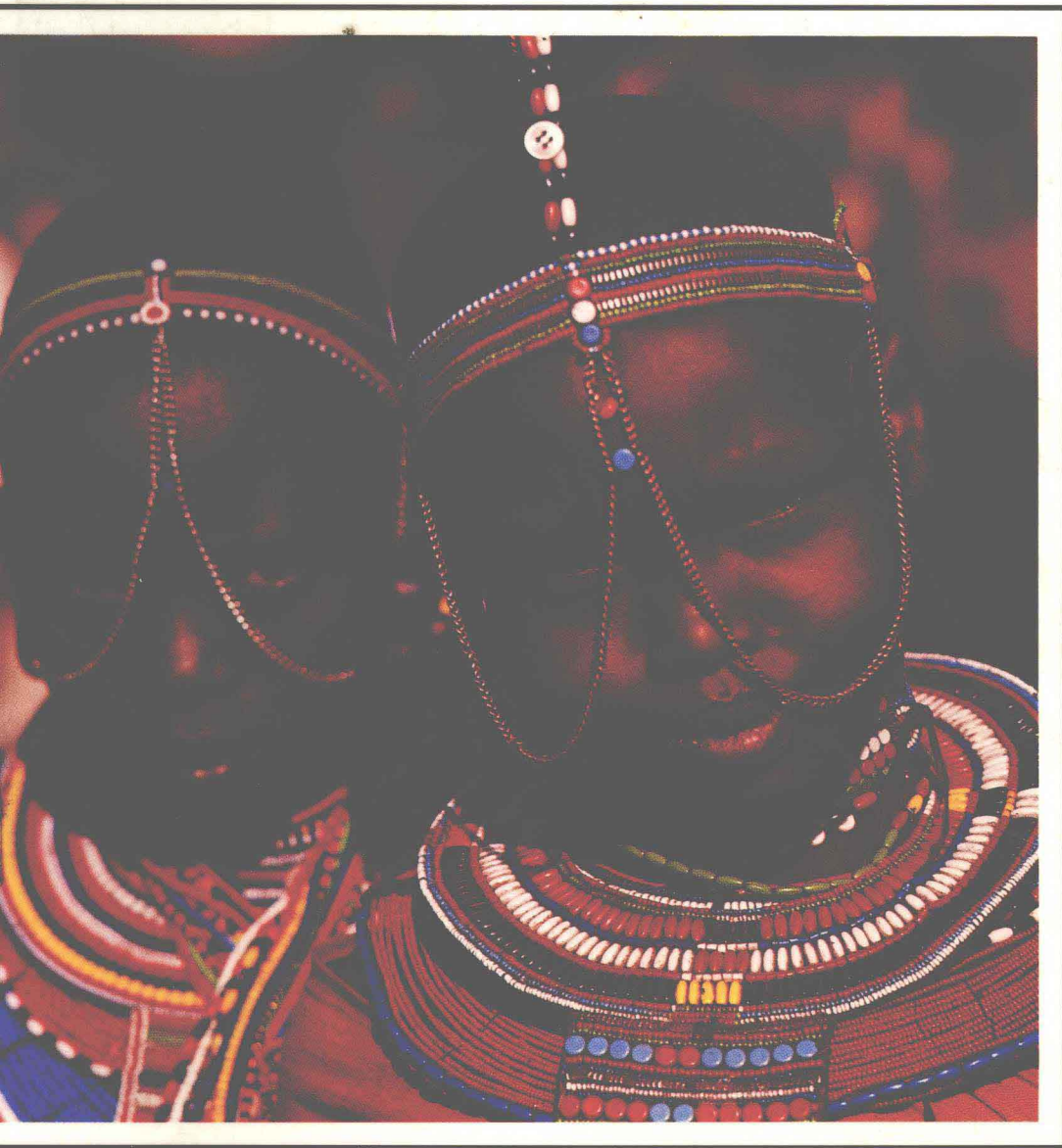


Cultural Anthropology

EDITION

UNDERSTANDING OURSELVES & OTHERS



Richley H. Crapo

2ND EDITION

Cultural Anthropology

UNDERSTANDING OURSELVES & OTHERS

Richley H. Crapo

Utah State University



The Dushkin Publishing Group, Inc.

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Cultural Anthropology

2ND EDITION

UNDERSTANDING OURSELVES & OTHERS

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2ND EDITION

Cultural Anthropology

UNDERSTANDING OURSELVES & OTHERS

Richley H. Crapo received his Ph.D., with an emphasis in cultural and linguistic anthropology, from the University of Utah in 1970. He is currently a professor of anthropology at Utah State University where he has taught the introductory course for over 19 years. **Cultural Anthropology: Understanding Ourselves and Others, 2nd Edition**, was conceived and developed in his classroom. Beginning as handouts that his students used as supplements, it grew over a period of ten years into an integrated text that has been rewritten, class-tested, reviewed and revised into its present form—a coherent, comprehensive and interesting introduction to anthropological understanding of all cultures, including our own.

**To Sharon:
With love and gratitude.**

Cover photo of Masai children of Kenya, East Africa
by Marc and Evelyn Bernheim—Woodfin Camp

Preface

Anthropology, like its study, humankind, is a tremendously diverse subject. This diversity at once creates its richness and excitement as well as providing a challenge for anthropologists to present to students a coherent and meaningful introduction. While no text is likely to fulfill the hopes of all teachers, I believe *Cultural Anthropology: Understanding Ourselves and Others*, 2nd Edition, will provide the basic insights into the field which a thoughtful student ought to have as part of a liberal education. These include not only facts and theories but most importantly the anthropological attitude of a commitment to understanding and appreciating cultural diversity.

Content and Organization *Cultural Anthropology: Understanding Ourselves and Others*, 2nd Edition, is an integrated text. I have tried to avoid fragmentation by building systematically from one concept to the next. In the process, I cover the wide range of interests which comprise the field of anthropology.

To accommodate the needs of the majority of instructors in introductory cultural anthropology courses, the chapters of this second edition now focus exclusively on the various aspects of culture. Chapters on biological anthropology and archaeology have been dropped, and new chapters have been added in response to suggestions from users and reviewers of the first edition. The new chapters provide expanded coverage of subsistence, economics, politics, kinship, and marriage and the family. Other chapters have also been substantially rewritten and expanded to accommodate the thoughtful suggestions of these reviewers and those who used the first edition in the classroom.

Part I, The Science of Culture The book begins in chapter 1 with a succinct discussion of the often confusing subject of anthropology itself: the breadth of its content, its history and contemporary forms, its methods, and its ethics. Chapter 2 introduces the concept of culture, including discussions of both ideology

and technology, as well as issues of how different cultures respond to and influence each other.

Part II, Survival and Adaptation Building on these basics, the next three chapters discuss aspects of survival and adaptation to the human physical and social environments. In this section, the infrastructural components of human social life are discussed. Chapter 3 discusses the physical environments in which human societies are found, the concept of adaptation, and how human societies organize their subsistence customs in various environments. Chapter 4 builds upon the concept of subsistence systems and discusses the economic customs of the world's societies. Chapter 5 considers how humans adapt to the practical problems of social life with the various mechanisms that form the political system of each society.

Part III, Society and Social Life The chapters in this section discuss the ways in which social life is elaborated beyond the basic needs of mere coping and survival, by the presence of meaningful systems of relationships between individuals. Chapter 6 outlines the concept of social organization, with a special focus on how the statuses of individuals within societies change as they pass through life. Chapter 7 discusses the human notion of descent and how it is elaborated into various kinship systems. Chapter 8 discusses the customs and varieties of marriage that play a role in every descent and kinship system and surveys the family forms that arise from these marriage customs.

Part IV, Ideology and Symbolism The fourth section of the text moves to the superstructure of culture, the realm of symbolism, communication, and religion, and concludes with a discussion of how the human individual is incorporated into the cultural realm. Chapter 9 begins with a consideration of human learn-

ing, the human capacity for endowing things with meaning, and the unique role of language as a system of meaningful symbols with which humans communicate and create their cultural order. Chapter 10 takes an in-depth look at religion, the most abstract and creatively varied use of the human symbolic ability. This chapter not only demonstrates the varieties of human religious ideology, but also points out the ways in which both religious thought and social organization are structured in adaptive ways to the circumstances in which people live. Chapter 11 focuses on the individual's relationship to culture and discusses the cultural shaping of personality, altered states of consciousness and psychological disorders.

Part V, Cultural Change and Diversity The final three chapters approach culture from an evolutionary perspective and emphasize the ways in which cultures change. Chapter 12 examines the process of evolution from small-scale bands to large-scale states. Chapter 13 discusses the contemporary mixture of vanishing nonstate societies, peasant cultures, developing countries, and industrialized societies that characterize the world today. The book ends with a special chapter about the United States, interpreting its technological, economic, social, political, family, and ideological characteristics from the unique point of view that cultural anthropology has to offer.

I have attempted to write clearly and logically, and the vocabulary and the level of writing that I have adopted are appropriate for the serious student. I have found that when one addresses one's students with respect and dignifies them with the assumption that they possess more than a modicum of intelligence, it pays off. Students, like anyone else, live up to or down to one's expectations of them. I believe that after a decade in which the conventional wisdom has been that basic texts should be written down to their audiences, the trend is now to recognize this as a tragic error for our educational system. The classroom is a place of education and the purpose of teachers and students and their texts should be the perpetration of wisdom and intellectual skills.

Learning Aids A variety of learning aids has been systematically incorporated into the text.

Each chapter begins with an *outline* to aid students in recognizing the main concepts and in understanding how they will be organized. To facilitate students' learning of the basic concepts of each chapter, all *terms* are defined in context and *underlined* for easy recognition. Each chapter ends with a list of these terms in the order in which they occur, with page numbers indicating where they are defined. These technical terms are also defined in a *glossary* at the end of the book. Since learning the subject matter of a new field also involves acquiring a new vocabulary, students should be encouraged to use these glossaries as a valuable learning review. By testing their knowledge of the meaning of each term, they can readily determine which parts of each chapter need further study in preparation for tests.

Major concepts are often illustrated by *extended narrative examples* integrated with the text. These provide concrete, down-to-earth examples of the material under discussion. For instance, in chapters that concern cultural anthropology, the extended narratives introduce students to appropriate aspects of cultures using an ethnographic record, from the practical reasons for India's sacred cows to attitudes toward conformity in Germany, Japan, and the United States. A number of these narratives describe aspects of Native American cultures, reflecting current interest in these peoples and my own fieldwork among the Shoshoni. These narrative examples are marked with a bullet (•) in the table of contents and are identified within the text by vertical rules.

All cultures to which students are introduced that might be unfamiliar are located on a map at the beginning of the book and are included in the index. All references cited within the body of the text have been compiled into a single bibliography placed immediately before the index. For teachers using the text, I have prepared an instructor's resource guide: *Teaching and Testing from Cultural Anthropology: Understanding Ourselves and Others*, 2nd Edition.

Acknowledgments I deeply appreciate the help of many people who contributed their knowledge, skill, and time in ways that generally enhanced the quality of this book: Carol J. Loveland, who repeatedly shared her exper-

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I am also indebted to those who gave constructive criticism and expert advice as reviewers of this book and its revision:

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Richley H. Crapo



This map shows the approximate location of the cultures introduced in this book. You will find page references to these cultures in the index.



PART I

The Science

Anthropology is a discipline through which we seek to understand human nature and the broad implications of social interaction. It is at once personal yet scientific. Anthropologists study societies at first hand with a humanistic interest in their cultures and customs and use a scientific approach to gather information that they hope will ultimately lead to a greater appreciation and acceptance of the diversity in human societies. Chapter 1 details the historical approaches in anthropology as well as the current methods used by anthropologists. Chapter 2 defines in a multi-dimensional way the basic concept of culture as an institutionalized system of ideas, emotions, and survival strategies passed on from one generation to another.

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