

# The Anthropology of Africa: Contemporary Perspectives



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# The Anthropology of Africa

The Anthropology of Africa introduces students to contemporary anthropological approaches to culture and society in Africa. The guiding thread is an exploration of the relationship between macro and micro levels of analysis in understanding of African society through a selection of thematic lenses (politics, religion, health, gender, conflict, power etc.).

<b>Week</b>	<b>Short title</b>
<b>1</b>	Introduction to the Anthropology of Africa
<b>2</b>	Anthropology, Colonialism and Representation
<b>3</b>	Ethnicity and Politics
<b>4</b>	Gender and Generations
<b>5</b>	Witchcraft and Modernity
<b>6</b>	READING WEEK
<b>7</b>	Ebola, Blood and Medicine
<b>8</b>	African Sexualities
<b>9</b>	Violence, Conflict and Genocide
<b>10</b>	Movement, Migration and Borders
<b>11</b>	African Diasporas

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## Timetable

Spring term teaching

Lecture: 1 hour, held once per week

Seminar: 2 hour session, held once per week

Student presentations comprise an important element of the teaching

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## Aims and Objectives

**By the end of the course, a successful student should be able to demonstrate:**

- An understanding of the transformations in modern African society in relation to global and local historical processes.
- An understanding of the development of Anthropological research in and theorisation of African societies over the same period.
- An understanding of the different approaches of Anthropologists towards African society, and the relationship between these Anthropological approaches and the approaches of other disciplines.
- An ability to read and assess critically Anthropological accounts of African societies and cultures.
- An ability to construct and present arguments about African culture and society in both written and verbal form, using theoretical and empirical data.

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## Assessment

The module will be assessed by two 2500 word book reviews, on works you have selected in consultation with your module convenor. The book reviews will deal in some depth with theoretical and empirical material related either to one or more of the topics of the module, or to a related topic that further explores or complements the material of the module. We expect the reviews to draw on library (and web-) - based research, in addition to the module readings.

**The deadlines for the two book reviews are t.b.a. (but are likely to be in the second half of the Spring term, and towards the beginning of the second assessment period in May.**

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## Journals

Some Africanist journals, available via the electronic library, include *African Affairs*, *Africa - Journal of the International African Institute*, *Journal of African History*, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, *Journal of Southern African Studies*, *Journal of East African Studies*. The full range of Africanist journals available through the library can be found by entering the keyword 'Africa' and ticking 'Contains'.

## Websites and other E-Media

A very good British-based website is that of the Royal African Society and the associated material at <http://www.africanarguments.org/> There are two main African-based anthropology networks: CODESRIA (the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa located in Dakar, Senegal, - <http://www.codesria.org/Publications.htm#Journals%20Online> ) and the Pan African Anthropological Association: <http://www.upe.ac.za/paaa/> These provide fora for many African anthropologists who are under-represented in northern publications. CODESRIA on-line journals and publications would provide an excellent first stop for students interested in gaining more African authored material. A pan-Africanist website covering contemporary political, social and cultural issues and offering links to many other African websites, as well as regular newsletters, is Pambazuka News:- <http://www.pambazuka.org/>

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## Module Tutor:

MARK LEOPOLD is a Lecturer in Social Anthropology in the Sussex Anthropology Department. Apart from this module, he teaches on conflict, violence and peace, and on ethnography and research methods. His own research is focused on the Northern Uganda/ South Sudan border area, and his interests include historical anthropology, conflict and violence, media and representation, postcolonialism, masculinities, psychoanalysis, and the nature of evil. He is the author of *Inside West Nile: Violence, History and Representation on an African Frontier* (2005), and is currently working on a biography of Idi Amin.