

Anthropology 343

Pacific Islands Archaeology

University of Oregon
Department of Anthropology Fall 2011
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Office Hours: tba; Class Meetings: 12:00-13:50 MW

Texts/Reading:

Text: Kirch, P., *On the Road of the Winds*. 2000 (2002 pbk).

Supplemental Readings: Materials on reserve or Blackboard (see attached bibliography):

Content:

The primary aim of this class is exploration of the prehistoric colonization of the Pacific islands that began more than 50,000 years ago. This includes archaeological study of the subsequent cultural patterns of adaptation to life on large islands as well as small, remote ones. A regional frame-work will be formulated for discussing the migrations and cultural adaptations made by peoples moving into the Pacific and for clarifying their relationship to complex cultures in mainland Asia. In particular, the area of SE Asia and the Southwest Pacific provides an early cultural foundation and, out of this, a broad, later dispersal pattern of settlement in the eastern Pacific islands of Polynesia follows. Changing Pacific Island cultures are examined from the time of the earliest human settlement through the stages of complex society existing at the time of early Western contact.



Cultural resource management, ethnology, linguistics, and oral history are all areas of study related to cultural history and conceptions held by islanders and by researchers of the human past in the Pacific Islands. Of interest is the use of culture “history” developed by archaeologists to examine the human past and this includes questions related to cultural conservation and cultural identity. Connections between archaeologically known cultures and historic to contemporary island peoples will be explored.



Note: this class may be used to meet anthropology major requirements for a prehistory/ archaeology class. It also satisfies university group requirements in the social sciences.