When I contemplate the forty years that the Black Studies Department at Portland State has survived, one overwhelming sentiment overrides all others. The awareness that it has been a constant struggle to survive, to overcome the initial hostility to our presence on campus and to endure the persistent opposition the department has faced over the years. The nature and forms of that opposition has changed and evolved over time, gradually becoming less overt and somewhat more subtle and submerged quality as the older generation of faculty and administrators have died off or moved on.

Yet the constant need to struggle for survival, resources and the ability to provide for the department’s future remains the defining characteristics of our relationship to the university. I was recently reminded of this legacy of struggle when I came across two memos from the early years of the department as I reorganized my office after our forced move (from Neuberger Hall) to a new building on campus.

They constitute reminders of the kind of things the department had to overcome in our first 40 years and a prediction that more battles undoubtedly lay in the future of the department in the next 40 years.

The memos concern the issue of “cross-listing” courses between departments. This practice allows the courses offered by one department to also be listed with the courses offered by another so that more students have access to that coursework and the department’s profile and visibility is enhanced on campus. Prior to the arrival of Black Studies on campus such cross-listing was common and routine between traditional departments. Yet, when the infant Black Studies program sought to participate in that process it was rebuffed by many of those traditional departments on often specious and questionable grounds. In fact, the rejections insinuated that Black Studies as a discipline and its faculty as members of the academic community were unqualified and unwelcome intruders into the university. Victory over such sentiments was an essential part of how the department was able to eventually survive and endure as the years unfolded. Forty years have passed by. Black Studies has grown from a small program through a Certificate, Minor and now a Major—all along and until today only with three tenured or tenure-track faculty. Perhaps in the next forty years we will be able to grow from three to four full-time faculty and then to five in another forty years. We can only wish ourselves God’s blessings and good luck.

~ Professor Darrell Millner
From the Chair

AT THE AGE OF 40:
BLACK STUDIES STILL IN HARD TIMES

In the last newsletter I promised to take the good works of the past forward in a manner that will place the Department at the forefront and in leadership role and with the hope that the department continues, in a small way, to serve as a model that would demonstrate how our approach to educational diversity can strengthen our college and university in its outreach efforts to the community. We should continue to create bridges through curriculum development, and maintenance of good campus climate, between the university, the community and the outreach programs of the urban community with whom we share our knowledge. But we have to do it in one fearless voice. The challenge to all Faculty and staff of Black Studies and Friends of Black Studies, even as we maintain distinctiveness and as the only degree offering Black Studies among very few in the nation, to join me to strive to raise the department’s endeavors in sustainable ways to the highest levels, by using it to the full and to usher in refreshing transformations, to enhance the mission of the College and the University, still holds. I am pleased to continue to lead you as we move forward. Good ideas, positive teamwork, persistent communication, dedication, a little toughness where necessary, and effective ventures of outreach to the key constituencies of our urban university and community, are all I ask of you all.

The Black Studies Department at Portland State University has marched with others in the nation experiencing along all the financial and other turbulence of the academic world. Black Studies have since the years our community and student powers forced their establishment in the 1960 appear to be still struggling to survive. Many Black Studies Departments in the nation face the perennial issues of marginalization, reluctant institutional commitment, chronic lack of funding, apprehensive students, uncertainties of administrative priority determinations and perceptions of unhinged and hidden radicalism among faculty and students as they undermine the discipline. Although many people who have Black Studies degrees have been found to be very useful in such fields as education, diversity training, human resources and personnel consulting, politics, journalism, urban planning, public relations and government work, international relations and business, many are yet to recognize that a degree in Black Studies holds great future for this current generation.

This is the time to bring to the fore Black Studies students who are making a difference and who will bear the torches that will shine on the good works emanating from our efforts over the years:

These are our students and are by no means the only ones. They are just a sample of the many out there and we hope that they make it through the turbulent but hopeful years ahead. I still hope that this is the time for us to look ahead beyond FORTY YEARS into the future. But we need to work together to move forward – students, faculty, community members, friends of Black Studies and all with good will. Thank you.

~ E. Kofi Agorsah, Chair

How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and strong. Because some day in life you will have been all these.

~ George Washington Carver, African-American scientist ~
This Faculty Enhancement Grant archaeological project guided Portland State University (PSU) students in a two-four week hands-on archaeological field school, to investigate cultural transformation of the historic Kormantse settlement on the Gold Coast (Ghana) in response to changes occurring from the 16th to the 20th century. Using ethnographic and archaeologically uncovered material culture, students were guided to seek explanation for the processes and cultural manifestations by which enslaved populations, including those who passed through historic site during the trans-Atlantic slave trade, negotiated their survival and developed their identities. The project made several major achievements: prepared and served as an opportunity that led to a National Science Foundation award; it strengthened the PSU-University of Cape Coast (UCC) partnership that continues to allow students of both institutions to share cultural, academic, and educational experiences and exchanges; created the so-much desirable and long over-due data base at the Cape Coast Castle Historical Museum (CCCHM) for academic research on African identity in the Diaspora. New and older archaeological sites have been located during this field school requiring a reconnaissance and survey as a step toward the procurement of another major grant.

These should also help identify “ethnic” or cultural affiliation(s). Artifact differentiation and sources of goods and “people”, travel routes, makers and makers’ marks while scientific dates would provide a chronological dimension and help establish emerging and continuing social distinctions within and around communities in and around colonial Kormantse. Of great interest were the numerous shrines (community and individual), some of which have been used for hundreds of years. Traditions about these shrines have also been recorded.

(Continued on page 4)
FIELD ACTIVITIES

The project completed the inventory and initial data entries of the preliminary work, organized by provenience and levels within grid units and features and reset data base for the new material, producing summary statistics on artifact counts and percentages within contexts and artifact categories. Also examined were site area for soil composition, and depositional history, which helped with site differentiation and mapping. PSU students working with University of Cape Coast students collected historical traditions, clan histories and related colonial documents, maps and reports under the supervision of Dr. Douglas Frimpong-Nnuroh, Sociologist, of the University of Cape Coast.

The excavation centered mainly in Areas 1 (Fig. 2) constituted the next major aspect of the project. Excavation stratigraphy, determination of soil texture, chemical content and color, artifact data collection and records were based on natural levels. In addition to two burials, features or areas depicting artifact concentrations or cluster(s) of artifacts were plotted to show vertical and horizontal relationships. Burial #2 (Fig. 3) was particularly interesting. Excavated soil was screened using different size-mesh for faunal, floral and other small remains, which, together with charcoal samples, were separately bagged and numbered according to standard field procedure. Soil samples were collected from the fill of the burials, as soil control, from the head, stomach, pelvic; sacrum and chest areas and examined burial fill artifacts separately bagged and their levels and associations recorded. Scaled plans and drawings were made of burial indicating their horizontal and vertical relationships, prior to removal. Over twenty one meter square units, each down to the sterile level were excavated.

FIELD DATA ANALYSIS

Preliminary data processing (washing, sorting, marking and indexing) and analyses were conducted in a field laboratory located in Fort William in the colonial town of Anomabo. Different materials, e.g. stone, ceramics, metal, bone, plant, etc., will be separated and material intended for special analysis will be separately bagged, labeled and prepared accordingly. Sorting, classifying and determination of the functional uses of artifacts were related to both the vertical and horizontal contexts and also organized according to geographically identified sections of the settlements – Areas 1, 2 and 3 noting the major activity areas.
Local ceramic (the earthenware) in particular, was of special interest because it helped in identification of social groups and interaction levels. Techniques of production such as coiling, molding firing as well as vessel forms and types of decoration, surface treatment and temper material and source of the ware and possible routes were the significant aspects considered. It is expected that petrographic analysis of selected sherds will be completed in the Geology laboratories at the University of Ghana by next season. That will help reconstruct the routes and places of origin and/or markets and population movements and contacts as well as trade and cultural exchanges or connections. Other artifacts included local and imported smoking pipes, which are being sourced, classified and dated to obtain a chronology and conduct comparison with material from other coastal and interior sites in Ghana and adjoining areas. Glass artifacts particularly bottles, shapes and styles (base, lip, neck collar) size, material, makers’ marks, methods of manufacture. Local and imported beads of stone, glass, shell or bone and metal, were encountered in the excavations. Beads in West African Archeology have provided very good indications of long distance trade and cultural exchanges. Production methods, particularly of glass beads and materials used help to identify populations and sources and would be useful in the reconstruction of long distance as well as the coastal-interior connections. Beads are also indicators of trade connections.

Biological analysis of the human skeletal remains is currently being undertaken under the expertise of William Schaffer, a doctoral student at the University of Arizona. The initial standard inventories of the skeletal material and assemble biological profiles of age and sex as well as identify gross skeletal and oral-dental pathology are almost completed. This will gauge the full potential of other more sophisticated forms of analysis such as carbon and nitrogen isotopes (dietary habits), strontium and oxygen isotopes (migratory patterns), DNA analysis (lineage), and dental micro-wear analysis (chewing habits and abrasiveness of food stuffs). Impressions of the teeth will be taken with Colténe/Whaledent’s President Jet microsystem regular body polysiloxane and molds made with Ciba-Geigy Araldite epoxy (956 hardener/506 resin), or Epo-tek (Epoxy Technology) cold-cure epoxy and exposed to scanning electron microscopy (SEM). Molds appearing on skeletons will be isolated, checked and botanically identified before further handling. A watersoluble conservation material such as Rhoplex B60A is being used for holding fragments together and submerged in a 5-10% solution of water if needed to conserve materials. Bones are also being separated for different analysis – histological, radiographic and chemical analyses for results needed for resubmission of NSF proposal. In addition to charcoal and other samples selected for dating, shell, floral and faunal as well as metal objects have also been collected and are being prepared for material identification and laboratory analysis.

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS

The field research is already providing evidence in answer to some of the crucial questions of the project such the nature, content and extent of the historic town. Of the two parts of Area 1 excavated so far, one had predominantly imported European artifacts with some local ones here and there, while the other part had predominantly local artifacts with almost no imported material. This indicates two cultural zones of the site that needs to be closely watched as the excavation unfolds. Were these areas contemporary or in transition one to the other? Once the artifacts are dated, it should be possible to reconstruct any relationships. Evidence of the cultural transition, if any, and how the associated material culture reflect populations or ethnicities involved would be of great interest. Such a consideration should also lead to identifying general and specific origins or sources of the populations and the cultural paraphernalia deposited at Kormantse as the last point of the interior slave route and first point in the ocean-borne journey to the New World. Ultimately, it should be possible to reconstruct how the nature of international, cultural and other exchanges facilitated by the colonial encounters that linked the coastal areas around Kormantse to the interior, impacted Kormantse as a major port of embarkation of the enslaved. It should be possible to explain the formation and transformation patterns, cultural identities and associated adaptations to changing conditions as depicted by the material remains. As the population catchment and dispersal point for the African Diaspora, Kormantse was probably where the Diaspora cultural formation and bonding began.

SIGNIFICANCE AND CHALLENGE OF THE KORMANTSE PROJECT

While searching for the archaeological evidence was central to this project, providing PSU students the opportunity in their overseas experience on the search extends their classroom knowledge into the field tents (Fig. 4) in practical and very beneficial ways while also engaged in exchanges with local students of Ghana – killing two birds with one stone.
The project has achieved four major results through two field schools.

1. It solidified my developing scholarly agenda and has helped secure a National Science Foundation (NSF) Grant (See attached award letter). It has enabled me to effectively build and expand field approaches for identification of the roots of the emergence of cultural identities in the African Diaspora.

2. The PSU partnership plans with UCC has been further strengthened. It also has afforded students of both institutions field experience opportunities and solidified a base for PSU overseas Capstones and other programs and exchanges.

3. The Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB) is incorporating material from the excavations in the permanent exhibition of the UNESCO “Slave Route” project at the Cape Coast Historical Museum bringing this project to a direct national and international impact in the sharing of the research results with both local and international communities.

The Kormantse evidence would be more meaningful in the context of evidence from such sites as Elmina, Begho, Efutu, Salaga and African Diaspora sites at complementary levels. Scientific analysis of the soil, fauna, flora and other material will contribute useful data to the scientific data pool of participating institutions and increase the comparative capacity in skeletal evidence. The project has solidified opportunities for collaboration and expansion of the range of inter-disciplinary contributions. International student collaborative capacity-building, exchange, training, experience and research opportunities the project is strengthening the current developing partnerships and solidify public outreach and open up more tourist activities. Local efforts envisage converting a permanent field laboratory and site Museum for student courses and exchanges for scientific, educational and research experiences.

Acknowledgements

The Kormantse Archaeological Research Project (KARP) is funded by the National Science Foundation (NSF), USA and the Portland State University (PSU) Faculty Enhancement Grant and the Departments of Black Studies (BST) and International Studies (INTL). I acknowledge, with thanks, the support of my co-project directors Thomas Butler Portland archaeologist and William Schaffer, Bioanthropologist, University of Arizona, Tempe; University of Cape Coast (UCC), Ghana, the Ghana Museums and Monuments Board (GMMB), the Cape Coast Castle Historical Museum (CCCHM) and the Fulbright Senior Scholar program, USA, local and foreign student volunteers of UCC, PSU and the University of Ghana (UG), Legon; the Cultural Section of the American Embassy in Accra, Ghana; the Chiefs and people of Kormantse, particularly Mr. Kwame Sassah, the Assemblyman and Phillip Atta-Yawson, Museum Caretaker, Fort William and, last but not the least, all the local workers and their families for their support. We look forward to taking this collaborative endeavor to a higher level in the future.

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New BST Publications

The book addresses general aspects of the elusive realm of African religious experiences, using selected examples of evidence of how Africans have acted in their encounter with the known and unknown worlds from ancient times. For copies go to: www.authorhuose.com.

Gordly, Avel with Schechter, Patricia (2011). Remembering the Power of Words: The Life of an Oregon Activist, Legislator and Community Leader, Oregon State University Press
An honest and brave story of the personal and professional journey of Avel Gordly, the first African American woman elected to the Oregon State Senate.

Professor Shawn Smallman is Professor of International Studies & History and Kimberley Brown is a professor of Applied Linguistics and International Studies. "Introduction to International and Global Studies" is a publication that addresses interdisciplinary issues across political, economic, cultural, educational, energy and security borders. It focuses on global citizenship, development of critical thinking and understanding of different viewpoints while engaging in real life situations. It includes a glossary for reflective questions and student activities and teaches students issues relating to how to negotiate a rapidly changing world. Online teacher’s manual provides sample examination questions, additional list of resources as well as recommendations for freshmen, continuing and graduating students in Global/International Development, Diplomatic and Business Studies.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”
-Nelson Mandela
EXCURSIONS . . . What Black Studies Faculty are Up To

Clare Washington presented part of her research on the lesser-known female resistance leaders in the Caribbean and USA at the Association for African American Historical Research, Preservation (AAAHRP) in Seattle, Washington on Saturday, February 5, 2011.

The title of her research presentation, “Celebrating the Lesser-Known (More Obscure and Invisible) Black Women in History” encompasses some of the lesser—known women leaders in the Caribbean and the U.S. whose names are virtually unknown or have very little history written about them and their accomplishments.

Some crucial questions addressed in Washington’s research include:

Who were the major women contributors in the selected resistance episodes in the selected areas such as:

1. the January 7, 1876 Belmanna Riots on the Roxborough Estate in Tobago;
2. the St. John Slave Revellion of 1733 (St. John, U.S. Virgin Islands);
3. the St. Croix Labor Revolt of 1878 also known as the Fireburn (St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands);
4. the 1872 Coal Worker Strike (Coal Carrier’s Strike) on St. Thomas, U.S.V.I.;
5. the 1816 Slave Rebellion in Barbados;
6. Were the women involved in the Black Power Movement in both the Caribbean and USA, only doing so in order to follow the men around; and
7. Was the Civil Rights Movement in the U.S essentially built and operated by men, such that the role performed by women need only be remembered as a footnote in history?

Washington posits that women are considered half the human race and have been half of history, as well. Until recent years, Black women’s history has been even less than that. Many of the lesser-known women heroines in the African Diaspora have had very little or nothing written about them, and that further research needs to be done to fully examine the more important roles of these more obscure women that have simply been left out of history.

“Well-behaved Women Seldom Make History”
~ Laurel Thatcher Ulrich ~

Kofi Agorsah continued his investigation of Historic Kormantse, near Cape Coast, Ghana. The project which is funded by National Science Foundation is investigating cultural formation and transformation of the historic Kormantse settlement on the Gold Coast in response to changes occurring through colonial times. It seeks to explain, by use of evidence of material culture, the processes and cultural manifestations by which the settlement’s population, including those who passed through Kormantse during the trans-Atlantic slave trade between the 16th and 20th centuries, negotiated their survival and identities in Africa and the African Diaspora. The project will search for and identify material traces indicative of internal and external trade contacts and exchanges, migration routes, patterns of market traffic and, ultimately, the different groups represented in the colonial encounter with Kormantse and surrounding area. The project continues to solidify the partnership between the University of Cape Coast, Ghana and PSU and continues to provide students from both and other institutions with substantive cultural and educational exchanges as well as training and experience opportunities in the rudiments of archaeological and historical field investigation.

(Continued on page 9)
For the sixth straight year, the Multicultural Center at Portland State University held a series of flagship events honoring the life and legacy of the great Dr. Martin Luther King. Interspersed with teach-ins, video reflections and more, PSU’s dutiful recognition of this remarkable figure is always capped with a contemporary keynote address.

This year’s Student Interactive Session tackled the thorny issue of racial disparities and depictions in both the old and new media. The stellar panel of experts included OPB President, Steve Bass; BST Faculty members, Darrell Millner and Clare Washington; Chicano/Latino Studies Faculty and KPTV Fox 12 Traffic/News reporter, Tony Martinez; Pacific Northwest Premier DJ, DJ OG One; and Meggin Clay, Graduate Student, PSU Communications Department.

~ Angela Canton

National Black Graduate Student Association (NBGSA) Western Regional Conference at the University of Oregon, Eugene, OR

Clare Washington represented Portland State University and the Black Studies Department at the National Black Graduate Student Association (NBGSA) Western Regional Conference at the University of Oregon, Eugene, OR on October 8-10, 2010. This year’s conference titled “Empowering and Integrating Black Scholars: Looking Back, Reaching Out, Moving Forward in Institutions of Higher Learning”, brought academics and professionals from universities around the nation to present their work in roundtable discussions and poster sessions. NBGSC is a scholarly conference where networking, academic, professional and social opportunities occur. The gathering creates for planning, fact-finding and/or problem solving in face-to-face groups with high participation.

MLK Tribute: BST Well-represented on Media Panel

Panelists L to R: Clare Washington (BST Faculty), Meggin Clay (Communications Dept. Graduate Student), DJ OG One (Pacific Northwest Premier DJ, Music Producer and Author), Steve Bass (Oregon Public Broadcasting CEO), Tony Martinez (Chicano/Latino Studies Faculty & Fox 12 Traffic/News Reporter), and Darrell Millner (BST Faculty)
Alumni News

Cultural Transformations in African Identity: Investigating Historic Kormantse, Ghana

By Adam Carpinelli
Washington State University, Vancouver, Washington

Abstract

The following brief notes report preliminary historical research experience on an ongoing archaeological project in Kormantse, Ghana. Historical and archaeological research in Kormantse is slowly revealing many aspects of life that not only explains the areas role in trade but also the functional adaptation for enslaved Africans in the New World and a Diasporic Kormantse identity. The juxtaposition of oral history, archaeological and archival data are now revealing the pre-European history of Kormantse as well as cultural exchange during the slave trade. This report summarizes my experiences during the collection of oral history information and conducting interviews in 2009 as part of my investigation of Kormantse identity.

Introduction

Interviews with local elders (Fig. 1) focused primarily on pre-European and slave trade history of the area. Questions targeted aspects of the founding of the village to explain the founding of the area as well as place name etymology. Further inquiry explored the geography of the area in context of significant sites, burials, shrines and other religious and historical points of interest that will also help to further identify significant archaeological sites and to understand daily life historically in the village. A four phase chronological scheme was worked out as the periods in which the traditions could be placed. 1) 1200-1400: Etsi (indigenous inhabitants) settlement of the area dating to Fanti migration 2) 1400-1884: European contact, cultural exchange, slave-trade and abolition 3) 1884-1957: Berlin conference, partition of Africa and colonial period 4) 1957-Present: Ghanaian national independence.

Geographically the contemporary area considered as Kormantse was divided, for the purpose of the oral history collection into three areas: first and most important - the original historic site up on the hill overlooking the ocean from a several mile distance, locally referred to as Upper Town; secondly is the area below the hill and along the coast referred to as the Lower Town and thirdly the old Dutch fort which is the area alongside the coast but is isolated on its own plateau. According to oral tradition, the coastal area below the hill remained uninhabited until the arrival of Europeans. Today the lingua franca of the entire area is Fanti an Akan dialect. However, historically this has not always been the case. Etsi speaking people, related to languages originating in Eastern Ghana were the original inhabitants.

Currently there are very few people that identify as Etsi in the area. Diasporic connections with Kormantse have been prolific. People of African decent from Suriname, Jamaica and North America visit Kormantse identifying it as homeland. For example, on my research trip, I was introduced to two Dutch women of Afro-Surinamese decent. By simply going to a website they came across a tourist trip set up by an Afro-Surinamese man who had previously made a connection with the village, became an honorary chief and with an honorary name of Nana Mbroh I, a name that commemorates the past chief, who ruled Kormantse during a crucial period of the slave trade. Oral tradition regarding iron smelting was not prolific albeit several names and sites were identified. For example, the main shrine of Upper Town invokes the powers of Nana Kwabena Twi the chief deity for Kormantse. Lying near the shrine is an old anvil and a pile of smelted iron. Before the archaeological survey and excavation work of Kofi Agorsah people believed old iron slag piles represented local deities. This belief was a blessing in disguise because in turn local people have left them alone.

Since the mid-1950s there has been a great deal of archival research about the slave trade in the Gold Coast. Ghanaian historians such as Adu Boahen and Kwame Daaku have done much archival work but with no explicit focus on Kormantse. Albert van Dantzig’s work has explained the history of Ghana’s forts and castles. Similar archaeological and archival research has been done by Chris DeCorse on Elmina castle showing the complexity of local trade on the coast of central Ghana. Recent works in Atlantic history such as Toyin Falola and Matt D. Childs have inspired scholars to take a more trans-Atlantic approach in teasing out the complexity of Yoruba identity in
in the Atlantic World. In addition to the work of the Africanist historian such as John Thornton’s discussion of Kromanti in the African Diaspora in several of his works, other scholars who have brought close attention include Ray Kea, Adam Jones, John Fynn, Monica Schuler, Gwendolyn M. Hall, Emmanuel Akyeampong and Patrick Manning as well as local history texts and oral traditions from Coastal Ghana (see bibliography). Other Africanist historians such as Douglas Chambers have written and offered new ideas regarding the complexity, disambiguation and deconstruction of various African ethnoynyms in the Atlantic World and will also serve as the basis for further investigation in this project. Asking different questions about established research and archival work motivate the revisiting of previous archival works from scholars such as Margaret Priestley. Therefore the goal is to relate this and see how both sides of the Atlantic interacted in the formation of African identity. There is abundant evidence that, throughout the Atlantic world in the era of the slave trade, many enslaved people identified themselves, or were so identified by others, as members of African-derived named groups.

Disambiguating the Kormantse Ethnonym

Although Kormantse is a place name, its utterance has reverberated throughout the Atlantic World as an ethnonym in hundreds of linguistic permutations. References to Kormantse in the Americas generally referred to those enslaved Africans from the Gold Coast. The name is recorded from New York to the circum-Caribbean, where it is associated with “troublesome and dangerous escaped freedom fighters”. Kormantse was a significant site in the Atlantic World because its role straddled a local and global importance. References to the Kormantse ethnonym has also been located in ethno-botanical and ethnomusical sources from the Caribbean in “Creole languages”, dances, stories, riddles, proverbs, jokes and songs are of interest to this project.

 Diasporic memory of a Kormantse identity has been retained in the hearts, minds and collective memory by people of African decent in the Americas. The Maroons of Jamaica and Suriname have songs, dances, riddles and proverbs recalling their Kormantse heritage. Another example is of the Afro-Guyanese Kwe Kwe dance that has a specific dance dedicated to Kormantse. Now what does the retention of this cultural name tell us about the process of creolization? The primary questions contextualizing this area of inquiry looks at how, where and when local African people dispersed from the Kormantse area. But what does this recursive memory or idea of Kormantse tell us about the transformations in identity formation that took place in the Atlantic World as a result of the slave trade?

Challenges, New Questions and Problems

In 1964 there were terrible mudslides that overtook the original path to Upper Town. Walking up the hill from Lower Town one will find a perfect bird’s eye view of the Dutch fort. Reaching the top the old path on the right has remnants of the old fort that the British were trying to build in the original space. Other sites of significance include where pieces of iron slag are found scattered throughout the surface level of Upper Town including massive amounts of ground-layer midden. Current ongoing archaeological survey appears to be speculating that the area was an important center for trade. Beads and cowry shells were featured in the trade. Today in Upper Town, gold digging, locally known as “galamsey”, is rather prolific and is conducted almost every day. Once the gold is harvested it is sold to foreign merchants, who in some cases come all the way from Mali. Upper Town Kormantse is falling apart in an alarming way, a situation that should frighten archaeologists. Diasporic memories of a Kormantse homeland, large deposits of natural materials found in Upper Town such as bauxite and gold as well as locally produced para-military group (asafos) flags attract foreigners on a daily basis during their festivals and festivities. This site continues to be the focus of extensive National Science Foundation archaeological investigation since 2008. Historical research will contribute toward integrating historical documentation, ethnographic and other evidence into the gap to be filled with these related archaeological investigations. The cooperation with the local traditional leaders is making the study even more rewarding.

Note

Adam Carpinelli is a doctoral student and teaching assistant in the department of history at Washington State University.

REFERENCES


Assistant Professor Pedro Ferbel-Azcarate participated in several academic research opportunities Fall 2010, including trips to Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Cuba and Belize. Pedro’s research on the survival of Indigenous culture in the Caribbean led him to coastal Belize, where he met members of the local Garifuna community, and documented their traditional baking of casabe bread from yuca (manihot esculenta) flour. Contemporary Garifuna communities are found in Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Belize, and are related to Black Carib people from Saint Vincent, who had a long history of struggle against the colonial British. The Black Carib were descended from shipwrecked African people who were being sent to the Caribbean as slaves. They also joined remnant groups of Indigenous people who were also resisting the British. After the Carib Wars in 1796 they were sent away from the island of Saint Vincent to the island of Roatan off the coast of Honduras. From there, they developed a unique coastal culture, known for its sustainable fishing and agriculture. They speak their own language, derived from Native American Arahucan and Carib languages. They have also retained their African heritage in their music, dance, and spirituality. In 2001 UNESCO referred to their language, dance and music as a masterpiece of the oral and intangible heritage of humanity. In the image image, renowned casabe maker Miss Naomi (Fig. 1) is showing the yuca plant she uses for the raw material for making casabe bread. The roots of the yuca are peeled, grated, strained, sifted, and baked on a griddle called a "buren" making a flatbread that is high in carbohydrates and fiber and low in fat and can last months in a tropical environment without refrigeration.

Pedro presented a paper about the survival of casabe bread technology found in the contemporary Dominican Republic at the Tenth International Anthropology Conference in Havana, Cuba, in November 2010.
The Black Studies Department has embarked on its second quarter of a century of community and University service. An interdisciplinary academic unit within the Portland State University’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the department is devoted to research and teaching in the United States, the Caribbean, and Africa. The department is the oldest Black Studies program in the Pacific Northwest and the only program in the State of Oregon that offers a degree in Black Studies. Departmental objectives are to provide comprehensive learning programs, community-based learning and service, and an overall heightened sense of awareness about general multicultural, diversity and gender issues covering the African, Caribbean and African-American experiences.

Students, together with faculty in the department's programs, are involved in community-based learning and provide service to community groups and institutions in the Portland metro area and overseas. In conjunction with community partnerships, the department is also actively involved in the President's Diversity initiative, which has helped to broaden the definition of scholarship at Portland State University for over a quarter of a century.

**Congratulations Class of 2009-2010**

**Majors**
Jeffrey Brown
Lisa Briggs
Shaysee Williamson

**Minors**
Dawn Ebert
Sinira Fuimaono
Andre Williams
Cameo Reed
Nicole Sims
Electra Gardinier
Dana Halverson
Julie Mertes
Wendy Shortman
Raina Smith-Roller
Evan Donnelly
Christine Gadeholt
Sofia Janjgava

**Certificates**
Diane Kopperman
REVISED REQUIREMENTS** FOR THE DEGREE IN BLACK STUDIES ARE:

BST 202  Introduction to Black Studies 4
Lower Division Black Studies courses 12
Upper Division electives in Black Studies
  Selected in consultation with major adviser
  and spread over the geographic and thematic
  specializations of Africa, African-American (USA),
  Caribbean/Latin America 32
Adviser approved non-Black Studies
Upper Division electives 12

Total……………………60

- A maximum of 16 lower division credits in Black Studies may be applied to the major
- Of the 32 upper division Black Studies electives a minimum of 4 credits must be taken from each of the three areas of specialization within the department: Africa, African-American (USA), Caribbean/Latin America
- Of the upper division Black Studies electives a minimum of 24 credits must be taken under the graded option
- Upper division Black Studies courses may be substituted for some or all of the non-black studies electives requirements with Adviser approval

** New Requirements are more compatible with many other departments. Be a double major

Black Studies Faculty & Staff - 2011

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Summer Term 2011 Travel: August 15 —September 5, 2011

Led by: Dr. Kofi Agorsah, PSU Faculty

The 2011 program will offer:

Cultural Experience - will provide opportunities for first-hand interaction with traditional leaders, office bearers, chiefs, queens and queen mothers and also for exploring of a wide variety of traditional cultural events in Ghana including villages and towns to observe and take part in such traditional activities as festivals and festivities, ritual, drumming music and dance, craft and other creative aspects of the local culture while participating on the archaeological field work.

Historical Experience – this will involve participation in archaeological excavation and laboratory analysis of excavated finds as well as educational excursion and tour of historical and traditional cultural sites such as museums, shrines, historical towns and monuments, forts and castles of the trans-Atlantic slave trade (Fort Abandzi, Elmina, Anomabo and Cape Coast Castles for example) as an extension of the experience on the archaeological field work, cultural centers, palaces, traditional herbal institutions and selected educational institutions.

Academic Experience – students participate in talks, seminars and demonstrations on traditional social, political and religious expressions, to be given by academic and traditional specialists of both rural and urban Ghana; also undertake individual field project on an approved topic or subject based on direct interaction, interviews, archival, museum and/or library research, to be written up and presented at the end of the program.

For Program costs and more details contact the PSU Study Abroad Office or the Black Studies Department as indicated below

Applications & information available on-line at:
http://oia.pdx.edu/ea/  E-mail: agorsahe@pdx.edu edabroad@pdx.edu

Application Deadline: 4/30/11
Welcome to the third issue of the Portland State University’s Black Studies Department newsletter. This newsletter will be published once a year at the beginning of each academic year. It will contain up-to-date information on the activities of the Department of Black Studies and the research, teaching, community outreach of its faculty, staff and students.

To be placed on the mailing list, please send your email address to: Angela Canton: jennae@pdx.edu

Clare J. Washington and Angela J. Canton

OTHER NEWS . . . From the Field