SOCIAL FORMS: ANTHROPOLOGICAL THEORIES OF SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS
ANTHROPOLOGY 332
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor

Fall 2004
Instructor: David Akin (dwakin@umich.edu)
MWF 11:10–12:00
Office: 4418 MLB (office phone: 647-2100)
Lecture Room: 1401 Mason
Office hours: Mon & Wed. 12:30–1:30 (and appt.)

COURSE OBJECTIVES: We will examine anthropological approaches to social relationships, broadly defined, both historically and across the field of anthropology today. A diverse range of topics will be addressed, including kinship, marriage, exchange, relationships to place, and various relational aspects of religion such as rituals, taboos, ancestral spirits and means of communication with them, and sorcery and witchcraft. We will give particular attention to how these and other aspects of social relationships are changing as part of and in response to global processes, and their association with various forms of social inequality. Our ethnographic cases will be drawn mostly from Africa and Melanesia.

COURSE GRADING (100 points total)
(1) Mid-term exam 25 points
(2) Final examination 30 points
(3) Research paper 30 points (includes meeting deadlines)
(4) Discussion section 15 points (includes attendance and participation)

EXAMS: Two essay exams will cover the lectures, readings, and films.

RESEARCH PAPER: Everyone must submit a 12–15 page, double-spaced typed research paper (12-point type, 1.25” margins). You must submit a one- to two-paragraph paper proposal by start of class on September 27, which you will discuss with Dr. Akin, and agree on your final topic. Any topic related to the class may be acceptable, but it must be approved. It is recommended that you submit your proposal as early as possible in case revision is needed. Your final papers are due by the start of class on December 10. Early submissions, and consultation during office hours as your paper progresses, are welcome.

COURSE READINGS: Unless otherwise specified in class, I will assume that you have read assigned readings before the lecture they are listed under. This will be crucial to your understanding the lectures.

Books:

Coursepack: A course pack of the assigned readings can be purchased at Dollar Bill Copying (611 Church.). In the lecture schedule below, the number in parentheses after each reading is the number of text pages (i.e., omitting photos and bibliographies). This is to help you schedule your reading.
FILMS: *The Kawelka: Ongka’s Big Moka* can be viewed in UGLI Film and Video Library (room 2178). It is not on reserve except on the day it is shown in class. Akin will also show fieldwork film clips.

**LECTURE AND READING SCHEDULE**

**September 8**  
*Lecture*: Class Overview  
*Handouts*: (1) Glossary of kinship terms; (2) Basic kinship diagrams.  
*Reading for this lecture*: Start readings for Friday.

**PART I: KINSHIP**

**September 10**  
*Lecture*: What is Kinship? Basic Techniques of Collection and Notation.  
*Handouts*: (1) Sample complex kinship diagrams; (2&3) Maps of Africa and Melanesia showing groups referred to in the course  
*Reading for this lecture*:  
Ladislav Holy, *Anthropological Perspectives on Kinship*, Introduction. (7)  
Look over “Glossary of Kinship Terms” handout from September 8.

**September 13**  
*Lecture*: Basic Units of Kinship  
*Reading for this lecture*:  
Ladislav Holy, *Anthropological Perspectives on Kinship*, Chapter 1. (30)

**September 15**  
*Lecture*: Kinship, Descent, and Marriage  
*Reading for this lecture*:  
Ladislav Holy, *Anthropological Perspectives on Kinship*, Chapter 2. (11)

**September 17**  
*Lecture*: Lineage Theory I  
*Reading for this Lecture*:  
Ladislav Holy, *Anthropological Perspectives on Kinship*, 71–90. (19)  
(handout) John Middleton and David Tait, “The Lineage and the Lineage System; and Segmentary Structures.” (4)

**September 20**  
*Lecture*: Lineage Theory II: Segmentary Lineage Systems  
*Reading for this lecture*:  
*Optional reading*: Adam Kuper, “Lineage Theory: A Brief Retrospective.” (22)
September 22
Lecture: Doubts, Critiques, and Revisions
Reading for this lecture:
John Barnes, “African Models in the New Guinea Highlands.” (5 long pages)
(handout) Meyer Fortes, “Foreword” to *The Garia*. (4)

September 24
Lecture: Expanded Approaches to Kinship I
Note: your initial paper proposals are due next Monday
Reading for this lecture:
Ladislav Holy, *Anthropological Perspectives on Kinship*, Chapter 7. (31)

September 27
Lecture: Expanded Approaches to Kinship II: Gender, Substance, and Relationships
Assignment: Turn in your initial paper proposals by today (earlier submissions are welcome)
Reading for this lecture:
Sylvia Yanagisako and Jane Collier, “Gender and Kinship Reconsidered.” (10)

PART II: EXCHANGE
September 29
Lecture: Mauss, the Gift, and Reciprocity
Reading for this lecture:
Marcel Mauss, *The Gift*, Chapters I and II. (45)

October 1
Lecture: Commodities as Gifts
Reading for this lecture:
James Carrier, “Reconciling Commodities and Personal Relations in Industrial Society.” (15)

October 4
Lecture: Case Study: Big Men and Competitive Exchange
Reading for October 4–8 (next three classes):
Three handouts, for October 4: (a) Marshall Sahlin, Excerpt about big men from the book *Tribesmen*. (2); (b) Ma’aanamae, and Jonathan Fifi’i, “Social Power of Big Men” (1); (c) Bronislaw Malinowski, “Reciprocity as the Basis of Social Cohesion” (1).
October 6  
Note: Akin has no office hours today or Friday, but will hold extra hours next Monday by appt.  
Lecture: Principles of Exact Equivalence in Exchange

October 8  
Film: The Kawelka: Ongka’s Big Moka.

October 11 and October 13  
Two lectures: Spheres of Exchange: Objects, Relationships, and Modes of Exchange  
Reading for these two lectures:  
Paul Bohannan, “The Impact of Money on an African Subsistence Economy.” (13)  

October 15  
Lecture: Marriage as Exchange I  
Reading for this lecture:  
Ladislav Holy, Anthropological Perspectives on Kinship, Chapter 6. (18)  
(Review Schieffelin, The Sorrow of the Lonely, 58–63)

October 18: NO LECTURE—FALL STUDY BREAK. Akin will hold extra pre-midterm office hours by appointment.

October 20  
MIDTERM EXAM (in class)

October 22  
Lecture: Marriage as Exchange II: Marriage Payments  
Reading for this lecture:  
Dan Jorgensen, “Money and Marriage in Telefomin: From Sister Exchange to Daughter as Trade Store.” (20)  
George Famaea, Biblical arguments for the legitimacy of brideprice (1996). (19 easy pages)

October 25  
Lecture: Enclaving Exchange  
Reading for this lecture:  
D. Akin, “Cash and Shell Money in Kwaio.” (22)  
Film clips: Kwaio shell money making and mortuary shell valuable presentations (Akin, 1996).

PART III: RELIGION AND SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS

October 27  
Lecture: Durkheim and the Collective Conscience
Reading for this lecture:
Emile Durkheim, selections from *The Division of Labor in Society*. (18)
Ken Thompson, extract from *Emile Durkheim*. (11)

**October 29 and November 1**
Two lectures: Totem, Taboo, and Identity
Reading for these two lectures:
(handout) Extracts from Brian Morris, *Anthropological Studies of Religion* [on Freud, and Radcliffe-Brown]. (6)
E. E. Evans-Pritchard, extract from *Theories of Religion* [on Durkheim]. (10)
Mary Douglas, “The Abominations of Leviticus.” [Relevant passages from Deuteronomy and Leviticus attached]. (5 long pages)
(handout) Craig Smith, “This Rabbi’s Mission: Making Sure China is Keeping it Kosher.” (1)
(*Review Schieffelin, The Sorrow of the Lonely, 63–72*)

**November 3**
Lecture: Ancestors and Groups
Reading for this lecture:
(handout) excerpt from Audrey Richards, *Land, Labour and Diet in Northern Rhodesia*. (3)

**November 5 and November 8**
Two lectures: Communicating with Spirits: Divination and Possession
Reading for these two lectures:
E. E. Evans-Pritchard, “The Poison Oracle in Daily Life” (25); *optional reading*, “Problems Arising from Consultation of the Poison Oracle.” (18)
(handout) D. Akin, “Kwaio Divination.” (4)
I. M. Lewis, “Possession Cults in Context.” (28)
(*Review Schieffelin, The Sorrow of the Lonely, 94–107*)
Film clips: Kwaio divination; and Kwaio ancestral skull house ritual (both Akin, 1996).

**November 10**
Lecture: Spirits as Dynamic Forces of Change
Reading for this lecture:
Ivan Karp, “Power and Capacity in Rituals of Possession.” (15)
(handout) Thomas Eriksen, “The Logic of Ancestral Cults.” (1)
(handout) D. Akin, “Ancestress La`aka Speaks.” (2)

**November 12**
Lecture: Classic Approaches to Witchcraft and Sorcery
Reading for this lecture:
Philip Mayer, “Witches.” (19)
(handout) Clyde Kluckhohn, “Witchcraft as a Technique of Social Control.” (2)

November 15
Lecture: Witchcraft, Sorcery, and Explanations of Misfortunes
Reading for this lecture:
E. E. Evans-Pritchard, “The Notion of Witchcraft Explains Unfortunate Events.” (14)
(handout): Extracts from M. Marwick, “Sociology of Sorcery in a Central African Tribe.” (1)

November 17
Lecture: Witchcraft and Social Structural Conflict
Reading for this lecture:
Max Marwick, “Witchcraft as a Social Strain-Gauge.” (14)
Lucy Mair, extract from “Witchcraft and Lineage Fission.” (8)

November 19
Lecture: Case Study: Witchcraft and Life Force in Etoro
Reading for this lecture:
Raymond Kelly, “Witchcraft and Sexual Relations.” (16)
(Review Schieffelin, The Sorrow of the Lonely, 121–28)

November 22
Lecture: Pollution, Power, and Danger
Reading for this lecture:
Thomas Buckley and Alma Gottlieb, “A Critical Appraisal of Theories of Menstrual Symbolism.” (37)

PART IV: RESPONDING TO MODERNITY
November 24
Guest lecturer: Eric Montgomery: Voodoo Religion in a Contemporary African Society
Reading for this lecture:
Afolabi A. Epega and Philip Neimark, “Preface” and “Introduction,” The Sacred Ifa Oracle. (8)

November 26 and November 29
Two lectures: Modernity as Social Evil
Reading for these two lectures:
Henrietta Moore and Todd Sandars, “Magical Interpretations and Material Realities: An Introduction.” (19)
(handout) Jill Lepore, review of Mary Beth Norton’s *In the Devil’s Snare*. (1)

**December 1**
Lecture: A Case Study: Menstruation and the Social Causes of New Misfortune
Reading for this lecture:
(handout): Drawing of Kwaio hamlet layout. (1)
D. Akin, “Concealment, Confession, and Innovation in Kwaio Women’s Taboos.” (18)

**December 3 and December 6**
Two lectures: Good Money, Bitter Money, and Social Reproduction
Reading for these two lectures:
(handout) Parker Shipton, review of Bloch and Parry’s *Money and the Morality of Exchange*. (1)
(handout) Extract of myth from Chris Gregory, “Cowries and Conquest.” (1)
Parker Shipton, “Bitter Money.” (20)

**PART V: SOCIAL ASPECTS OF SPACE AND PLACE**
**December 8 and December 10**
Two lectures: Relationships of Space and Place
Assignment: Term papers are due by the start of class on Friday.
Reading for these two lectures:
Raymond Kelly, “The Strickland-Bosavi Tribes.” (18)
(handout) Extract from Dan Bauer, “The Sacred and the Secret.” (1)

**December 13 [final lecture]:**
Lecture: Summing up
Reading for this lecture: No more readings!

**To Be Arranged:** Informal Final Exam Review (Attendance Optional)
Anthropology 332 Coursepack Readings: Full References


Evans-Pritchard, E. E. 1985 [1937]. “The Notion of Witchcraft Explains Unfortunate Events” (pp. 18–32); “The Poison Oracle in Daily Life” (pp. 120–45); and “Problems Arising from Consultation of the Poison Oracle” (pp. 146–63). In, *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among the Azande*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.


