Georgetown University-SFS-Q
Research Seminar
Anthropology of War and Peace in Darfur
ANTH 305-1
August 21-Nov.27, 2017
Fall 2017

Instructor
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**Doyle Seminar**

*This course is a Doyle Seminar, part of the Doyle Engaging Difference Program, a new campus-wide curricular initiative, and gives faculty the opportunity to enhance the student research component of upper-level seminars that address questions of national, social, cultural, religious, moral, and other forms of difference. The Doyle seminars are intended to deepen student learning about diversity and difference through enhanced research opportunities, interaction with thought leaders, and dialogue with the Georgetown community and beyond.*

**Description**

Generations of travelers, historians, ethnographers, colonial administrators, humanitarian workers, celebrities, and NGO personnel have produced an enormous amount of knowledge about the Darfur. This course draws upon illustrative examples from the earliest forms of travel writing to the most recent forms of digital activism. Although recent events around the world have managed to divert attention from Darfur, its significance in international politics continued since the arrest warrant was issued for Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1593, concerning genocide and war crimes in Darfur. The United Nations Security Council referred the case to Luis Moreno-Ocampo, former prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, after the investigation of Sudan's own special prosecutor had not led to war prosecutions, suggesting the failure of institutions of justice within the country. Events of this magnitude are to be expected given the pervasive political violence that engulfed the country following its independence from British rule in January 1956. Ever since, the Sudan was converted into a theatre of atrocity that shattered lives and rendered ordinary citizens perpetual refugees and internally displaced people in a vast territory, the largest in the African continent. Within this context, this course will examine multiple topics pertaining to the debates on genocide and ethnic cleansing, sexual violence, and conflict mediation. It examines local, national, international, and transnational responses to the crisis.

**Themes**

**History & Knowledge Production**

This course considers how both past and present circuits of knowledge production about Darfur have systematically attempted to understand Darfur’s identities in binary terms. Despite different politically informed frameworks, the region’s identity has been divided into two entities: Zurga or indigenous black African and invader-settler and migrant Arabs. This bifurcated view not only altered self-perceptions in the region by politicizing ethnicity, but also affected views on the conflict at the national and international levels. What this form of knowledge overlooks is the many variations within these two seemingly oppositional groups, each with different views about its relationship to politics and the state. Since the topics which will be discussed in the course are fundamental to anthropological understanding of the region’s politics and identity, we will cover multiple forces that take into account the contestations over knowledge-production to examine ways of broadening our understanding of the atrocities by challenges oversimplified views on the conflict. We will probe culture and politics and trace the development of a political militancy that overwhelmed social arrangements among peoples with long histories of intermixing in a complex geography.

**Ethnology**

Much has been written on the Darfur crisis. For the most part, the literature assumes binary categories previously deployed in the media to explain the civil war between North and South Sudan. The predominant narrative pivoted
around ideas about the mighty Arab (Janjaweed militias) catching the meek indigenous black African (Fur, Zaghawa, and Massaleet) to pursue genocide or, at least, ethnic cleansing. Invariably, most of the writings produced on the subject have ignored the facts on the ground, primary of which is that Darfur, unlike the South, is part and parcel of Arabized Northern Sudan. This course will trace the trajectory of this identity formation as an outcome of political, economic, and environmental processes in the Sudan as a whole.

**Representation of Political Violence**

Competing narratives around the world emerged vis-à-vis the representation of Darfur. In the Sudan, we encounter different views stressing problems typical of state failure in the postcolonial situation of the Sudan including failed governance, reproduction of marginality, militarization, ignoring the environmental degradation, dismantling of native administration, and banditry. Elsewhere, there is an entirely different set of understandings are employed to explain the root causes of the political violence in the region as opposed to diaspora perspectives on the subject. The course will engage with these topics through multiple lens including the representations advanced by many parties around the World.

Among the questions we ask, therefore, are: How has knowledge been produced about Darfur’s past and present, particularly since the eruption of the political violence that has afflicted the region since 2003, and to what effect? What is at stake in the knowledge produced in terms of understanding ethnic, regional, class, and gender politics as well as the evolving truth regimes purporting to provide definitive explanations about the causes of the conflict? What does the thirteen-year-old term “Darfurian”—coined mainly outside the Sudan—mean for individuals and communities living within and outside of the region? How is that knowledge affected by the extensive movements and dislocations of people, and how does it generate specific migrant/diaspora communities? Also, what and how do newer circuits of knowledge via electronic media lend themselves to the complexity of this exercise?

**Diaspora Politics**

Host societies to Darfur migrants and refugees provide a range of opportunities for what can and cannot be narrated. These locations and strategic interests of these migrant communities sculpt their views and subsequently their involvement in the politics of their homeland. Systematic comparisons of the different narratives on the devastation of Darfur will be carried out.

**Humanitarianism**

The scale, scope, and significance of humanitarian action have expanded significantly since the late 1980s. This course reflects on two ways in which humanitarianism has been transformed. First, its purpose has been politicized. Whereas once humanitarian actors attempted to insulate themselves from the world of politics, they now work closely with states and attempt to eliminate the root causes of conflict that place individuals at risk. Second, a field of humanitarianism has become institutionalized; during the 1990s the field and its agencies became more professionalized and rationalized. Drawing on various strands of organizational theory, I examine the forces that have contributed to these transformations. We will explore how these transformations have changed the nature of what humanitarian organizations are and what they do. Finally, we will consider how the transformation of humanitarianism links to the relationship between international nongovernmental organizations and world order, including the purpose of humanitarian action and its distinctive function in global politics.

**Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes**

To augment the ability to understand anthropological knowledge on theoretical and methodological concepts and perspectives on war and political violence. The major outcomes can be summarized as follows:

1. All the readings will elucidate the links between culture and politics, theory and method.
2. Major contributions of the ethnographic analysis of political violence will contribute to a nuanced understanding of current political affairs today.
3. Understanding the important debates on human rights in Darfur.
Grasping of subject-specific knowledge and understanding of key concepts will further skills and qualities that are by no means limited to technical knowledge and disciplinary familiarity only.

It will advance research skills and the ability to apply knowledge, critical thinking and communicating wide-ranging perspectives effectively in and outside the classroom.

Delivery

To create enabling mechanisms for learning through active participation, several methods will be employed as key to the delivery of the course material. These will include seminars, research sessions, presentations, documentary film viewing and discussion and a guest lecture.

Discipline

Attendance is compulsory. Unexcused absences will not be accepted. Five points will be deducted from final the final grade except for Deans’ excused absences.

Classroom discipline. Mobile phones and computers are not allowed in class unless otherwise required for specific sessions.

Close attention must be paid to time. No late arrivals or departures without advanced notice.

Assignments

Graded Assignments

A one single-spaced review should be brought to each class for discussion purposes. This short review must represent your understanding of the authors' purpose and arguments. It should include a critical opinion and evidence to support your own reading. For excellent tips on how to compose a book review see www.library.dalcollow/guides/book review. Group presentations (see Oral Presentation Rubric on BB) (10 points)

Participation based on the readings and submission of written weekly reflections each class under discussion. (10 points). Please adhere to the Reading and Writing Rubric on BB

Presentations and submission: Drawing on News websites Oral Narratives, Blogs and other Social Media. Focus: Darfur Refugees in Israel, Australia, Egypt, and the United States (30 points)

Midterm Oral Exam (10 points). Oral exam covers questions on the readings and facts covered in the first part of the semester.

A Group Project: “Design a Session” Assignment (10 points)

Photographic Essay (10 points). Choose 8-10 photographs to convey your thoughts on a topic of your choice pertaining to Darfur. For a guide please see, https://digital-photography-school.com/5-photo-essay-tips/

Examples may include an analysis of photographic projects such as this one done by Brian Sokol: http://briansokol.com/sudanese-refugees#/id/i4932055

Final project. Independent research paper on a pre-approved topic based on your research case study. A ten-page double spaced paper should apply main themes, theoretical issues and methodological approaches covered in class. Your paper should reflect Knowledge of relevant concept and issues, in-depth understanding and critical thinking, analysis of a variety of sources, structure, clarity of language and attention to detail including references. (20 point)
Grades are final, missed, late assignments, unexcused absences or presentations will affect the grade. Points will be deducted as follows:

Absences 5 points
Late assignments 5 points
Missed presentation 20 points
Lack of accountable participation in class discussion 10 points
Late submission of the final project 5 points

Deadlines

All reflection comments must be brought to each session.
Mid-term Oral Exam: October 16, 2017
Photographic Essays’ Presentations: October 30, 2017
Final Project: November 30, 2017

Grading Scale

The grading scale will be based on the following:

A 93-100
A- 90-92
B+ 87-89
B 83-86
B- 80-82
C+ 77-79
C 73-76
C- 70-72
D+ 67-69
D 63-66
D- 60-62
F 59
Required Readings

Books

Resources for Class Presentations and Projects

Required Articles from Sudan Notes & Records (JSTOR)

Arguably the most extensive and authoritative source of published knowledge about Sudan was for many decades the journal Sudan Notes and Records (SNR), which was launched two years after the 1916 annexation of the independent Sultanate of Darfur to the Sudan by the British. Its authors were primarily British governors and district commissioners in the Sudan, most of whom were Cambridge and Oxford trained anthropologists, and for them, no detail was too small to be incorporated in the journal, whether about handicraft and wildlife or history and antiquity.
Ethnographic Articles and Entries by A. J. Arkell:

"The medieval History of Darfur in its relation to other cultures and to the Nilotic Sudan." Sudan Notes and Records 40 (1959): 44-47.


**Recommended Ethnographic Essays SNR**


"MĀNI MAGIC IN NORTHERN DARFUR." *Sudan Notes and Records* 19, no. 2 (1936): 317-319.


**Other Required Journal Articles JSTOR**


**Required Reading: Selected Sections from Travelogues**


**Recommended Articles**

**Documentary Films and Programs**
Doha-BBC Debates with Tim Sebastian (Selected debates on Darfur)

**Georgetown University Honor System**
Please view this link for GU honor system. Academic integrity is critical. Any evidence of plagiarized content will lead to a failing grade.

[https://www.qatar.georgetown.edu/programs/honor-system/sfs-q-honor-system](https://www.qatar.georgetown.edu/programs/honor-system/sfs-q-honor-system)
Class Schedule

August

21
Introductions
Overview

28
Readings:

---------"The medieval History of Darfur in its relation to other cultures and to the Nilotic Sudan." Sudan Notes and Records 40 (1959): 44-47.


September

11
Readings:

18

Reading


Design a Session

Group 1

25

Part 1 of the class


Part 2, Lecture on How to Study War, Professor Harry Verehoven
October

Readings


Design a Session

Group 2

Readings


Reading


Program

Mamdani/Prendergast Debate, Columbia University Law School
Readings

Design a Session
Group 3
Group 4
November

6
Documentary Film and Discussion

13
Reading

20
Reading

27
Reading

Last Class