
Spring 2006
M per 8-10, CBD 338

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What are the prevailing concerns of the anthropologies of the African present? How do they depart from or draw upon earlier anthropological inquiries? What are the socio-cultural preoccupations of these works and what interpretative and representational strategies do they employ?

Drawing on an array of new ethnographies published in the last few years as well as several works in progress, the seminar seeks to chart the major theoretical turns and topical preoccupations of contemporary ethnographic research in Africa. With an eye on method as well as content the course material covers a variety of themes now at the fore of ethnographic inquiry. Organized around the supra-categories of Governance, Embodiment and Locality, they probe the character of neoliberalism and development, violence and state decline, popular culture, urban life, health, the body and the environment. With case studies from East, West, Southern, Central and North Africa (Zambia, Mozambique, Tanzania, South Africa, Nigeria, Gambia, Ghana, Egypt, Burkina Faso, Congo-Kinshasa, Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, among other locales), the course material covers the whole of the African continent.

Along with the substantive and theoretical claims of the course reading, the class will attend to issues of ethnographic investigation, writing and analysis—how authors work from theory to data to narrative claim. We will likewise probe the histories of our chosen authors and texts to consider the intellectual and interpersonal milieu from which they emerged. Course assignments will require book reviews, intellectual genealogies, synthetic essays and class presentations.

Required Texts:

1. J. Ferguson, Global Shadows: Africa and the Neoliberal World Order, Duke, 2006

2. D. Smith, A Culture of Corruption: Everyday Deception and Popular Discontent in Nigeria, Princeton, 2006.
3. H. West, Kupilikula; Governance and the Invisible Realm in Mozambique, Chicago, 2005.
4. K. Geurts, Culture and the Senses, Culture and the Senses: Bodily Ways of Knowing in an African Community, California, 2002
5. C. Bledsoe, Contingent Lives: Fertility, Time and Aging in West Africa, Chicago, 2002
6. J. Elyachar, Markets of Dispossession: NGOs, Economic Development and the State in Cairo. Duke, 2005
7. MF Plissart and F. de Boeck, Kinshasa: Tales of the Invisible City Ludion, 2006
8. Veit Erlmann, Nightsong: performance, power, and practice in South Africa, University of Chicago, 1996.

Please purchase these texts on-line. Whenever possible, copies of the texts will also be placed on course reserve at Library West. Additional reading material will be made available in electronic format. If you have trouble accessing any of the texts or supplementary reading please contact the instructor immediately.

Course Requirements:

- 1 Bibliographic Brief (5%)
- 3 book reviews (10% each)
- 1 Intellectual Genealogy and Presentation (20%)
- Review Essay (2 @ 20% each or 1 @ 40%)
- Participation (5%)

Book reviews are due on the date of class discussion. No late reviews will be accepted. Students will prepare an intellectual genealogy of a chosen author (s) to be presented and distributed to the class. This should include an overview of the author's education and occupational background, research interests and field experience along with a list of their (or related) publications and brief discussion of content.

Class attendance and participation are required. The UF Academic Honesty policy applies to all students (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/academic.htm>).

Course Schedule

1. Jan 7 Introduction

2. Jan 14 Ethnographic Departures

S.F. Moore, Changing Perspectives on a Changing Africa, in Africa and the Disciplines, Chicago, 1993, pp. 3-57 (see also S.F. Moore, Anthropology and Africa, Virginia, 1994, for an expanded version of this essay)

C. Geertz, Interpretation of Cultures, Basic, 1973. Ch.1 Thick Description, p. 3-30.

Assignment: Bibliographic Brief With Moore as your guide, browse the library stacks and identify 5 ethnographic works from a region of interest to you spanning 1900-1970. Provide a 1 page list of cites to the class briefly describing content, organization/format, and whether or not they conform to Moore's general claims.

Jan 21 ML King Holiday NO CLASS MEETING

3. Jan 28 Governance 1: National and International Reconfigurations

J. Ferguson, Global Shadows: Africa and the Neoliberal World Order, Duke, 2006. Intro, Ch. 2,4,8.

C. Nordstrom, 2000, Shadows and Sovereigns, Theory, Culture and Society, 17/4, 35-54. electronic.

A. Mbembe, At the Edge of the World: Boundaries, Territoriality and Sovereignty in Africa, Public Culture, 12/1, 256-281. electronic.

J. Roitman, Fiscal Disobedience, Princeton, 2004, book review. OR
Power is not sovereign : the pluralisation of economic regularity authority in the Chad Basin, in Privatizing the State, B. Hibou ed., Columbia, 2004, 120-146. electronic.

4. Feb 4 Governance 1: Culture, Society and the Polity

D. Smith, A Culture of Corruption: Everyday Deception and Popular Discontent in Nigeria Princeton, 2006. Intro, Ch. 1, 4, 6, 7, Con

A. Mbembe, 1992, Provisional Notes on the Post-colony, Africa, 62/1, 3-37. electronic.

G. Anders, Corruption and the Law in Malawi, unpublished ms. electronic.

5. Feb 11 Governance 2: Intertwining Publicity and Secrecy

H. West, Kupilikula: Governance and the Invisible Realm in Mozambique, Chicago, 2005.

M. Ferme, Introduction, The Underneath of Things, California, 2001, pp. 1-21 (or book review) electronic.

**UF Center for African Studies CARTER CONFERENCE Feb 15-16, 2008:
New Perspectives on Migration and Mobility in Africa**

Feb 18 Research Day NO CLASS MEETING

6. Feb 25 Embodiment 1: Cultural and Historical Logics

K. Geurts, Culture and the Senses: Bodily Ways of Knowing in an African Community, California, 2002

P. Stoller, 1994, Embodying Colonial Memories, American Anthropologist, 96/3, 634-648. electronic.

M. Lambek, 1998, The Sakalave poiesis of history, American Ethnologist, 25/2, 106-127. electronic.

7. Mar 3 Embodiment 2: Agency and the Life-cycle

C. Bledsoe, Contingent Lives: Fertility, Time and Aging in West Africa, Chicago, 2002

Mar 10 Spring Break NO CLASS MEETING

8. Mar 17 Embodiment 3: Epidemics, Development and Dispossession

J. Elyachar, Markets of Dispossession: NGOs, Economic Development and the State in Cairo. Duke, 2005

V K Nguyen, "Antiretroviral globalism, biopolitics, and therapeutic citizenship." In A Ong and S Collier, eds, Global Assemblage. Blackwell, 2005. electronic.

V.K. Nguyen, "Uses and pleasures: sexual modernity, hiv/aids and confessional technologies in a West African metropolis." In Vincanne Adams and Stacey Leigh Pigg, editors, The Moral Object of Sex. Duke, 2005. electronic.

K. Peterson, AIDS policies for markets and warriors, unpublished paper. electronic.

9. Mar 25 Locations 1: Urbanities

M.F. Plissart, F. de boeck, 2006, Kinshasa: Tales of the Invisible City, Ludion.

A. Mbembe, 2004, Aesthetics of Superfluity, Public Culture. 16/3, 373-405. electronic.

D. Hoffman, 2007, The City Barracks: Freetown, Monrovia and the Organization of Violence in Postcolonial African Cities. Cultural Anthropology, 22/3, 400-428.

10. Mar 31 Locations 2: Mobilities

Veit Erlmann, Nightsong: performance, power, and practice in South Africa, University of Chicago, 1996.

J. Shipley, Living the Hiplife, dvd

A. Mohr, Pentecostal Performance in the Ghanaian Diaspora, unpublished paper. electronic.

11 Apr 7 Locations 3: Ecologies

M. Leach and J. Fairhead, Misreading the African Landscape, Cambridge, 1996. book review

C. Walley, Rough Waters: Nature and Development in an East African Marine Park, Princeton, 2006. Intro, Ch. 5. 6. electronic.

David McDermott Hughes, From Enslavement to Environmentalism: Politics on a Southern African Frontier, Washington, 2006, Introduction. Ch. 5 (skim) 6, 7. electronic.

April 14 Research Day NO CLASS MEETING

DR. CHALFIN AWAY

April 21 Presentations and Wrap-up