

TROPICS AND TROPICAL CULTURE
ANT-4930 (Section 131G): Spring 2013

Instructor: Michael Heckenberger; mheck@ufl.edu

Time/Location: T: 7 (1:55-2:45); TH: 7-8 (1:55-3:50); Turlington 2306

Office Hours (Turlington B360): M: 12:45-2:45

Summary:

Tropics and Tropical Culture takes a critical look at the anthropology of three major tropical regions, the Pacific, Africa and the Amazon. It provides a brief survey of cultures in these areas, paying particular attention to how tropical forest and tropical island peoples have been portrayed in Western characterizations. It critically evaluates the characterization of tropical peoples as primitive, environmentally limited, and generally backwards, in comparison to the cultures of temperate and sub-tropical regions, a viewpoint that has been characterized as “tropicality.” This view of view of the tropics begins with Aristotle’s suggestion that the tropics, the “torrid zone,” was uninhabitable or only inhabitable by the most savages of races, and follows how tropical peoples have been portrayed, in print and film, as primordial and uncivilized through the 20th century. Anthropological studies are used to help deconstruct this bias and reveal the richness and diversity tropical cultures, and the places where they live.

Required Books:

P. Kirch (2005), *On the Road of the Winds*, Berkeley: UCalifornia Press

J. Vansina (1990), *Paths through the Rainforest*, Madison: UWisconsin Press

J. Hill & F. Santos Granero, *Comparative Arawakan Histories*, Urbana: UIllinois Press

L. Rabben (2004), *Brazil’s Indians and the Onslaught of Civilizations*, Washington: Smithsonian

Several additional readings will be available on Sakai

Weekly Outline:

T (01/08): Introduction: The Global South

TH (01/10): Orientalism & Tropicality

T-01/15: Setting the Stage: Africa to Asia

TH-01/17: Early Pacific: Kirch 1

T-01/22: New Guinea: Kirch 2

TH-01/24: Polynesian Kingdoms 1: Kirch 3

T-01/29: Polynesian Kingdoms 2

Th-01/31: Review for first Exam (Kirch review due)

T-02/05: Early Africa (Vansina 1; First exam due)

Th-02/07: Bantu (Vansina 2)

T-02/12: Zimbabwe & Jenne (Vansina 3)

TH-02/14: Colonialism & 20th Century Africa (Vansina 4)

T-02/19: Review for Second Exam

TH-02/21: Film: Urbanized

T-02/26: Guest lecture (Vansina review due)

TH-02/28: Film: Masai Women (Second Exam Due to Sakai by 03/11)
 T-03/12: Amazons and Avatars
 Th-03/14: Early Amazonia (Heckenberger & Neves 2009; pdf on Sakai)
 T-03/19: Amazonian Complex Societies (CAH 2-4, 8)
 TH-03/21: Garden Cities (Heckenberger 2009, 2012; pdf on Sakai)
 T-03/26: Film: Lost Cities
 TH-03/28: Arawak Societies (CAH 1, 5-7)
 T-04/02: Discovery: Amazon, Caribbean & Coastal Brazil (CAH 9-11)
 TH-04/04: African Diaspora, Rubber Boom and Mixed Blood Peoples (Rabben 1)
 T-04/09: Ethnographic Amazonia (Rabben 2)
 TH-04/11: Sustainability & Social Values
 T-04/16: Amazonian Urbanism
 TH-04/18: Rio & São Paulo (Heckenberger 2012; pdf on Sakai)
 T-04/23: Review for Final (Amazon book review due)
 05/02: Final Exam Due

Evaluation:

Evaluation will be based on (1) three 500 word commentaries on primary readings; (2) three take-home exams (distribution one week before in-class review. Summaries are worth 10% of grade each; exams are worth 20%. Summaries handed in one week late will be reduced; take-home exams handed in late will be reduced by 10% each week and no materials will be accepted after 3 weeks from deadline. Activities will also be expected to be conducted and will not add points but will have points taken off if not conducted (tba). Attendance and participation are expected and worth 10% of grade.

Commentaries will be graded on a scale of high (full 10%), medium (7.5 of 10%), low (5 of 10%) (0 points will be given only for materials not submitted); Exams will be graded on a 50 pt scale, and divided into 10 short answer (1 phrase or sentence) worth 2.5 points each; 4 short essay (3-5 short sentences) worth 4 points each; and one essay (250-500 words) worth 10 points (in all sections there will be some choice, i.e., more possible selections than need to be answered). Exam three will have two additional short essays (250 words) for extra credit worth 5 points each.

Grades for tests are assigned as:

A	≥ 90%
A-	87-89.9%
B+	85-86.9%
B	80-84.9%
B-	77-79.9%
C+	75-76.9%
C	70-74.9%
C-	67-69.9%
D+	65-66.9%
D	60-64.9%
D-	57-59.9%

E	< 56.9%
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Please note that there are new policies for calculating grade point averages. See <http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/regulationgrades.html> for details. Also note that a grade of C- does not count for credit in major, minor, Gen Ed, Gordon Rule, or college basic distribution credit (for further information regarding minus grades go to: <http://www.isis.ufl.edu/minusgrades.html>).

Additional Items:

Academic Honesty, Student Responsibilities, Student Conduct Code: Students are required to do their own work on exams. The penalty for cheating is to receive no points for that exam and the incident will be reported to the Student Honor Court. The student is responsible to review the UF Student Responsibilities Guidelines, available online.

Students with Disabilities: Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who then must provide this documentation to the instructor.