

**A Critical Archaeology of Time
ANG 6112 and ANT 4914**

Fall Semester, 2011-2012

Prof. Peter R. Schmidt
441 Grinter Hall
schmidtp@ufl.edu

Office Hrs: Thurs. 1:30—3:00 PM
Wed 4-5 PM
And, by appointment

This course explores problems in the intersection of measured time in anthropology and archaeology as well as the practice and reckoning of time in mostly non-Western cultures as well as industrial Western culture. This is a topic long ignored by archaeologists, who work on the taken-for-granted assumption that measured time is an appropriate and unproblematic issue. It is a topic that has long been of interest in cultural anthropology, with a rich literature that takes up the social construction of time both within specific cultures and cross-culturally. Thus, this course will draw heavily from the ethnography of other cultures, marking it an appropriate course for cultural anthropologists as well as archaeologists.

We will assume a critical view, inquiring into philosophical thought on time in anthropology—ranging from such thinkers as Durkheim and Levi-Strauss to more recent approaches articulated by Gell, Fabian, and Lucas. We will also examine the implications of different time reckoning systems—drawing from the anthropological literature—on the practice of archaeology, with a particular concern for: 1) the contradictions that arise between linear progressive time and cyclical time as well as rhythmical or ritual time; and, 2) the key question of how archaeologists may possibly recognize and represent the time systems of other cultures. This is an issue of significant import in archaeology, for until such time as archaeologists develop methodologies to account for different ways of measuring and reckoning time, the practice of archaeology runs the risk of erasing time markers of other cultures.

Case studies drawing on different systems of time reckoning and practice will form an important part of the background materials, allowing informed discussion based on knowledge of how different cultures socially construct time. We will also delve into the original anthropological writings to learn, first-hand, precisely what the classical sources say—not depending on the interpretations of other, later anthropologists. In this way the seminar will fashion its own construction of how issues of time articulate to anthropological theory and to archaeological methodology and theory.

This is an important frontier zone in archaeological and anthropological theory. While by necessity it is deeply informed by the anthropological literature on time and the philosophical issues that have previously infused this anthropological debate, we will come to our own conclusions of what intersections between the anthropological discourse and archaeological theory are most germane to the improved practice of archaeology. One long-term goal is to produce seminar papers of excellence, with the hope that some may qualify for inclusion in an edited volume of essays (currently being compiled by the instructor and Prof. Jonathan Walz of Rollins College) that situate questions of time in the midst of contemporary theoretical debates.

Protocols:

- This is a working seminar; short papers will be prepared by participants on weekly readings. These papers are meant to clarify theoretical points, to examine contradictions in academic debates on issues, and to tease out points in the literature that may shed light on our thinking and practice in anthropology and archaeology. These will be papers of 4-6 pages. While the number of seminar participants will in part determine the number of papers, each participant will be expected to present a minimum of two short papers during the semester.
- As a very significant part of the course is discussion, seminar participants will be expected to contribute on a regular basis.
- Students will submit two key questions each week relating to debates or issues that need clarification in the readings. These questions must be submitted to the instructor via email by 6 PM on each Tuesday, one day prior to the seminar meeting.
- A final paper addressing an issue in the practice of time in archaeology or, for example, examining how methodological issues arise in understanding and representing the construction of time in a cultural system is required. The presentation of papers will occur during the last two meetings of the seminar. There are no mid-terms and no final examination.

Grading Summary:

- Participation: Weekly Questions: 15%
- Participation: Class Discussion: 20%
- Two Short Papers: 30%
- Final Paper: 35%

For students with disabilities: Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Primary Books (**Available for purchase online or otherwise):

- 1) **Lucas, Gavin. 2005. *The Archaeology and Time*. Taylor & Francis.** Available for purchase at Orange and Blue Textbooks.
- 2) ****Fabian, J. 1983. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Other*. New York, Columbia Univ. Press.** A pdf will be provided.
- 3) ****Gosden, C. 1994. *Social Being and Time*. Cambridge, MA, Blackwell**
- 4) ****Gell, A. 1992. *The Anthropology of Time*. Providence, Berg.**
- 5) **A Blue and Orange Reader that incorporates readings listed below in the weekly readings.**

On reserve: Bintliff, J. 1991. *The Annales School and Archaeology*. New York, New York Univ. Press.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1, August 24

- Introduction to syllabus, course organization, expectations, and selection of topics

Week 2, August 31

- Fabian, J. 1983. *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Other*. New York, Columbia Univ. Press.

Week 3, Sept. 7

- Barnes, J. 1971. "Time Flies Like an Arrow." *Man* (n.s.) 6:531-52.
- Peacock, D. F. 1964. "The Anthropology of Time-Reckoning." *Contributions to Indian Sociology* 7:18-29. Reprinted in Middleton, J., ed. *Myth and Cosmos*. Austin, Univ. of Texas Press, 1967, pp. 303-314.
- Just, P. 1980. "Time and Leisure in the Elaboration of Culture." *Journal of Anthropological Research* 36:105-15.

Week 4, Sept. 15

- Bloch, M. 1977. "The Past and the present in the present." *Man* 12:178-92.
- Howe, I. 1981. "'The Social determination of knowledge: Maurice Bloch and Balinese time.'" *Man* 16:220-34.
- Munn, N. D. 1992. "The Cultural Anthropology of Time: A Critical Essay." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 21:92-123.
- Trautman, T. R. 1992. "The Revolution in Ethnological Time." *Man*, n.s. 27:379-97.

Week 5, Sept. 21

- Thompson, E. P. 1967. "Time, Work and Discipline in Industrial Capitalism." *Past and Present* 38:56-97.
- Postill, J. 2002. "Clock and Calendar Time: A Missing Anthropological Problem." In *Time and Society*, pp. 251-270.
- Leone, M. and P. Shackel. 1987. "Forks, Clocks, and Power." In *Mirror and Metaphor*, Ingersoll, Daniel and Gordon Bronitsky, eds., pp. 45-61. Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America.
- Adams, B. "Perceptions of Time." In *Companion Encyclopedia of Anthropology*. T. Ingold, ed., pp. 503-26.

Week 6, Sept. 28: No Class—Preparation of Final Paper Proposal**Week 7, October 5**

- Evans-Pritchard, E. 1939. "Nuer Time Reckoning." *Africa* 12:189-216.
- Turton, D. and C. Ruggles. 1978. "Agreeing to disagree: The Measurement of Duration in a Southwestern Ethiopian Community." *Current Anthropology* 19: 585-93.
- Bohannan, P. 1953. "Concepts of Time among the Tiv of Nigeria." *Southwestern Journals of Anthropology* 9(3):251-62. Reprinted in: Middleton, J., ed. *Myth and Cosmos*, Austin, Univ. of Texas Press, 1967, pp. 315-329.

- Ogutu-Obinga, G. E. M. 1974. "The Ideas of Time and History with Special Reference to the Kenya Luo." *Kenya Historical Review* 2(1):13-21.
- Dietler, M. and I. Herbich. 1993. "Living in Luo Time: Reckoning, Sequence, Duration, History and Biography in a Rural African Society." *World Archaeology* 25(2):248-260. Online.
- Sinha, C., et.al. 2011. When time is not space: The social and linguistic construction of time intervals and temporal event relations in an Amazonian culture. *Language and Cognition* 3(1):137-169.
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Week 8, Oct. 12

- Shanks, M. and C. Tilley. 1987. *Social Theory and Archaeology*. Oxford, Polity Press, Chapter 5: "Time and Archaeology," pp. 118-136.
- Levi-Strauss, C. 1966. *The Savage Mind*. London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, Chapter 8, "Time Regained"

Week 9, Oct. 19

- Gell, A. 1992. *The Anthropology of Time*. Providence, Berg. Selected chapters.

Week 10, Oct. 26

- Ramenofsky, A. 1998. "The Illusion of Time." In *Unit Issues in Archaeology*, eds. A. F. Ramenofsky and A. Steffen, 74-84.
- Ingold, T. 1984. "Time scales, social relationships and the exploitation of animals: anthropological reflections on prehistory." In *Animals and Archaeology: 3, Early Herders and their Flocks*, eds. J. Clutton-Brock and C. Grigson, 3-12. Oxford, BAR.
- Farriss, N. 1998. "Remembering the Future, Anticipating the Past: History, Time and Cosmology among the Maya of the Yucatan." In *Time :Histories and Ethnologies*, eds. D. Hughes and T. Trautman, 107-138. Ann Arbor, Univ. of Michigan Press.

Week 11, Nov. 2

- Gosden, C. 1994. *Social Being and Time*. Cambridge, MA, Blackwell. Selected Chapters.
- Bintliff, J. 1991. *The Annales School and Archaeology*. New York, New York Univ. Press. (Several selected chapters)

Week 12, Nov. 9

- Lucas, Gavin. *The Archaeology of Time*. Routledge, 2005.

Week 13, Nov. 16

- Schmidt, P. 1996. "Rhythmed Time and Its Archaeological Implications." In *Aspects of African Archaeology*, eds. G. Pwiti and R. Soper, 655-662. Harare, Univ. of Zimbabwe Press.
- Bailey, G. 1983. "Concepts of time in Quarternary prehistory. " *Annual Review of Anthropology* 12:165-92.
- Bradley, R. 1991. "Ritual, time, and history." *World Archaeology* 23:109-19.

Week 14, Nov. 23: Thanksgiving Vacation

Week 15 Dec. 1

- Presentations of first group of papers

Week 16, Dec. 7

- Presentation of second group of papers, if necessary.