

Fall 2023

HUMA 2621 Culture and Environment

Course Instructor: Ma Jianxiong

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Time & Venue: Room 2306 (Life 17-18); Tuesday, 12:00PM-1:50PM;

Tutorial: Room 2306 (Lift 17-18), Tuesday, 2:00PM-2:50PM;

Office Hours: Wednesday, 3:00PM-6:00PM;

Office: Room 3342

TA: KAN Yue Ming

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Course Objectives

This course aims to study the impacts of cultural mechanisms on the management of resources, population size and health practices in different cultural settings. In addition to examining the relationship between "culture" and the "environment," we shall survey the complex adaptive systems integrating technologies, social organization and ideology, and understand how these institutions shape the environment and cultures for different people in the world.

Intended Learning Outcomes

On completion of this course, students should be able to

1. Comprehend interactions between environmental and cultural settings in our daily life;
2. Develop an anthropological understanding of socio-cultural institutions and their environment in human societies;
3. Develop environmental awareness in our daily life.

Teaching Approach

In this course, we shall emphasize the cultural and ecological strategies of adaption developed by different societies in various environmental settings. In tutorials, we will examine various case studies. Students' participation in lectures and tutorials are emphasized to accelerate their intellectual development.

Assessment

Students are expected to attend all lectures, tutorials and exams. Continual assessment counts for 50% of the marks. Of this 50%, 20% is based on assessments of two quizzes while the remaining 30% comes from tutorial presentations (20%) and participation (10%). The final exam counts for 50%.

Textbook and Main References

Erik Mueggler. 2011. *The Paper Road: Archive and Experience in the Botanical Exploration of West China and Tibet*. University of California Press.

Course content and teaching components:

September 5. Week 1. Introduction

Reading:

Bates, Daniel G. and Fred Plog. 1991. *Human Adaptive Strategies*. Chapter 1. Pp. 2-32.

No tutorial this week (In Add/Drop period).

September 12. Week 2. Concepts in the Study of Human Adaptive Strategies

Reading:

Scott, James C. 2009. "State Evasion, State Prevention: The Culture and Agriculture of Escape". In *The Art of Not Being Governed*. Chapter 6. Pp. 178-219.

No tutorial this week (In Add/Drop period).

September 19. Week 3. Environmental Determinism and Origins of Cultural Ecology

Reading:

Diamond, Jared. 1998. A natural experiment of history. In *Guns, Germs and Steel: The Fate of Human Societies*. London: Vintage. Chapter 2. Pp. 53-66.

Tutorial: September 19. Organization of presentation teams.

September 26. Week 4. Production and Consumption in Societies of Different Types

Reading:

Bodley, John H. *Anthropology and Contemporary Human Problems*. Chapter 3. Pp.89-120.

Tutorial: September 26. Presentation for Eric Mueggler, *The Paper Road*, Introduction, Chapter 1-2, Pp. 1-86.

October 3. Week 5. Hunting and Gathering (the Bushmen)

Reading:

Lee, Richard B., 1969, "Kung Bushman Subsistence: An Input-Output Analysis". In Andrew P. Vayda Ed., *Environment and Cultural Behavior*. New York: The Natural History Press. Pp. 47-76.

Tutorial: October 3. Presentation for Eric Mueggler, *The Paper Road*, Chapter 3-4, Pp. 87-146.

October 10. Week 6. Horticulture (The Lahu)

Reading:

Du, Shanshan. 2002. "'Husband and wife do it together': Unifying Gender in Labor", in *"Chopsticks Only Work in Paris": Gender Unity and Gender Equality among the Lahu of Southwest China*. New York: Columbia University Press. Pp. 79-106.

Tutorial: October 10. Presentation for Eric Mueggler, *The Paper Road*, Chapter 5-6, Pp. 147-210.

October 17. Week 7. Maritime and Tropical Foragers (Fishman communities);

Quiz A.

Reading:

Weiner, Annette B. 1988. *The Trobrianders of Papua New Guinea*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. Pp1-31 & Pp. 139-167.

Tutorial: October 17. Presentation for Eric Mueggler, *The Paper Road*, Chapter 7-9, Pp. 211-290.

October 24. Week 8. Pastoralism (The Mongol)

Reading: Morris Rossabi, 2012. "Life on the steppes" & "Chinggis Khan emerges", in *The Mongols: A very short introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. Pp. 1-59.

Tutorial: October 24. Scott, James C. 2009. "State Evasion, State Prevention: The Culture and Agriculture of Escape". In *The Art of Not Being Governed*. Chapter 6. Pp. 178-219.

October 31. Week 9. Labor Intensive Agriculture (The Pearl River Delta)

Reading:

Ruddle, Kenneth and Zhong, Gongfu. 1988. "Historical Development of the [Dike-pond] System", in *Integrated Agriculture-aquaculture in South China*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1. Pp.14-28.

Tutorial: October 31. Film: *Children of the 7 Headed Snake*. New York: Filmmakers Library. 1999.

November 7. Week 10. Ritual and Magic (Chinese Fengshui); Quiz B.

Reading:

Bruun, Ole, 2008. "Chapter 3, *Feng Shui* in the context of Chinese popular religion." In *An Introduction to Feng Shui*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Pp. 49-83.

Tutorial: November 7. Weiner, Annette B. 1988. *The Trobrianders of Papua New Guinea*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston. Pp1-31 & Pp. 139-167.

November 14. Week 11. Mechanized, Capital-Intensive Agriculture

Reading:

Tsing, Anna. 2009. "Beyond economic and ecological standardization." In *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* (2009) 20: 247-368.

Tutorial: November 14. Morris Rossabi, 2012. "Life on the steppes" & "Chinggis Khan emerges", in *The Mongols: A very short introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. Pp. 1-59.

November 21. Week 12. Urban Ecology and Urban Sustainability

Readings:

F. Moran, Emilio. 2008. *Human Adaptability: An Introduction to Ecological Anthropology*. “The history of Cities” & “The Ecology of Cities”, Pp. 307-330.

Tutorial: November 21. Tsing, Anna. 2009. “Beyond economic and ecological standardization.” In *The Australian Journal of Anthropology* (2009) 20: 247-368.

November 28. Week 13. Conclusion

Readings: Boyce, James K. 2007. “Inequality and Environmental Protection”, in Jean-Marie Baland, Pranab Bardhan, and Samuel Bowles (Eds.) *Inequality, Cooperation, and Environmental Sustainability*, New York: Princeton University Press, Pp. 314-348.

Tutorial: November 28. Final Reviewing