

Introduction

Thesis: By applying the theory of cultural materialism to West African artifacts, it can be shown, in a display in the Divine Design Exhibit, that basic human needs determine West African social organization, political organization, belief systems, and ideology.

Introduction

"Cultural materialism is based on the simple premise that human social life is a response to the practical problems of earthly existence."

Marvin Harris

 Purpose: Present an overview of successful findings that resulted in a completed display that demonstrates the relation between infrastructure, structure, and superstructure

Methods and Tasks

- . Divine Design website
- . Conduct initial culture research
- Collect artifact data to establish provenience
- Theory application
- Write Divine Design display theme and texts

West African Infrastructure: Sacred Fertility

- 1. Modes of production variables
- Environment: temp. rain, trees--link to the soil
- Ecology: Dependent on small scale farming



West African Infrastructure: Sacred Fertility

- 2. Modes of reproduction variables
- . Demography: high twin birth rate
- Reproduction:
 - Fertility cults
 - . Osun-Osogbo Sacred Groves and Festiva

West African Structure: Divine Kingship

- 1. Domestic social behavior
- . Ogbani councils:
 - King selection and coronation ceremony
- · Advisors: Adherence to rituals
 - King Follows guidelines



West African Structure: Divine Kingship

- 2. Political economy behavior
- . Agriculture: centralization of political power
- . Shared by king and council of elders
 - Elaboration of rituals
 Sacred arts Kente cloth/beaded iter



West African Superstructure: Yoruba Religion

- 1. Active belief system
- . Shrines with sacred objects
- . Add to over 400 gods (orishas)



• Find novices through nature's indicators

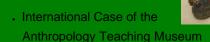
West African Superstructure: Yoruba Religion

- 2. Ideology
- Ancestor veneration
- Rituals
 - Earth sorcery
 - Diviner



Conclusion

• Explanation of West African Culture by applying Harris theory



• Potential Research concerning Divine Design

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