

ANT 101: Introduction to Sociocultural Anthropology

Fall 2005, M,W,F 9:30 — 10:20, Chambers 1027

Prof. Eriberto P. Lozada Jr.

Office: Chambers B12

Telephone: 704-894-2035

Office Hours: M, W, F 10:30 – 11:30 am

T, Th 10:00 – 11:15 am or by appointment

Email: erlozada@davidson.edu

Web: <http://www.davidson.edu/personal/erlozada>

Lecture Notes, 30 November 2005

Returns: the impact of American migration on Tonga

Wider impact?

- New forms of economy: The development of economies based on remittances from migrants. Remittances are not only the lifeblood of small island nations. By the 1990s they had become the world's second largest trade item, surpassed only by oil.
- New forms of family: transnational family patterns, where relatives are scattered in different countries. ... Between 1980 and 1990 alone, overseas phone calls from the US quintupled.
- New cultural traditions: For the American-born Tongans, great expenditures of wealth at Tongan events signal opulent display, ugly competitiveness, and social climbing.
- New Identities: the rising importance of ethnicity; "Tongan power T-shirts as an "American phenomenon related to living in a large, multiethnic environment. (pg. 178)

On Tonga?

- remittances and increased migration have led to the growth of a middle class in Tonga, democraticization and weakening of Tongan aristocratic hold on politics in Tonga; Tongans who return are more educated and more cosmopolitan, bringing new ideas
- while remittances have improved the Tongan cash economy, it has led to greater stratification: example of houses in Tonga when Small returned in 1994 – bigger houses, but also shabbier houses; no more tapa-making houses
- individual prosperity at the cost of "public" prosperity – stratification caused by globalization, some suggest, have led to instabilities that can cause the global system to collapse

Fonu's story: (pg. 144-146)

Now I've been to America and my thinking is open [As he says the word "open," he presses his wrists together and makes a triangle outward with his hands.] And Now I come back. [He makes an inverted V with his hands, pushing his fingertips together and indicating his sense of a narrowing horizon.] I don't know which way to go. I don't know which way to go for my family.

Here I work hard and I go to the bush and I sell my produce. But I want my wife to have things and I think about my children in the future.... In America, you make lots of money. In Tonga, there's the family, there's help. If you don't have gasoline, you go next door and borrow money for gasoline. If you don't have food, you come to people and they give it to you. But it's not that way in America. Most of my family is here in Tonga. I don't know what to do.

(see also example of “Japanese pumpkin event.”)

- staying Tongan: “means maintaining one’s identity as a Tongan, but more important, it also means thinking and behaving in a Tongan manner – what Tongans call the “Tongan way” (pg. 171)
- paradox of globalization: as globalization has penetrated into local societies, there appears to be a sense of homogenization – more people are consuming the same things, hearing the same music, drinking the same Coke; but there is also an increase in difference, heterogeneity – identities and traditions are kept in different ways
- example of Tongan T-shirt power – read from pg. 178 and discuss. “being Tongan in the United States is different from being Tongan in Tonga because Tonganness exists there in a different context” – idea of “authenticity”