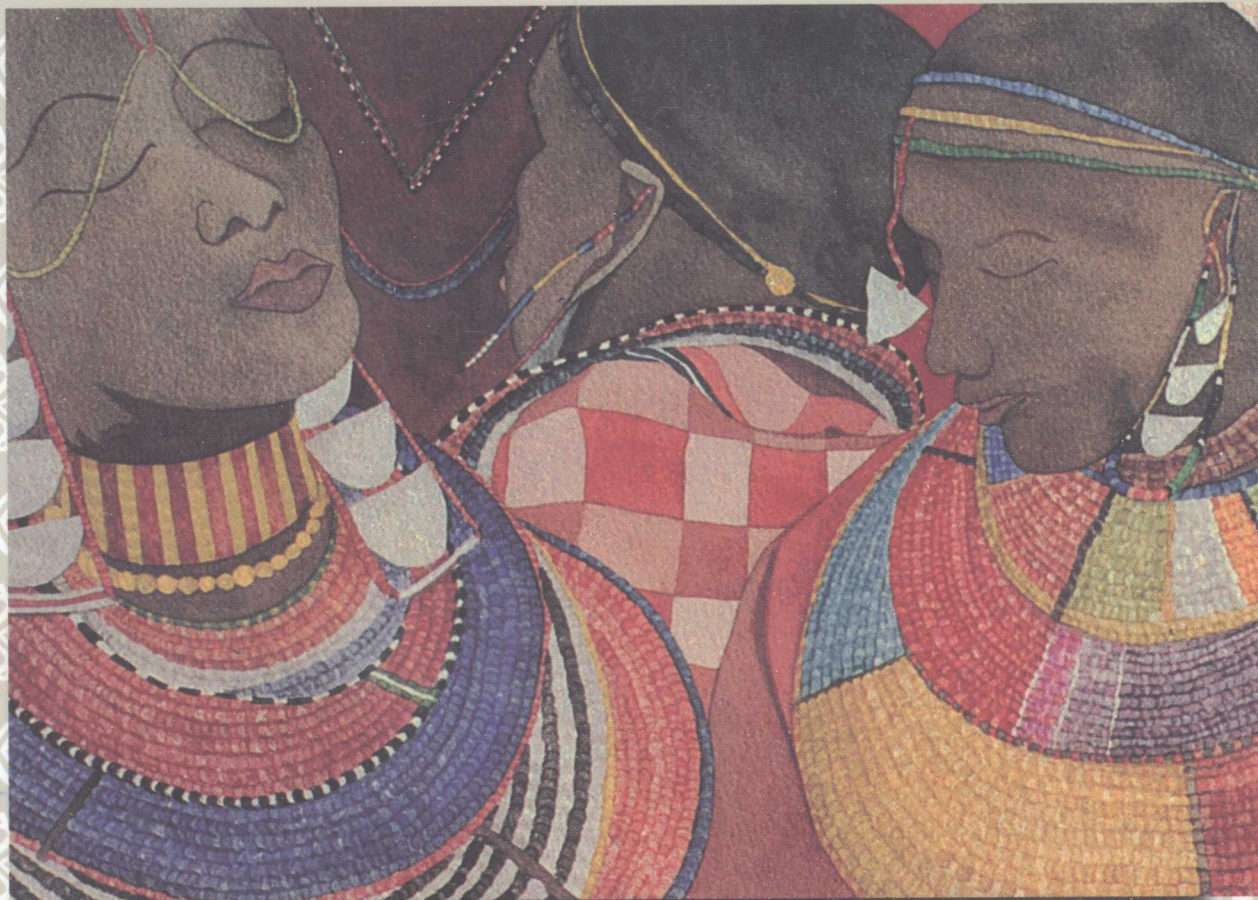


PEOPLES OF THE PAST AND PRESENT

READINGS IN ANTHROPOLOGY



Jean-Luc Chodkiewicz

PEOPLES OF THE PAST AND PRESENT
READINGS IN ANTHROPOLOGY

Jean-Luc Chodkiewicz
University of Manitoba

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Preface

This volume is intended to accompany your textbook in introductory anthropology, not to compete with its full and systematic coverage. The articles it contains, although they are not all written by anthropologists, illustrate many of the issues and viewpoints commonly discussed in the latest editions of the various available textbooks. The topical arrangement of the readings in this collection is also similar to that of most current textbooks for introductory courses, reflecting the “four-square” division of the field (biological anthropology, archaeology, cultural anthropology, and linguistic anthropology) so often honored in the breach in the research and practice of many modern anthropologists. To give just one example, the fast-developing field of applied anthropology would deserve some portion of that “square.” The majority of the articles reproduced here were chosen from hundreds of books, journals, and magazine articles that have appeared over the last four decades. Older articles appear alongside original contributions published here for the first time. One function of the older articles is to dispel the illusion that only the latest is the best, or that only the anthropological research of this decade is useful and relevant to our basic understanding of human societies and cultures.

Whereas well-established facts and theories are the main fare of a textbook, a reader such as this

one attempts to illustrate, comment, and speculate. To avoid creating an eclectic and disjointed collection of unrelated texts, I have combined articles unified by several themes, and provided introductory comments that highlight the links among the selections. So many choices had to be made among equally worthy anthropological contributions that, like any selection, this one does not contain every item of importance, but reflects, to an extent, its editor’s preferences and perspectives. I wanted to present anthropology as a science in the making, and to emphasize the modern understanding and practice of “holism,” which is not the so-called four-fields approach but a synthetic approach that distinguishes anthropology from all other social sciences. Although not all modern anthropologists find this approach equally useful and relevant, it has the advantage of promoting a logical and coherent framework for an initiation into the field of anthropology.

Anthropology is, first of all, a unique way of looking at the world, and the objective of an introductory course should be to illustrate and explain that world view. Anthropology does not have a monopoly on the study of humankind and its place in nature, but it has original contributions to make to that understanding. A leading concern in the selection of the articles in this reader was to introduce and emphasize problems

of method, by providing illustrations of “sciencing,” and not just scientific results. This emphasis on seeking knowledge rather than revealing accepted truths is intended to help students understand that there is much yet to be done: the purpose of their training is to enable them to dispel the confusions and fill the gaps of our present knowledge. No attempt was made to be comprehensive and to cover *all* the important points; that is the job of textbooks. Some of the more humanist, or postmodern, perspectives, for example, are underrepresented in this collection. Nevertheless, the present collection represents many of the anthropological perspectives embraced by modern leaders in the field. Other anthropologists, other ideas and theoretical positions have been or could be featured in other readers. As it is, *Peoples of the Past and Present* reflects different facets of modern anthropological research dedicated to making anthropology into the science that it could be, and that many anthropologists claim it is already becoming.

The articles chosen, as well as the comments that introduce the various sections, are not intended to be comprehensive or to settle issues, but to raise interest in them. Although they do not seek controversy for its own sake, they are often argumentative, intended to initiate a debate. The objective was to provide interesting illustrations of anthropological discoveries and points of view, in order to show that a scientific anthropology is an attractive and viable possibility.

Advances in other sciences — notably in biology, physics, and chemistry, but also in many of the new technologies that have been made available to us — help us to settle old issues, prompt us to raise new questions, and force us to reconsider cherished assumptions. Beginning students are often puzzled or discouraged by the argumentative self-analysis characteristic of the discipline, and by the “learning by debunking” illustrated by Stephen Jay Gould in Chapter 9. You may feel that, if the specialists cannot agree, then anything goes — you can believe whom you want. On the contrary, a point illustrated in many of the following selections is that we should *never* believe scientists. Science is not a matter of belief, but a self-correcting effort to develop workable explanations. We can use the discoveries of scientists only with caution, always aware that their interpretations are tentative and readily modified. Indeed, at any moment, it might be too late even to agree with them, because newer discoveries may have come along

to complement or replace the previous, hard-won knowledge. To some, this uncertainty is overwhelming and discouraging. To many others, including the present writer, it illustrates the excitement of “sciencing,” an excitement that I hope you will come to share as you read this volume.

Five hundred years ago, Columbus made a fateful landing in the Caribbean, initiating the history of contact and interaction between the Old and the New World. This meeting of Indian bowmen with cavalry and guns is not properly described as a “culture contact”: it was the start of a brutal conquest, assisted by pestilence and genocide. It is timely, so recently after the Quincentennial celebrations of this event, to reflect on the first “Americans” and their independent achievements: this is why many articles on the subject have been included in this reader.

Other articles in the collection are linked by their discussion of some aspect of reciprocity — ecological, economic, or political — which is present and important in all human societies. The discussion of social stratification in several of the articles and the focus on linguistic as opposed to alternative, nonlinguistic modes of communication in the second part of the book also distinguish *Peoples of the Past and Present* from other readers.

Acknowledgments

It is a pleasure to acknowledge my gratitude to the many people who helped me prepare this volume. First, I wish to thank the authors who allowed me to use their work, and their publishers. My students over many years have made insightful comments and raised important questions, which I have attempted to address in this book. I hope that it answers some of their questions, and raises challenging new ones. Anonymous reviewers have done an excellent job; their suggestions and criticisms guided much of my effort. I am particularly grateful to Dr. Gary Crawford of the University of Toronto, whose assistance in the late stages of preparation of the manuscript proved invaluable. Thanks also go to my colleagues at the University of Manitoba, especially Louis Allaire, Haskel Greenfield, Ellen Judd, Gregory Monks, and Hymie Rubenstein, who have read portions of the manuscript and provided many insightful and useful comments. I wish I could also hold them responsible for any mistake or inaccuracy remaining in the text, but I

assume complete responsibility for the final manuscript. Finally, I am very grateful to my wife, Ruth Chodkiewicz, whose help and advice contributed so much to bringing this project to its conclusion.

Jean-Luc Chodkiewicz
University of Manitoba

A Note from the Publisher

Thank you for selecting *Peoples of the Past and Present: Readings in Anthropology*, by Jean-Luc Chodkiewicz. The author and publisher have

devoted considerable time to the careful development of this book. We appreciate your recognition of this effort and accomplishment.

We want to hear what you think about *Peoples of the Past and Present: Readings in Anthropology*. Please take a few minutes to fill out the stamped reader reply card at the back of the book. Your comments and suggestions will be valuable to us as we prepare new editions and other books.

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Biological Anthropology

Introduction / 8

1 Voyage of the Overloaded Ark / 14

JARED DIAMOND

From *Discover Magazine*, June 1985

Diamond describes so-called creation science as a disguise for the religious beliefs of a small minority. The arguments presented by creationist scholars over the last three centuries are often inconsistent with scientific methodology, and contradict the evidence offered by fossil discoveries and the distribution of species on earth. Most church leaders also oppose creationist science as theologically suspect.

2 The Relevant Ape / 21

BIRUTÉ M.F. GALDIKAS

From *Equinox*, May/June 1984

The world's foremost specialist on orangutans reflects on her research on these arboreal primates in Borneo since 1971. Solitary

dwellers of the tropical rain forests, they are threatened by natives, who kill them for food or keep them as pets, and by loggers, who are destroying their habitat at a rapid rate. Galdikas has discovered that orangutans are much more numerous than scientists had previously believed, and that they spend a great deal of time on the ground, have very long intervals between births, and have a far more complex social life than had been assumed. Recent paleontological and anthropological finds suggest that orangutans are very relevant indeed to understanding human evolution.

3 Lucy and the First Family / 28

DONALD C. JOHANSON and MAITLAND A. EDEY

From *Lucy: The Beginning of Humankind*, 1981

The discovery in Ethiopia of large portions of the skeleton of an individual representing a new variety of *Australopithecus* proved that australopithecines were bipedal. The later find of a *group* of skeletons, which the authors named the "First Family," was even more important, because of the mix of sexes and ages that was represented in it. These findings have important implications for further refinement of our knowledge of human evolution.

4 **Scavenger Hunt / 34**

PAT SHIPMAN

From *Natural History*, April 1984

A new technique using the electron scanning microscope shows that our ancestors used stone tools to process the carcasses of many animals as early as two million years ago. The evidence from cut marks and tooth wear, combined with the implications of bipedalism, suggests that our early ancestors were scavengers rather than hunters.

5 **A Novel Notion of Neanderthal / 39**

STEPHEN JAY GOULD

From *Natural History*, June 1988

Popular novels and scientists together have perpetuated the mistaken notion of a temporal succession of Neanderthal by Cro-Magnon. This scenario has been upset by claims that fully modern human skeletal remains recently found in Israel date to 90,000 years before the present. The author reports on the use of thermoluminescence dating, paleontology, and the analysis of mitochondrial DNA to show that evolution resulted in the branching off of Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon from a common ancestor, as descendants who differed from each other but coexisted for a time.

6 **The Archeology of Modern Human Origins / 45**

RICHARD G. KLEIN

From *Evolutionary Anthropology*, Vol. 1, 1992

Did the different varieties of modern *Homo sapiens sapiens* result from the hybridization of local pre-*sapiens* populations in various regions of the world, or did an undifferentiated stock of modern humans evolve in Africa between 280,000 and 140,000 years ago, then spread and diversify throughout the world? Klein finds evidence supporting the latter explanation in the archaeological record.

7 **The Naked Ape: An Idea We Could Live Without / 55**

DAVID PILBEAM

From *Discovery*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 1972

Almost all behavior in monkeys and apes involves a mixture of the learned and the innate. Many recent books have suggested that humans are genetically programmed to be

aggressive and territorial, and that such patterns of behavior were inherited from killer apes. These simplistic theories slander the apes; moreover, there is considerable anthropological evidence to contradict them.

8 **Racial Odyssey / 61**

BOYCE RENSBERGER

From *Science Digest*, January/February 1981

The biological diversity of human populations is much greater than implied by simplistic racial classifications. There are not and have never been "pure races." The basis of human biological variability is genetic, and the evolutionary success of the human species is attributable to its genetic variability. The distribution of many genetic traits among human populations does not respect racial boundaries: it can be explained as the result of natural and cultural selection.

9 **Fallacies of Biological Determinism / 68**

STEPHEN JAY GOULD

From *The Mismeasure of Man*, 1981

The author asserts that it is only through the debunking of existing theories in the light of new evidence that scientific knowledge is able to progress. Many of the theories of biological determinists have been proved fallacious: they tend to overemphasize the genetic predetermination of human behavior, while ignoring cultural diversity. In particular, sociobiologists have claimed that certain genes program humans for specific behaviors, but this theory posits the genetic basis of human behavior at the wrong level. Flexibility and learning ability are the traits that have been naturally selected in humans.

10 **No Bone Unturned / 74**

PATRICK HUYGHE

From *Discover Magazine*, December 1988

Biological anthropologist Clyde Snow has achieved spectacular results in his forensic research. His skillful use of the traditional techniques of archaeology, paleontology, and modern genetics in making identifications as diverse as those of airline disaster victims and victims of the mass "disappearances" in Argentina has illustrated both the validity and the practical applicability of these techniques.

11 Did Solder Kill Franklin's Men? / 80

WALTER KOWAL, OWEN B. BEATTIE,
HALFDAN BAADSGAARD, and PETER
M. KRAHN

From *Nature*, Vol. 343, 25 January 1990

Researchers led by Owen Beattie demonstrate that an important factor contributing to the demise of the Franklin expedition (1845–48) in search of the Northwest Passage was lead poisoning from the solder in the cans that contained their food.

PART TWO Archaeology

Introduction / 84

12 Who Peopled the Planet? / 94

JOANN C. GUTIN

From *Discover Magazine*, November 1992

An anthropologist reviews briefly the latest developments in the saga of the "African Eve" hypothesis, and the continuing debate between proponents of the replacement model and supporters of the multiregional model of the evolution of modern humans. Some of the puzzles concerning the date when humans first arrived in America have also been made more complex by new data and analysis.

13 The Functions of Paleolithic Flint Tools / 99

LAWRENCE H. KEELEY

From *Scientific American*, Vol. 237, November 1977

The author reports on the results of his research in combining experimental archaeology with the use of high-power microscopes to determine how Paleolithic stone tools were used and the kinds of materials (wood, meat, hides) on which they were used. His findings advance archaeology toward its goal of describing the life styles of early human populations.

14 Age and the Female Form / 107

PAUL G. BAHN

From *Nature*, Vol. 342, 23 November 1989

The "Dancing Venus of Galgenberg" and several ivory carvings of people and animals discovered in Austria in 1988 are dated at approximately 30,000 years and demonstrate a

degree of technological skill that could only have resulted from a long tradition of carving. Already known to be at least 5000 years older than the famous Venus figurines attributed to the Gravettian period, they therefore move back considerably estimates of the emergence of the "first" human art. They also reveal an enduring aesthetic interest in the female form.

15 Stone Age Psychedelia / 109

ROGER LEWIN

From *New Scientist*, Vol. 130, 8 June 1991

Lewin examines several theories that interpret Paleolithic cave paintings as depicting hunting magic and containing sexual symbolism. He suggests a new interpretation inspired by the observations of the shamanistic rituals of the !Kung San by South African archaeologist David Lewis-Williams. The similarities between certain patterns of Paleolithic art and the patterns characteristic of the sensory hallucinations associated with trances suggest a provocative new explanation.

16 The Worst Mistake in the History of the Human Race / 114

JARED DIAMOND

From *Discover Magazine*, May 1987

Was the invention of agriculture a wonderful advance for humankind, from hard-working scavenger to producer of food and creator of leisure time? Diamond dispels this myth by showing that contemporary hunter-gatherers have better health and nutrition and devote fewer hours to work than their agriculturalist neighbors. Moreover, archaeology and paleopathology reveal that health standards and stature diminished markedly following the adoption of agriculture. This trend is attributable to the spread and intensification of agriculture, which encouraged both overpopulation and inequality. Today, agriculture is still bad for the health of millions of starving peasants.

17 The Americas: The Case against an Ice-Age Human Population / 118

ROGER C. OWEN

From *The Origins of Modern Humans: A World Survey of Fossil Evidence*, 1984

Like many other anthropologists, Owen thought that there was considerable evidence of a pre-Clovis occupation of the Americas, but

on reviewing that evidence, he finds it unsatisfactory. Several recently discovered dating techniques have enabled researchers to correct faulty estimates and other errors that led to claims of pre-Clovis dates (older than 12,000 years) for some human remains. Owen shows that several dozen archaeological sites provide inconclusive evidence or can be proved to be much more recent than their discoverers had claimed.

18 Dating the First American / 129

PAUL G. BAHN

From *New Scientist*, 20 July 1991

Since 1984, new evidence has fueled the debate about the peopling of the New World. Bahn presents the discoveries of Brazilian archaeologist Niède Guidon, who has found rock art, stone tools, and charcoal samples at Pedra Furada, in Brazil, that date to earlier than 30,000 years ago. In Chile, at the Monte Verde site, Tom Dillehay has found many artifacts, including a stone flake and a core which he claims to be 33,000 years old. Richard MacNeish is also claiming pre-Clovis dates for his latest research site in New Mexico.

19 The Lost Civilization of the Maya / 133

T. PATRICK CULBERT

From *The Lost Civilization: The Story of the Classic Maya*, 1974

A review of previous explanations that attributed the collapse of the Maya civilization to a single major cause, be it overpopulation, warfare, or the breakdown of the long-distance trading system, finds them all wanting. Culbert uses a systems approach to reveal the interacting stresses that increased the frequency and severity of agricultural and political emergencies, until disaster finally struck. He concludes with the suggestion that the failure of the Maya should be a warning to modern civilizations.

20 Rethinking the Quincentennial: Consequences for Past and Present / 138

ALISON WYLIE

From *American Antiquity*, Vol. 57, No. 4, 1992

One important consequence of the conquest of the Americas, started in 1492, is that the

archaeologists reconstructing the history of the Amerindians are not Amerindians, but members of the dominant group. Many archaeological interpretations of past Amerindian cultures betray the political nature of archaeological practice and attest to the need for archaeologists to assume responsibility for the consequences of their work and findings.

21 Pixel Archeology / 141

NEIL McALEER

From *Discover Magazine*, August 1988

Ground-penetrating radar and many remote sensing devices mounted on satellites, planes, and even trucks have made possible the discovery of many important archaeological sites, from biblical sites to previously unknown settlements in the Sahara Desert, the Peruvian Andes, and the mountains of Costa Rica. These new techniques will revolutionize not only archaeological knowledge, but also the ways in which archaeological research is performed.

22 Gender, Politics, and American Archaeology / 145

JULIAN THOMAS

From *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 8, No. 3, June 1992

This review of two recent books suggests that a feminist critique of archaeology reveals it to be a male-dominated profession that has produced conclusions weakened by unverified assumptions about the respective roles of men and women in past societies. We can improve our reconstructions and our understanding of past societies by rejecting processual and ecological approaches, which emphasize the totality of the group and mask the asymmetrical social relations and processes that prevailed within it.

23 Who Owns the Past? / 148

DAVID HURST THOMAS

From *Natural History*, August 1990

This short essay analyzes some of the ethical, cultural, and political implications of the storage and exhibition of cultural artifacts from "have-not" countries in the museums of rich Western countries. The author explains why the demand for universal repatriation must be roundly rejected, and suggests several alternative ways of solving the problem.

PART THREE

Linguistic Anthropology*Introduction / 154***24****Monkey Business / 158**

MARTIN GARDNER

From *The New York Review of Books*, March 1980

Chimpanzees such as Washoe, Sarah, and Lana, and gorillas such as Koko have been taught to communicate with humans using sign language, plastic chips, and computers. Do they have linguistic abilities? A careful scrutiny of their achievements so far is not optimistic: many of their messages are random gibberish, and most are just imitations of parts of immediately preceding messages delivered by their trainers. It has been shown that these primates' "success" at learning language was an artificial result of the unconsciously biased editing of the films shown to scientists and to the public. Many researchers from Charles Darwin to Noam Chomsky have claimed that human language requires a human brain.

25**Hard Words / 164**

PHILIP E. ROSS

From *Scientific American*, April 1991

Comparative linguistics attempts to reconstruct the genealogy of the languages of the world, but specialists disagree as to how far back it can be traced. Their differing conclusions are supported by different methodologies, which Ross describes here briefly. The debate also illustrates the importance of language as a characteristic defining humanity, and contributes to advancing our knowledge of a past that is difficult to recover.

26**Colorful Languages / 176**

ROBBINS BURLING

From *Man's Many Voices: Language in Its Cultural Context*, 1970

All languages share common features in the assignment of color terms, and even the differences among them are predictable. In cross-cultural experiments, Brent Berlin and Paul Kay discovered that speakers of various different languages all placed the foci of their color labels at very nearly the same spots of the color spectrum. All people with normal vision are physiologically capable of discriminating

the same colors. In languages with the same number of basic color terms, the foci are in the same places. The common features of all color terminologies suggest that the color spectrum does not form a continuum, but is rather divided by human perception into discrete sections waiting for a label.

27**Male and Female Language / 179**

MARY RITCHIE KEY

From *Male/Female Language*, 1975

Differences in the linguistic behavior of men and women are as universal as sex roles, but linguistic analyses of them have been conducted for fewer than a hundred languages. The author illustrates some of the stereotypes and prejudices that have been perpetuated by certain linguists and anthropologists. Linguistic differences cannot be attributed to innate sexual differences. Examples from several Amerindian languages show that the gender distinctions of English speakers are too limiting to allow for proper translation.

28**Armed Situation Impacts Severely, Linguistics-wise: War Is Hell on Plain Speaking / 185**

SALLY MACDONALD

From *The Seattle Times*, 23 November 1991

There are no wars, only "armed situations"; there are no conquests, only "pacifications"; and bombs don't kill, they simply "service the target." This short article illustrates how language can be used to distort and even to prevent communication.

PART FOUR

Cultural Anthropology*Introduction / 188***29****One Hundred Per Cent American / 191**

RALPH LINTON

From *The Study of Man*, 1936

This account of a morning in the life of a staunch American nationalist, by anthropologist Ralph Linton, shows how cultural diffusion makes a mockery of prejudices against "foreign" influence. The inventions of many different peoples, living at different times,

have contributed to the formation of that heterogeneous blend that any society calls its "culture."

30 **Fieldwork among the Yuquí / 193**

ALLYN MACLEAN STEARMAN

From *Yuquí: Forest Nomads in a Changing World*, 1989

Research leads anthropologists to live in strange places where they can never assume that they will be welcome. A successful adjustment requires skills and psychological traits that no academic program can provide. A.M. Stearman lived with the Yuquí, a small group of nomadic foragers of Bolivia. Their distrust and resentment of strangers are well justified by the activities of land-grabbers, insensitive or hostile governments, and ethnocentric missionaries. This abstract describes some of the material, social, and psychological problems that the author had to overcome at the start of her field research.

31 **Cultural Truth and Ethnographic Consequences / 199**

MICHAEL LEVIN

From *Culture*, Vol 11, No. 1-2, 1991

What anthropologists write about the people they study affects not only the latter's self-perception, but also the way others see them. Caught between their own culture and that of the people they study, anthropologists are becoming increasingly aware of their responsibility to their informants. With the aid of analogies to the language of baseball umpires, Levin illustrates the scientific alternatives in ethnographic description, and evaluates them from the perspective of the consequences of labeling in print the people who trust anthropologists not to harm them.

32 **Oral Tradition and Material Culture: Multiplying Meanings of "Words" and "Things" / 205**

JULIE CRUIKSHANK

From *Anthropology Today*, Vol. 8, No. 3, June 1992

The cultural achievements of Africans or Amerindians have become "things" to be stored and exhibited in our museums; their myths and other oral literature have been reduced to documents in libraries. The taking of these "words" and "things" out of their own

context may represent the ultimate form of colonialism. Following in the footsteps of those who took the land away from its native owners, anthropologists and museums seem to rob the defeated peoples of their culture and history. Cruikshank describes some of the recent innovations through which museums attempt to redress these mistakes.

SECTION ONE

The Material Basis of Social Life

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33 **Murders in Eden / 218**

MARVIN HARRIS

From *Cannibals and Kings: The Origins of Cultures*, 1977

Hunter-gatherers, in the present as in the past, work less, eat better, and enjoy better health and more leisure than do agriculturalists. It was not as the result of great new discoveries that people became agriculturalists, but as an unhappy consequence of overpopulation. How had the populations of the earlier hunters and gatherers been controlled? Natural causes are not sufficient to explain their remarkably low growth rates. For example, most epidemic diseases could not have spread effectively among them because of their low population densities. After considering all the techniques of population control that would have been available to our ancestors, Harris suggests that infanticide must have played a major role in maintaining close to zero population growth over the millennia.

34 **Eating Christmas in the Kalahari / 224**

RICHARD BORSHAY LEE

From *Natural History*, December 1969

Reciprocity is one of the fundamental institutions of such hunters and gatherers as the !Kung of the Kalahari desert. The author shows in this amusing tale how givers are prevented from becoming proud: an outstanding gift is greeted not with admiration but with ridicule. The object is to enforce humility upon the provider, who might after all become a beggar any day, and should not be allowed to threaten the egalitarian order of the society.

35 When the Turtle Collapses, the World Ends / 229

BERNARD NIETSCHMANN

From *Natural History*, June 1974

The Miskito Indians on the coast of Nicaragua are very dependent on green turtles. These reptiles used to provide the Miskito with the bulk of the proteins in their diet, but today they are exploited for sale on the open market. The Miskito were victims of several boom-and-bust economic cycles. Whenever one of their resources became a market commodity, it became overexploited, leaving the Miskito poorer than they had been before. The turtle hunters have abandoned their harpoons for nets that allow them to capture excessive numbers of turtles for export. The commercialization of what used to be a subsistence resource has also disrupted the social obligations of reciprocity that had previously ordered the society, leaving most people with an inferior diet and causing the breakdown of village cooperation. A new phase of economic bust has started.

SECTION TWO

Kinship

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36 Dealing with Incest in a Caribbean Village / 240

HYMIE RUBENSTEIN

Original essay, 1992

All societies have incest taboos, which many anthropologists have described or attempted to explain. Few, however, have dealt with the *consequences* of breaking the taboo, as this essay does. In Leeward Village, on the island of St. Vincent, the occasional breaches of the taboo are punished by mock public trials and executions. The trials, which last up to two months, and the public executions of the culprits in effigy allow the villagers to express their outrage, while maintaining a complex web of social relations and keeping the official justice system out of their private affairs.

37 When Brothers Share a Wife / 245

MELVYN C. GOLDSTEIN

From *Natural History*, March 1987

Fraternal polyandry is an ideal form of marriage and family among certain Tibetan social strata. The author reports that neither men nor women find the sexual sharing unusual or repulsive, and that no attempt is made to link children specifically to the brother who is their biological father. This form of marriage helps to avoid the fragmentation of family and scarce land. Previous explanations, such as the claim that polyandry is a consequence of female infanticide in Tibetan society, are disproved. Large numbers of spinsters contribute to a lowering of population growth.

38 What Makes Warú Run? / 250

ROBERT F. MURPHY

From *The Kroeber Anthropological Society Papers*, No. 24, Spring 1961

The 1200 Mundurucú Indians of Brazil are organized into patrilineal clans, but men normally reside in their wife's village. Warú was the son of a village chief, but was raised by a non-Indian trader before returning to be the chief of a nearby village. Lost between two worlds, Warú was neither Mundurucú nor Brazilian. He attempted to bolster his prestige by practicing polygyny, like the chiefs of times past. Because his two wives resided in two different villages, he was constantly running from one to the other; in the meantime, one set of villagers plotted against his life, while the other cuckolded him merrily. Warú was perceived as a deviant, and the Mundurucú resorted to plans of murder, on the one hand, and sex with his wife, on the other, as means of social control.

39 Domesticity and Politics / 255

MURIEL DIMEN-SCHEIN

From *The Anthropological Imagination*, 1977

Imagine a soap opera about the Yanomamö of Brazil or the Nuer of the Sudan. The domestic scene would still be the focus, but it would be embedded in larger, more permanent units composed of relatives by descent or marriage. Love is not an important prerequisite of marriage in these societies, since marriage is perceived not as the union of a bride and a groom but as an alliance of two family groups.

In spite of the isolation of nuclear families in North American societies, the wealthy and the poor still use extended kinship ties to their advantage.

SECTION THREE

Political Systems

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40

Mbuti Politics / 262

MAURICE GODELIER

From *Perspectives in Marxist Anthropology*, 1977

The Mbuti Pygmies are hunters and gatherers in the tropical forests of Zaire. They hunt collectively for gazelles and the occasional elephant. The author discusses the maintenance and reproduction of the social order in terms of three constraints: dispersion, cooperation, and fluidity. Bands do not have chiefs. Inequality does not exist, and the Mbuti make a systematic effort to avoid all kinds of violence between individuals and between bands. They use a buffoon to draw attention away from serious quarrels, and they abandon guilty individuals to be punished by the forest, which is revered as a god and a life-giver.

41

The Rise of a Big Man / 268

DOUGLAS L. OLIVER

From *A Salomon Island Society: Kinship and Leadership among the Siuai of Bougainville*, 1955

This brief sketch of the life and achievements of Sonji, a "Big Man" (*mumi*) from Bougainville, illustrates vividly the multiple aspects of egalitarian redistribution. Industrious, cunning, and friendless, Sonji gains respect through calculating, planning, and coaxing and manipulating others to work hard and raise pigs for his feasts. Even the most successful feast in memory is no excuse to rest: the next one will be bigger!

42

A Theory of the Origin of the State / 276

ROBERT L. CARNEIRO

From *Science*, August 1970

Carneiro defines the state and analyzes the flaws in previous explanations for its emergence, all of them rooted in voluntaristic theories. Only a coercive theory, implying the use of force, is supported by the evidence, but,

as Carneiro puts it, "while warfare may be a necessary condition for the rise of the state, it is not a sufficient one." Environmental circumscription is seen as another key condition: people who live in fertile valleys surrounded by mountains, seas, or deserts are prevented from escaping when they are defeated in war; they have no choice but to stay and accept political subordination to the victor. Examples from Peru and Amazonia show the effects of circumscription and other important factors contributing to state formation.

43

Cyclical Conquests / 284

JULIAN H. STEWARD and LOUIS C. FARON

From *Native Peoples of South America*, 1959

The state is both a provider of public services and a consumer of taxes. Political, religious, and military institutions demand increasing amounts of taxes, and when an economy can no longer support the increases, the state's only alternative is to conquer other states to garner their wealth, thus creating an empire, such as the Tiahuanaco empire of Peru. Overtaxing ultimately results in revolt, the destruction of the empire, and depopulation by starvation. Later, the survivors form villages, then chiefdoms, then states, then an empire, and a new cycle repeats the previous one.

44

The Political Economy of the Aztec and Inca States / 289

PEDRO CARRASCO

From *The Inca and Aztec States, 1400–1800*, 1982

The empires of the Incas in Peru and the Aztecs in Mexico were still thriving when the Spanish conquerors arrived and destroyed them. Carrasco emphasizes the similarities between these two economic and political systems. In both, the economy was politically directed. The Incas had unified their empire, but the Aztecs ruled a federation. In both, the rulers were economically powerful. Both empires comprised a multitude of ethnic groups and many local units, and were ruled by the emperor and his closest relatives.

45

Reciprocity on Skid Row / 295

CHRISTOPHER HAUCH

Original essay, 1992

Poverty is not a state of mind or the result of laziness. Hauch's analysis of Winnipeg's skid