

ANTHROPOLOGY 343

PACIFIC ISLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY

2015, Fall Term
William S. Ayres
Department of Anthropology
University of Oregon



Rano Raraku, Rapa Nui, Polynesia (w. ayres © 2015)

Pacific Islands Archaeology

University of Oregon Fall, 2015, 04 cr hrs; CRN 10294

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Instructor web page: <http://pages.uoregon.edu/wsayres/>
Office Hours: MW 12:30-13:30 and 16:00-16:30, and by appointment
Class Meetings: MW 10:00-11:50, 112 Lillis Hall

Reading and Text material:

Basic Text: Kirch, Patrick., *On the Road of the Winds*, 2002 (pbk ed.)
Blackboard: Selected Readings
Supplemental Optional Readings/Materials on reserve (see attached bibliography):

Content:

The early (prehistoric and pre-modern) colonization of the Pacific islands began as a slow migration process more than 50,000 years ago. The subsequent cultural patterns of adaptation to life on remote islands are revealed through archaeological evidence. In this class, a review of basic archaeological concepts provides a basis for formulating a regional framework for discussing the migrations and maritime cultural adaptations made by peoples moving into the Pacific and for clarifying their relationships 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 into the more remote eastern Pacific islands follows. Changing Pacific Island cultures in Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia (geographically, from Australia-New Guinea across the Pacific to Rapa Nui) are examined from the time of the earliest human settlement through the stages of complex society existing at the time of early Western contact. Ethnology, linguistics, and oral history are related areas of study related to cultural history and conceptions held by islanders and by researchers of the human past in the Pacific Islands. Archaeologists examining the human past in the Pacific also address questions related to cultural conservation and cultural identity. Connections between archaeologically known cultures and historic to contemporary island peoples, including issues of cultural resource management will be explored.

Learning Objectives:

Typically for an upper-division archaeology course such as this one, a class in introductory archaeology is expected as background, so that you are familiar with the basics of archaeology method and theory as well as world prehistory in general. Prior knowledge of the

Pacific Islands or the archaeology of other world areas can, in some cases, serve the same purposes for this class. As well, in this class, we will be reviewing some of the basic concepts in archaeology in the context of sites and artifacts from the Pacific. After successful completion of this course, students are expected to have an understanding of the following key issues:

- The basic concepts and aims of area prehistory studies within archaeology and the Pacific region, and, more broadly, anthropology's role in such studies.
- The major trends in how the Pacific Islands, representing a major world area and a set of distinctive cultural groups, have been archaeologically studied by outsiders and by islanders.
- The environmental context of early Pacific settlement, including biogeography and natural environmental factors affecting islands.
- The archaeological study of cultural diversity within the region, and an understanding of human migration patterns.
- Contemporary factors related to conservation of the archaeological and cultural remains and the impact of these materials on traditional island society and cultural heritage.

Course Outcomes (some specifics):

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- *. explain the differences between Austronesian and non-Austronesian colonization of the Pacific Islands;
- *. identify key archaeological sites in Samoa related to Polynesian origins;
- *. describe the ceramic attributes of Lapita pottery in Melanesia;
- *. be able to document the initial colonization of Micronesian islands
- *. know the key differences among Pacific Islands adze types
- *. identify the main elements of tree and root crop cultivation practices;
- *. distinguish Near Oceania and Remote Oceania;
- *. calculate from radiocarbon dates the time of initial colonization of West Polynesia
- *. formulate a model of marine-terrestrial subsistence for islands;
- *. evaluate the arguments for early versus late colonization of Polynesia;
- *. discuss the arguments for and against New World connections to the Pacific Islands;
- *. explain the relationships of megalithic architecture to evolving social systems in islands.

Basis for Evaluation:

Quizzes (20%) and homework (10%), midterm (25%) and final exam (25%; percentages are approximate out of a total). There is no formal term paper, but you will have a research and writing project (15%) due later in the term that reviews, in approximately 5 pages, the archaeological record for a specific site, island or island group. Specifics for the format and content of this paper will be provided. Also, class participation is important (5%). More detailed information about reading assignments will be provided on a weekly basis and materials will be available in class or on Canvas. The syllabus with reading assignments and other details will be

available from the instructor and the Canvas web page. Exam format will be both objective and essay. Attendance is expected.

Other Points:

The UO is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of prohibited discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking.

Note: For those needing special assistance with the materials and information presented in class, please see the instructor at the beginning of the term. Documentation of special learning needs is to be established through the Accessible Education Center in Oregon Hall.

COURSE SCHEDULE, ANTH 343, FALL 2015 CRN 10294

<u>Week 1 - 28 Sept -04 Oct (M-Su)</u>	<u>Introduction to Islands and Island Archaeology</u>
Class 01. Mon, 28 Sep	Introduction to Islands and Island Archaeology (read the Syllabus);
Class 02. Wed, 30 Sep	Area Prehistory and archaeological methods Hawai'i Dispersal of People in the Pacific and SE Asia Read <i>Road of the Winds (ROW)</i> , Introduction, pp. 1-11.
<u>Week 2 – 5 -11 Oct</u>	<u>History of Island Studies; Early Archaeology in the Pacific</u>
Class 03. Mon, 05 Oct	Early Archaeology in the Pacific. Read <i>ROW</i> , Chpt 1, pp. 12-41 Read C1. Kirch 1997, <i>Microcosmic Hist.</i> (on Canvas)
Class 04. Wed, 07 Oct	Environment, Resources and Cultural Adaptation: The Pacific and its islands. Pacific Island Types. Read <i>ROW</i> , Chpt 2, pp. 42-62.
<u>Week 3 – 12-18 Oct</u>	<u>Migrations and Cultural Sequences</u>
Class 05, Mon, 12 Oct	Cultural Frameworks/Regional Prehistory. Read C2, Irwin 1992, <i>Prehistoric Exploration ...</i> , pp 1-16 Review C3, Anderson and O'Connor, pp. 1-11. Quiz 1
Class 06, Wed, 14 Oct	New Guinea and the SW Pacific, Melanesia. Read <i>ROW</i> , Chpt 3, pp. 63-84. (Optional, see, Pavlides and Gosden 1994, <i>35,000 year old ...</i> ; Irwin 1992, <i>Prehist Explor.</i> , pp 18-30) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0mn3Cb8tzOc

<u>Week 4 - 19-25 Oct</u>	<u>Melanesia and Early Migrations; Navigation</u>
Class 7, Mon, 19 Oct	New Guinea and the SW Pacific: Melanesia Read ROW, Chpt 4. pp 85-116. Colonization of the Western Pacific See C4. O'Connell and Allen, Sahul (2004)
Class 8, Wed, 21 Oct	Traditional Navigation and Sailing Craft. Sea Lanes and Corridors. (see: http://www.penn.museum/sites/Navigation/sailing/sailing.html)
<u>Week 5 – 26-Oct – 1 Nov</u>	<u>Early Melanesia and Lapita</u>
Class 9, Mon, 26 Oct	The Lapita Complex and West Polynesia. Later Melanesian Archaeology Read ROW, Chpt 5, pp 117-164 Read C5, Sand 2013. See C6 Kirch 1988a, Talepakemalai Lapita Site. See C7 Burley and Dickinson, Polynesian Settlement 2001 See: Terrell: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2KzshDLNres
Class 10, Wed, 28 Oct	Midterm Exam
<u>Week 6 – 02- 08 Nov</u>	<u>Micronesia</u>
Class 11, Mon, 02 Nov	Settlement and Cultural Differences. Read ROW, Chpt. 6, pp. 165-206. See C8, Carson 2011 Read C9, Fitzpatrick 2008 Read C10, Ayres 1990a, <i>Pohnpei's Position ...</i>
Class 12, Wed, 04 Nov	Pohnpei and Eastern Micronesia. See C11, Ayres 1990b, <i>Mystery Islets ...</i>) Nan Madol
<u>Week 7 - 9-15 Nov</u>	<u>East Polynesia: Overview</u>
Class 13, Mon, 9 Nov	West Polynesia-East Polynesia. Read ROW, Chpt. 7, pp. 207-245. Read item C12, Mattisoo-Smith-Rats2004 [optional: Anderson 1995, Current Approaches ...]

Class 14, Wed, 11 Nov	East Polynesian Interrelationships. [Class 13-14 material on Micronesia-West PN]
<u>Week 8 - 16-22 Nov</u>	<u>East Polynesia: Easter Island</u>
Class 15, Mon, 16 Nov	Easter Island. Review of the Archaeology
Class 16, Wed, 18 Nov	Easter Island Stone Tools and Sociopolitical Change. See Item C13, Ayres et al. 1998, <i>Arch. Investigations of Stone Adzes ...</i> , pp 304-311 Quiz 2
<u>Week 9 – 23 Nov- 29 Nov</u>	<u>Sociopolitical and Economic Developments</u>
Class 17, Mon, 23 Nov	Dr. Joan Wozniak lecture on Easter Island and Polynesian subsistence. Read <i>ROW</i> , Chpt. 8, 246-301
Class 18, Wed, 25 Nov	Sociopolitical Evolution: Social and political complexity. Read <i>ROW</i> , Chpt. 9, pp. 302-325. Polynesian Chiefdoms.
<u>Week 10 – 30 Nov - 06 Dec</u>	<u>Summary and Synthesis</u>
Class 19, Mon, 30 Nov	Read C14, Ayres 2013 Austronesian Cultural Heritage... Optional Read Item: C15. Van Tilburg on Easter Island statue issues. See also: http://www.eisp.org/
Class 20, Wed, 02 Dec	Class Discussion.
Final Exam: 10:15 Wed, Dec 9	



Some Typical Rapa Nui (Easter Island) stone artifacts, Polynesia

Anthropology 343 Fall, 2015 CRN 10294

Papers on Pacific Archaeology: (these will be on Canvas electronic reserve or available on-line through the UO library). We will consider some of these significant papers published on Oceanic archaeology:

Read in this order (see course schedule):

- C1. Kirch, Patrick V. Microcosmic Histories: Island Perspectives on "Global Change" *American Anthropologist* 99(1):30-42. 1997.
- C2. Irwin, Geoffrey. An Introduction to the Pacific and the Theory of its Settlement, In *The Prehistoric Exploration and Colonisation of the Pacific*, pp. 1-16. Cambridge. 1992.
- C3. Anderson, Atholl, and Sue O'Connor. Indo-Pacific Migration and Colonization—Introduction, *Asian Perspectives* 47(1):1-11. 2008 University of Hawai'i Press. (on line, UO lib).
- C4. O'Connell, J.F., and J. Allen. Dating the colonization of Sahul (Pleistocene Australia–New Guinea): a review of recent research. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 31(6), June 2004, pp. 835-853 (2004).
- C5. Sand, Christophe. Ritually breaking Lapita pots: or, can we get into the minds of Oceanic first settlers? A discussion. *Archaeology in Oceania*, Vol. 48 (2013): 2–12 (on line, UO lib).
- C6. Kirch, P.V. 1988 The Talepakemalai Lapita site and Oceanic prehistory. *National Geographic Research* 4:328-42 Kirch 1988, Talepakemalai Lapita Site.

- C7. Burley, D. V. and W. R. Dickinson 2001. Origin and significance of a founding settlement in Polynesia. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, U. S. A. 98:11829-11831.
- C8. Carson, Mike T. Palaeohabitat of first settlement sites 1500-1000 B.C. in Guam, Mariana Islands, western Pacific. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 38 (2011) 2207-2221 (on line, UO lib).
- C9. Fitzpatrick, Scott. Maritime interregional interaction in Micronesia: Deciphering multi-group contacts and exchange systems through time. *Journal of Anthropological Archaeology* 27 (2008) 131–147 (on line, UO lib).
- C10. Ayres, W. Pohnpei's Position in Eastern Micronesian Prehistory. 1990 *Micronesica*, Supplement 2: Proceedings, Indo Pacific Prehistory Association, Guam, pp. 187-212. 1990.
- C11. Ayres, W. Mystery Islets of Micronesia. *Archaeology* Jan-Feb 1990, pp. 58-63.
- C12. Mattisoo-Smith, E. and J. Robins. 2004 Origins and dispersals of Pacific peoples: Evidence from mtDNA phylogenies of the Pacific rat. *PNAS* 101(24):9167-9172.
- C13. Ayres, William S., Scott M. Fitzpatrick, Joan A. Wozniak, and Gordon Gales. Archaeological Investigations of Stone Adzes and Quarries on Easter Island, In *Easter Island in Pacific Context: South Seas Symposium*, pp., 304-311. Los Osos: Easter Island Foundation. 1998.
- C14. Ayres, W. Austronesian Cultural Heritage: Historic Preservation and Archaeological Conservation in the Western Pacific. *Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures*. 7(1):39-59 (2013). <http://www.shimajournal.org/current.html>
- C15. Van Tilburg, Jo Anne, A.L. Kaeppler, M. Weisler, C. Cristino, and A. Spitzer. Petrographic analysis of thin-sections of samples from two monolithic statues (moai), Rapa Nui (Easter Island). *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 2008.

Other Optional Reading (Samples):

- Allen, Melinda S. Coastal Morphogenesis, Climatic Trends, and Cook Islands Prehistory. In Kirch and Hunt, eds, *Historical Ecology in the Pacific Islands*, pp. 124-146. New Haven: Yale University Press. 1997.
- Anderson, A. Current approaches in East Polynesian colonization research. *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 104:110-32. 1995.
- Bellwood, P. The Austronesian dispersal and the origin of languages. *Scientific American* July 1991, pp. 88-93. 1991.
- Di Piazza, A., P. Di Piazza, and E. Pearthree. 2007 Sailing virtual canoes across Oceania: revisiting island accessibility. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 34(8): 1219-1225.
- Pavrides, C. and Gosden, C. 35,000 year-old sites in the rainforests of west New Britain. *Antiquity* 68:604-10. 1994.



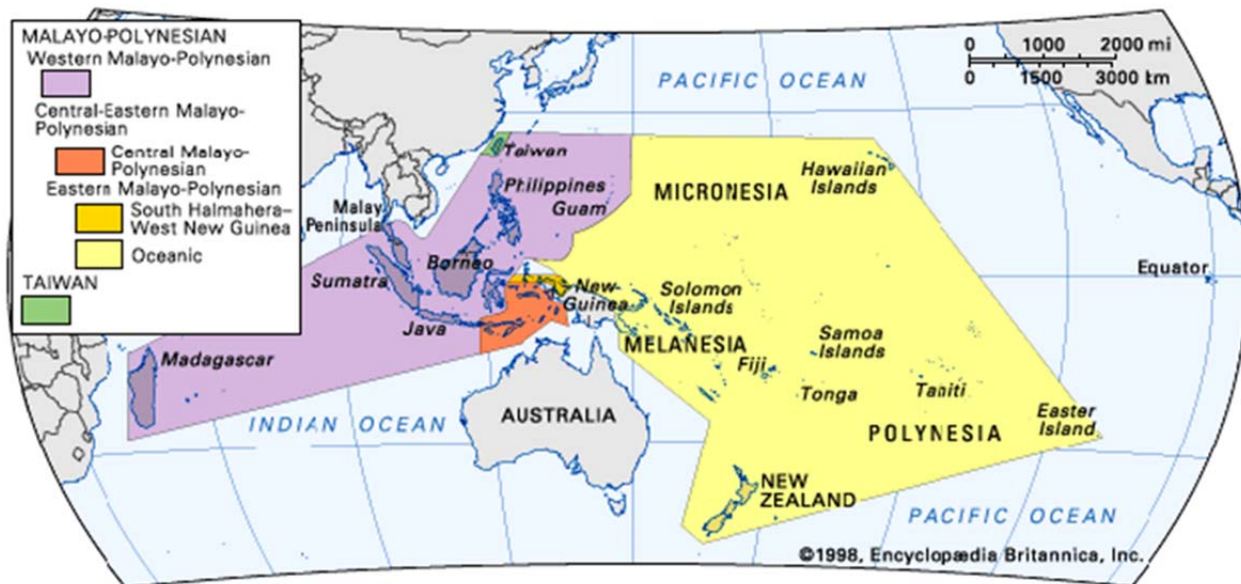
Field studies at Dau en Kioahk, Sokehs, Pohnpei, conducted by the Pohnpei State Historic Preservation Office and the University of Oregon. Students from the UO and elsewhere participated in this site documentation and conservation project. This structure is an early historic meeting house called a *nahs*.

General Introduction to Pacific Linguistic Diversity

Language relationships provide important insight into how Pacific migrations took place. Historical relationships that can be recognized by linguists studying Pacific Island languages can be compared to the results of archaeological and other evidence of population dispersals. There are nearly 1500 distinct languages spoken in the Pacific Islands (including the diverse languages of New Guinea, totaling some 800; see http://press.anu.edu.au/oceanic_encounters/mobile_devices/ch02s02.html).

The most geographically-extensive language grouping within the Oceania region of the Pacific is called Austronesian, which extends from SE Asia (with an outlier in Madagascar) to Easter Island in the East Pacific. We can trace the history of their individual language roots back six or seven thousand years to SE Asia/South China. Archaeological and linguistic evidence reveals varying degrees of cultural homogeneity and diversity among the past and present inhabitants of the three major Oceanic "culture areas;" these are designated Micronesia, Polynesia, and Melanesia. Indonesia and Australia constitute two other major culture areas within the Pacific Basin. Pacific archaeologists continue to seek the causes of cultural patterns that emerged within and across these area boundaries. There are, however, differing views regarding the value of the tripartite culture area distinction noted above (see Mason 1968, Thomas 1989, Hanlon 1989). While respecting the need to deconstruct the aura of early historical misconceptions and colonialism embedded in the names, Micronesia (literally, small islands), Polynesia (many islands), and Melanesia (black islands), and recognizing the need to blur boundaries in many areas, much linguistic and

archaeological research has been conducted with these boundaries in mind. This seems appropriate for some levels of investigation, but the broader framework of an Austronesian, as well as an earlier non-Austronesian, colonization of the Pacific Islands must be understood prior to focusing on settlement and culture change in specific island groups.



Pacific map showing distribution of major groups of Austronesian languages.

Speakers of the Austronesian Oceanic languages characteristic today of most of Melanesia, Micronesia—except for the westernmost islands—and Polynesia represent the most recent major tropical Pacific migration (see map). The ancestral populations were in the New Britain and New Ireland area perhaps as early as 1500 B.C. and moved south and southeastward to the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, and Fiji by approximately 1300 to 1000 B.C. (see, e.g., Bellwood 1979). The initial settlement of the Micronesia area is represented by colonization in the west, by 3500 years ago, derived from Island SE Asia (Western Malayo-Polynesian) and by later migrations derived from the south and southeast (Melanesia) moving into eastern Micronesia. The initial settlement of the eastern Caroline Islands, beginning between two and three thousand years ago, was part of the relatively rapid dispersal of Oceanic Austronesian horticulturalists and seafarers northward from the Solomon and Vanuatu regions into Kiribati and the Marshall Islands. From eastern Micronesia, gradual western expansion through Kosrae, Pohnpei, Chuuk, and as far to the west as Tobi Island followed (Shutler and Marck 1975, Bender 1971, Ayres and Mauricio (1987). Language relationships in Polynesia indicate connections among languages spoken in two western island groups centered respectively on Tonga and Samoa, and including a number of "outlier" languages that are closely related to Samoan in the latter. An East Polynesian language group developed out of the Samoic grouping and it becomes distinct through isolation beginning as much as 1500 years ago. The major groups of East Polynesian languages consist of Easter Island (Rapanui) as an isolate, Marquesic, and Tahitic (Central Polynesia). Important for archaeology are the implications of settlement dispersal suggested by these language relationships.

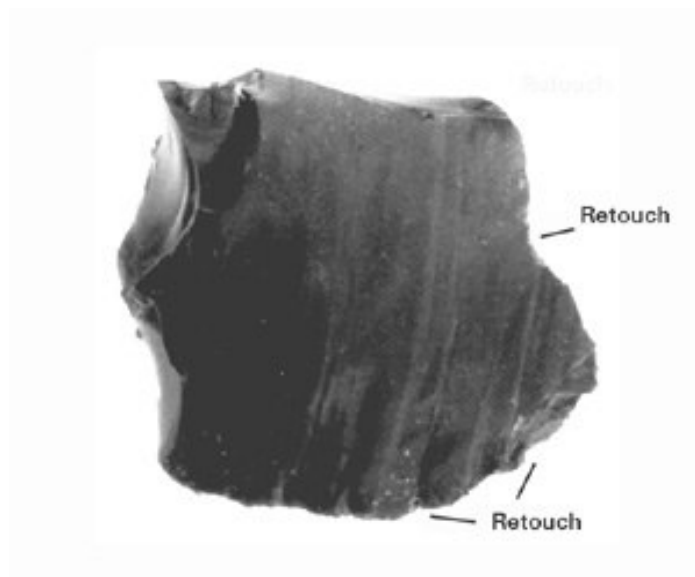
Reference List: This includes basic materials covering the Pacific in general.

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- Burley, D. V. and W. R. Dickinson 2001. Origin and significance of a founding settlement in Polynesia. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, U. S. A. 98:11829-11831.
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Early Rapa Nui (Easter Island) Stone Tool. An obsidian scraper shows use-retouch on sharp edges.

Major Journals for the Pacific Region:

AO Archaeology in Oceania (formerly APAO); ANZ Archaeology in New Zealand (formerly NZAAN); AP Asian Perspectives; APAO Archaeology and Physical Anthropology in Oceania; BIPPA Bulletin of the Indo-Pacific Prehistory Association; JICA Journal of Island and Coastal Archaeology; JPH Journal of Pacific History; JPS Journal of the Polynesian Society; JRSNZ Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand; JSO Journal de la Société des Océanistes; MCO Man and Culture in Oceania; MI Micronesica; NZAAN New Zealand Archaeological Assn. Newsletter; NZJA New Zealand Journal of Archaeology; PAR Bishop Museum, Honolulu: Pacific Anthropological Records (no longer pub.); PPS Proceedings Prehistoric Society; RNJ Rapa Nui Journal; Shima; WA World Archaeology