

African Culture – Chaminade-Julienne – 17Apr2008

Show the World Map – The Big Picture – Throw a lot of numbers at you....

- How far is a km? 1.6 miles
- World Total Surface Mass: 510.072 million sq km
- World Water Mass: 361.132 million sq km (70.8%)
- World Land Mass: 148.94 million sq km (29.2%)

Show the Africa Map – The Human Footprint – Where people live and their impact

Show the Africa Map – Africa Threatened and flip side – Political Africa

- Africa Land Mass: 30.221 million sq km
 - USA Land Mass: 9.161 million sq km (can put 3.3 USA's inside of Africa)
- Africa Population: Over 941 million people (as of 2005)
 - USA Population: 303,838,913
- World Internet Users: 1,319,872,109
 - USA Internet Users: 215,935,529
 - Africa Internet Users: 44,361,940
- 27 million refugees in the World.
 - 11 million refugees in Africa.
 - 300,000 refugees in Kenya
 - 113,000 refugees in Zambia
- Out of the 36 poorest countries in the World 26 are in Africa.
 - 62% of Africans are below the poverty line
 - 130,000 Kenyans are living on the streets.
 - 15% of USA is below the poverty line
 - 46% of Kenyans are unemployed
 - 5.1% of USA is unemployed
- The Poor Suffer from:
 - Lack of education
 - unequal distribution of resources
 - government mismanagement
 - corruption
 - poor planning
 - population explosion
 - lack of work
 - lack of health care
 - breakdown of the family
 - single parent families

African Culture.....

- Sort of a joke to talk about African Culture....Africa has:
 - 61 different countries/territories
 - 410 different tribes
 - 2000 estimated languages

Things Fall Apart, Chinua Achebe

- Setting: Nigeria
- Tribe: Igbo (Pronounced “É-bow”)

What are the basic elements that make up a culture? (John J. Macionis, Miami Dade College)

- **Symbols**
 - Anything that has been given representational meaning by the members of a cultural group
- **Language**
 - A system of patterned sounds, often with corresponding written symbols, that the members of a society use to communicate their thoughts and feelings to one another
- **Values**
 - Cultural standards or judgments of what is right, good, or desirable
- **Norms**
 - The rules of culture that tell the members of a culture how they are expected to behave in a given situation
 - Mores
 - Norms that carry a strong social sanction if violated because the members of a culture consider adherence to them essential to the well-being of the society
 - Folkways
 - Norms that carry only a weak social sanction if violated because the members of the society do not consider adherence to them essential to the well-being of the society
 - Laws
 - Norms that the governing body of a society officially adopts to regulate behavior
 - Taboos
 - Norms so strongly held by the members of a society that to violate them is virtually inconceivable
- **Technology**
 - The body of knowledge that members of a society apply to their physical environment to meet their survival needs
- **Artifacts**
 - The physical things that the members of a society make when they apply their technology to the physical environment
- We live in our own culture as if in a bubble, many things we take for granted:
 - How and what we eat
 - How and where we shop
 - How we dress
 - How we cook
 - How we speak and communicate
 - How we behave
 - How we travel from one place to another
 - What our houses look like
 - Where we get water

- This elements make up our world and it's all we know until we travel elsewhere
- Who has traveled outside the USA? Let's see where and how far?
- Every Culture has its strengths and weaknesses.
 - Cultural differences in general are not right or wrong compared to other cultures.
 - They are simply different.

I'll talk about the cultures in which I lived and experienced:

- Ireland - 1 year
- Zambia - 2 years
- Kenya - 5 years
- I have also visited Canada, Mexico, England, France, Italy, Spain, Zimbabwe and Malawi.
- This is by no means a definitive study.
- **My** experience; a very important concept and reality.
- **Your** experience of the same culture may be very different

Examples of different cultural realities in Kenya and Zambia:

- **Language:**
 - Gateway to understanding the culture.
 - Ability, even in a small way, to speak with or to others in there language, helps greatly to insert oneself into another culture.
 - Examples from church:
 - **Let us pray: Tuombe**
 - **Sign of the Cross:**
 - Kwa Jina la Baba, na la Mwana
 - na Roho Mtakatifu. Amina.
 - **Hail Mary:**
 - Salamu Maria umejaa neema
 - Bwana yu nawe,
 - umebarikiwa kuliko wanawake wote,
 - na Yesu mzao wa tumbo lako amebarikiwa.
 - Maria Mtakatifu mama wa Mungu
 - utuombe sisi wakosefu
 - sasa na saa ya kufa kwetu. Amina.
 - **Our Father:**
 - Baba yetu uliye mbinguni
 - jina lako litukuzwe.
 - u falme wako ufike,
 - utakole liyafanyike duniani kama mbinguni.
 - Utupe leo mkate wetu wa kila siku.
 - Utusamehe makosa yetu
 - Kama tunavyowasamehe na sisi waliotukosea
 - Usitutie katika kishawishi,
 - Lakini utuopoe maovuni, Amina.
- **Time:**

- Not strict.
- Appointments are flexible.
- Can be hour late and still be considered acceptable behavior.
- **Work:**
 - Relationships between workers are much more important than the task at hand and its relationship to the quantity of work produced.
 - Workers can do so very much with so few tools and resources. (We will see some of that in the photos)
- **Hospitality:**
 - When you stop by unannounced to visit a family they stop whatever they are doing and give you their full attention and presence. Their sense of time knows that there will always be time to finish what they were doing at another time. The more important thing to do is to be with the visitor. Here in the States we might even feel imposed upon if someone came to our house unannounced!
 - Food in the house is always shared. Whatever is available is shared. It may even be the food meant for the family itself!
- **Greetings and Gestures** are very important.
 - When you enter the house it is very important to go around and shake the hand of each one present. Not unusual to be greeted into the family house, one member of the family will stay with you while the others disappear to prepare something to eat and drink.
 - In Zambia when you shake someone's hand it is respectful to do so with both hands while bending the knees.
 - Hand gestures calling someone to come closer.
 - Pointing to someone or something with your lips.
- **Respect:**
 - One never, ever, ever yells in anger at someone else in public with others around. To do so is considered a serious offense. The one offended would report that incident as their being *abused*.
- **Shopping:**
 - Zambia and Kenya do have what we would call shopping malls. They are for the well off.
 - Most people shop at the local market.
 - Food is usually just laid out in piles of potatoes, tomatoes, etc
 - Flour, beans, etc are in big bags and is measured and dispensed by a tin can into smaller plastic bags.
- **Family/ Tribe:**
 - One's personal identity comes from the group/tribe. Not from the self and one's accomplishments. Here in the States we are self-made individuals.
 - The naming of children often dictated by the
 - Gender
 - involves the
- **Church/ Religion:**
 - Some say that Africans in general were a religious people even before the colonialists brought their own form of religion and inserted it into African cultures. Sometimes these practices were different from tribal customs. Example:

- Here in the States we stand for the proclamation of the gospel. In Zambia the people sit out of respect for God's Word. When the chief in a village speaks, he stands while the others sit.
- **Faustino Construction Project –**
 - Construction and Work Methods –
 - House of formation for our brothers from Zambia and Malawi –
 - Faustino young boy who lived in Spain and was very interested in the Marianist way of life who died at a very young age
 - Construction records kept by hand in ledger books rather than on computers with spreadsheets etc.
 - No electrical plugs. Bare wires pushed into receptacle
 - Plastic pipe bent with heat
 - Leaks in pipes repaired with strips of inner tube.
 - Chisels made with pieces of re-bar
 - Pieces of plumbing pipe often used as hammers
 - If you are lucky to possess a hammer head it may be welded to a piece of pipe for durability.
 - Short pieces of I-beams are welded to a piece of pipe and used to compact soil.
 - Road work and movement of soil all done by hand
 - Bottom of doors cut with hand saw rather than with circular saw
 - Cement and concrete all mixed by hand
 - Concrete cured by flooding with water with sand on edges of slab
 - Cement block is laid up, then channels cut to provide for plumbing and electrical pipes
 - 2" well pump was pulled by hand with iron bars rather than with hoist
 - Footers and trenches all dug by hand rather than with back-hoe
 - Scrap pieces of wood used to finish concrete and cement
 - Plumbing pipe all threaded by hand not with pipe machine
 - On the job....when mistakes are made it does no good to get angry and yell.
 - Sometimes they saw away from themselves using wood hand saws
 - High grass is cut with a slasher (draw on board) rather than with a mower or tractor
 - Ladders are hand made with 2x4's. Not purchased.
 - Dropped ceilings made with 2x2's and thin wood sheets rather than with metal grid and acoustic ceiling tiles
 - Crack filler applied with finger rather than with a putty knife
 - Welders hardly ever use welding mask or goggles. Sometimes just hold a welding lens in front of their face.
 - Everything is saved and used for a purpose: Old woven plastic cement bags used to separate top soil from rock in the septic system. (draw picture on board)
 - Old paint buckets use as buckets to carry anything
 - Hand and push brooms used to the very last bristle

Show pictures of Faustino House Construction

General Cultural Points in Kenya and Zambia

- Animals seen in game parks only
- Our Lady of Nazareth Primary School – Nairobi – Mukuru Slum – Oasis in the midst of slum
- Lusaka, Zambia – St. Joseph Chapel – Sunday worship – lively singing, dancing and drumming
- Faustino Marianist Lay Youth Group
- Marianist Lay Adult Group
- Faces of Zambia
- Toys made out of fence wire to form a car
- Kariba Dam – Generate electricity for Zambia and Zimbabwe
- Matero Boys Secondary School – 40th Anniversary – Kenneth Kaunda – First President of the Republic of Zambia - Matero is the name of the area of Lusaka where Matero Boys is located
- See how women dress for special occasions
- Parade downtown Lusaka to commemorate the 40th Anniversary of Matero Boys Sec. School
- Bro. Carmine Annunziata -Marianist Brother who was one of the first founders of the school. Supervised the building of the school
- Brothers house
- Internet Café
- Local Community School – food program – dancing – entertainment – story – “though I am poor I want to be treated with dignity”
- No shoes.....I saw many kids walking barefoot
- Poor Clare Sisters – Taught some of them to play guitar 23 years ago...
- Winnie – guitar student
- Henry – star guitar student
- Livingstone and Victoria Falls