Society, Culture and Modernization in Ghana

Lecturer: Professor G. K. Nukunya

Lecture Hours: Tuesdays, 10:00am-1:00pm

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Course Description:

The course takes the perspective that an understanding of contemporary Ghanaian society and culture requires a good understanding of traditional institutions, beliefs and practices. It therefore starts with a discussion and analysis of traditional culture, social organization, social institutions and world-view before tackling the influence of contemporary social changes on them. Some important factors of change to be considered include: colonialism, Christianity, formal classroom education and monetization of the economy. Other features of modernization to be treated are urbanization, industrialization, migration (rural-urban), globalization and new and increasing advances in communication technology.

Outline


**Week 2**: Main features of traditional society with particular reference to social structure; kinship as basis of social life. (Nukunya, 2003: 17 – 40).

**Week 3**: Marriage and family discussed from all relevant angles. (Nukunya, 2003: 41 – 54).


**Week 5**: Political figures and institutions. Politics and religion; politics and gender. (Nukunya: 67 – 78, Assimeng 164 – 79).

**Week 6**: Natural resources, environment and economy; organization of labour and production; exchange of goods and services, reciprocity and markets; the economy, religion and ritual. (Nukunya 92 – 106).

**Week 7**: Law and social control (Nukunya 79 – 91).
Week 8: Social stratification: traditional manifestations, the main forces at work; the processes and recent trends (Nukunya: 171 – 191, Assimeng 133 – 63).

Week 9: Spring Break

Week 10: Colonialism and other factors of change and their effects. (Nukunya: 107 – 140).


Week 13: Gender and changing authority structure in the family and society at large (Nukunya 141 – 166).

Week 14: Globalization and Ghana (and Africa)

Week 15: Festivals and their socio-cultural contexts (Kofigah 19 – 28).

Week 16: Retrospect and Prospect

Week 17: (Exam Week).

Please Note: There will be assignments every two weeks and a term paper at the end of the course in lieu of exam.

Required Reading


