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Ukhamba: The Implications of Amateur Domestic Genealogical Research for African Socio-historical Analysis

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Ukhamba: The Implications of Amateur Domestic Genealogical Research for African Socio-historical Analysis”

Dr. Nikitah Okembe-RA Imani
Professor and Chair
Department of Black Studies
University of Nebraska-Omaha
Tanya Evans: “Secrets and Lies: The Radical Potential of Family History”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social and Cultural Historian</th>
<th>Family historian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Academic</td>
<td>Hobbyist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Official Record”-Government Documents, Archives</td>
<td>“Unofficial” Record- Personal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researcher</td>
<td>Diaries, Journals, Oral Narratives,</td>
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<tr>
<td>Patriarchical and Male</td>
<td>Personal Effects and Autographs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Detective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Egalitarian and Female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Effect of “New Media” Technologies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Democratization of Data</th>
<th>Democratization of Methodology</th>
<th>Democratization of Utility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More people collecting data</td>
<td>More people with formal education.</td>
<td>More people find data useful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More varieties of data</td>
<td>More people with the capability of using technology</td>
<td>More people respond to data or find they need to develop the capability to respond to data or at least to data-driven implications and policies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More people having access to data</td>
<td>More people having access to technology</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Net Result: Breakdown in the “Wall” between the social/cultural and the familial.

(1) Shared Material

(2) Shared Cultural and Social Institutions of Activity
Inmates use Family History centers to find family trees

By Ben Winslow, Deseret News
Published: Monday, March 23 2009 1:22 a.m. MDT

Summary
In a cramped room in a Utah State Prison medium-security unit, inmates sit hunched over computers, trying to decipher the aged writings of people long dead.

UTAH STATE PRISON — In a cramped room here in the Wasatch medium-security unit, inmates sit hunched over computers, trying to decipher the aged writings of people long dead.

Some scroll through reels of microfilm, searching for a name that can help unlock the secrets of the past. They are among hundreds of inmates doing genealogical work in
Two Views of “Family Histories”

Conservative and conservative

- Nostalgic for an ideal type of “family"
- Desire for social status
- Stabilizing element in times of social instability, disruption, and transformation

Radical

- Deconstruction of social status
- Deconstruction of the idea of stability in class relationships and power relations
- Undermines narratives about historical change and continuity
The Identity Paper Tchaiko Kwanyana

Goals

- Increase literacy-technological/linguistic/cultural
- Increase self-respect, individual and communal
- Empowerment

Elements

Part I family
- autobiography - uniqueness
Family celebrations - foods
Heroines/heroes - proverbs
Folk personalities
Part II Group
Folk tales myths and legends
Proverbs themes nonfiction
Historical fiction film essays

Elements 2

Part III Shift as a result of forced migration or immigration
Part IV reflection
conclusions and projections
Strengths and weaknesses
Part V appendix
Family trees maps photographs
# The Identity Paper

## Tchaiko Kwanyana

### Specs

- 3 hours of public radio a week
- 3 days a month 2 hours in computer lab with parents or other extended family members throughout
- Students in English...respondents in any tongue
UKHAMBA (CLAYPOT)

Goals
Bridge “digital divide”
Bridge “linguistic divide”
Restoring a sense of community
Preservation of Afrikan familial source materials

Methodology
Solicitation of families that agree to participate in the project
Provision of software and materials for the community to engage the task
Provision of opportunities for sharing of information on a larger scale and for preservation of the materials as well