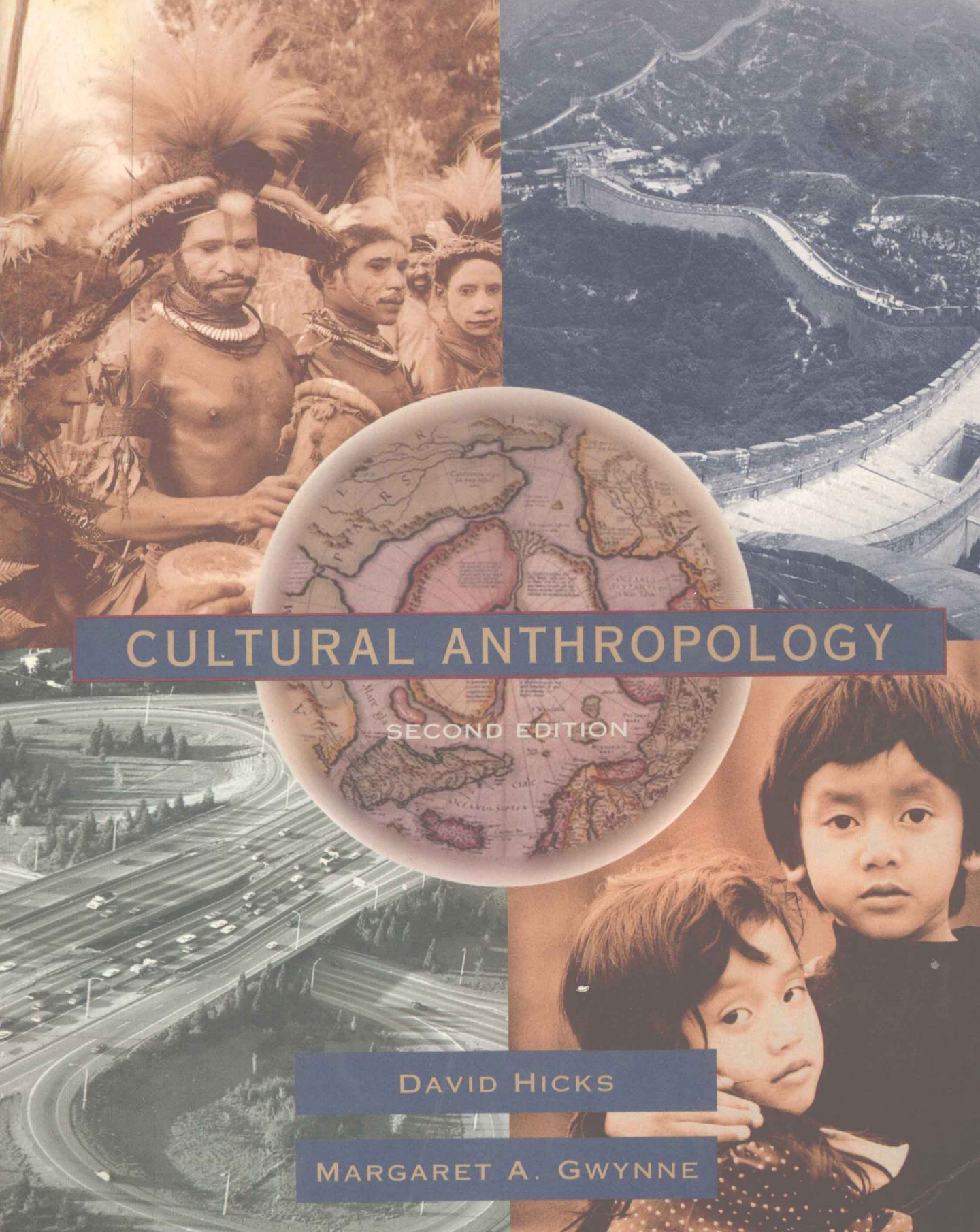


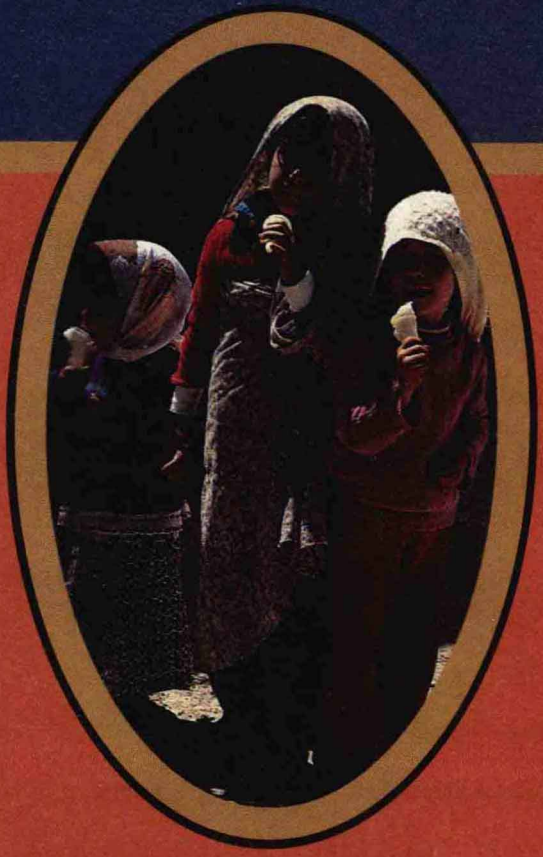
CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

SECOND EDITION

DAVID HICKS

MARGARET A. GWYNNE

Cultural Anthropology



Second Edition

David Hicks
Margaret A. Gwynne
State University of New York at Stony Brook

HarperCollinsCollegePublishers

Chapter opener art: The four figures used in the corners of the first pages of each chapter are "generalized monumental figures representing the various races" from the *Detroit Industry* murals by Diego Rivera in the Detroit Institute of Arts. The frescoes, done in 1932 and 1933, are considered the finest example of Mexican muralist work in the United States and a highlight of Rivera's career. The images appear by kind permission of the Institute.

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Cover Photographs: Top left, Bob and Ira Spring; top right, Gerard Fritz, 704/333-5330; bottom left, image provided by © 1994 PhotoDisc, Inc.; bottom right, Ron Chapple/FPG International Corp.
Art Studio: John D. Sparks/Burmar Technical Corp.
Photo Researcher: Julie Tesser
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Manufacturing Manager: Hilda Koparanian
Electronic Page Makeup: Interactive Composition Corp.
Printer and Binder: R. R. Donnelley & Sons Company
Cover Printer: New England Book Components

Cultural Anthropology, Second Edition

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Hicks, David, 1939–
Cultural anthropology / David Hicks, Margaret A. Gwynne—2nd ed.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-673-99875-4
1. Ethnology. I. Gwynne, Margaret Anderson. II. Title.
GN316.H52 1995
306—dc20 95–21274
CIP

96 97 98 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

To
Emma and Paul
and
to the memory of
Margaret Spencer Wood Anderson

Preface

Before we embarked on the preparation of *Cultural Anthropology,* neither of us had ever found a textbook entirely suitable for our first-year anthropology students. Our colleagues sometimes mentioned the same problem. Some available textbooks seemed unnecessarily pedantic; others dwelt on material that was obviously remote from students' interests; still others seemed to us to be too abstract. We were looking for something that was clearly and engagingly written; that was as comprehensive as any single textbook could reasonably be, covering the basic subjects to which instructors would wish to expose their introductory students; that would introduce certain new materials commonly shortchanged in currently available textbooks (such as women and culture, the human body as a vehicle for cultural expression, and sexuality from a cross-cultural point of view); and that would genuinely interest and even excite its undergraduate readers.

We wrote *Cultural Anthropology* to address these needs. We were, and are, guided by two related and equally fundamental premises: that American college students are interested in their own cultural experience, and that the comparative study of their own culture with others will result in a deeper appreciation of all cultures. In *Cultural Anthropology* we deliberately focus on familiar aspects of Western culture that find parallels in other cultures, since we believe this will foster readers' awareness of, and tolerance for, the ethnic diversity that constitutes an ever-increasing element in the lives of American students.

Themes

Cultural Anthropology is designed around four distinctive themes we regard as fundamental to the education of anthropology students in the last decade of the twentieth century.

1. **Cultural relativism**. Most introductory cultural anthropology texts promote the notion that some invisible dividing line separates Westerners from non-Westerners. In *Cultural Anthropology* we reject what we consider the improper distinction between "us" and "them," and following from this general stance, consistently advocate what we take to be the most important lesson cultural anthropology has contributed to human understanding: cultural relativism, the willingness to evaluate a culture in terms of its own values rather than those of another culture. Throughout the book, we contrast this ideal with its opposite, ethnocentrism.

2. **Holism.** Despite its traditional fragmentation into four subfields customarily treated in separate courses, anthropology remains a holistic discipline, and "American anthropologists ... credit the quality of their insights, research and teaching in one field to past and present influences of the remaining three. Trained in one subdiscipline, they still are affected by other parts of the whole. The persistent power of holism continues today as American anthropology's essential and coveted reality" (Givens and Skomal 1992:1).

   The same concept is also used by anthropologists to convey the idea that the various aspects of any culture are closely interrelated, even as the different but interconnected parts of a car's engine work together to keep the car running smoothly. Anthropologists study cultures holistically because the synchronic interconnections among the different aspects of a culture help to impart meaning to that culture. We continue this tradition here.

3. **Women and anthropology.** A major theme of *Cultural Anthropology* is that ways of living, the beliefs that encapsulate them, and the institutions by which they are brought into action belong not to one gender but to both. Until recently, even though much anthropological fieldwork was carried out by women, most published work in anthropology was dominated by the presumption that culture was male culture and society was male society. This unrealistic

and outmoded stance is currently in the process of being replaced by one that emphasizes the complementary influences of males and females in fashioning the communal worlds in which they live. While not wholly uncritical of contemporary feminist research, we draw on it frequently in our attempt to fashion a coherent, balanced account of the contributions women make to the cultures they have helped create.

4. **The value of applied anthropology.** In the first half of the 1990s, the proportion of anthropology graduates who applied their training outside of academia increased to such an extent that these anthropologists now outnumber their academic colleagues. However, the importance of applied anthropology continues to be underestimated in comparison with academic anthropology in the majority of textbooks. In contrast, *Cultural Anthropology* emphasizes this newly recognized and growing subdiscipline in the form of "Anthropologist at Work" boxes, which appear in most chapters. Each of these focuses on a practicing anthropologist and her or his work, or else suggests a way students might apply an undergraduate education in anthropology to a specific career path.

Theoretical Approach

Cultural Anthropology has no theoretical axe to grind; we treat the most influential perspectives and approaches in cultural anthropology with an even hand. Still, as teachers of anthropology we have found that we can best express our holistic view of culture through two approaches, the structural-functionalist and the cultural-materialist. Since holism is a lesson we regard as fundamental to understanding cultures, and therefore an essential one for our readers to grasp, we emphasize these two approaches rather more than, say, the psychological or structuralist approaches. This is perhaps especially true for Chapters 6 and 7, which provide cultural-materialist treatments of subsistence strategies and economics, and Chapters 10 and 13, which provide structural-functionalist interpretations of marriage and religion.

Special Features

Unique Coverage

While generally following the now-standard format and list of topics found in other major introductory anthropology textbooks, *Cultural Anthropology* offers additional materials not available in any introductory text with which we are familiar.

- *Unique chapters on sexuality and the human body.* We devote an entire chapter (Chapter 8) to a cross-cultural look at social constructions of sex, gender, and sexuality, and another (Chapter 15) to consideration of how people in different cultures reconstruct the human body to reflect their own cultural images.

- *"Ask Yourself" boxes.* We believe a good textbook should provide intellectual challenge, actively encouraging its readers to think for themselves. To promote independent thinking, we have placed inserts, titled "Ask Yourself," throughout each chapter. These boxes ask readers to formulate their own personal answers to questions—many of them of an ethical nature—related to the text. We hope they will also stimulate discussion in class.

- *"Anthropology and the Environment" boxes.* This second edition includes a new series of boxes, titled "Anthropology and the Environment," reflecting the contemporary concerns of anthropologists and nonanthropologists alike about the natural environment. These boxes appear in most chapters to draw links between major chapter topics and environmental matters.

- *"The Anthropologist at Work" boxes.* As we mentioned above, these highlight the relevance of studying anthropology for a wide range of interesting and challenging careers.

- *Locator maps.* New maps, found in each chapter, locate regions and peoples at the points in the text where we first mention them. These are intended to help readers quickly and easily place the groups and places mentioned in their appropriate geographical contexts.

Student Accessibility

Unfamiliar material, especially when combined with technical jargon, can intimidate newcomers to anthropology. We have taken pains to ensure that our special features and style of writing will make this book accessible to undergraduate students.

- *Chapter-opening vignettes.* Each chapter of *Cultural Anthropology* opens with a brief vignette, selected from Western culture, calculated to evoke immediate interest and recognition in student readers. Many of these vignettes are drawn from the popular press. The chapter on marriage, for instance, begins with a back-page news story about a brother-sister marriage in Massachusetts, and discusses this episode in the context of familiar Western marriage customs before going on to consider the different forms of marriage encountered cross-culturally.

- *Student-oriented writing.* We have taken to heart our students' preferences for brevity, informality, and even humor. Each chapter is short enough to be read comfortably at a single sitting; our writing style is nonpedantic; and here and there, we hope, the material will bring a smile to our readers' faces.

Cultural Anthropology is the product of our combined teaching experience of over forty years. Our hope is that students who read it will become well-informed about the contemporary world and the place of a wide range of cultures, theirs and others, within "the world system."

Accompanying Supplements

- We have written our own Instructor's Manual and Test Bank to aid instructors in the classroom use of *Cultural Anthropology*. Each chapter of this manual includes suggested additional lecture topics with substantial discussion, a suggested class activity, recommended reference materials, essay-type exam questions, and a test bank of multiple-choice questions.

- To assist students in their review and comprehension of the text material, a Student Study Guide has been developed by Diane Barbolla at San Diego Mesa College. Each chapter of the study guide contains a chapter outline, chapter learning objectives, key points for review, identification exercises, a practice test of multiple-choice questions (including an answer key), and three practice essay questions that require the student to synthesize the chapter material.

- For this edition we have prepared an accompanying reader consisting of sixteen texts, each corresponding to one of the book's sixteen chapters. Some of these texts were written by well-known anthropologists; others are drawn from popular literature. Each is prefaced by a short introduction. The readings are intended to supplement the text by providing further information and helping to develop our discussions of topics introduced in the book.

Note to Specialists

Cultural anthropology poses special challenges to scholars seeking to synthesize its theories, hypotheses, and philosophical approaches. On the one hand, we see our discipline as holistic. On the other, we acknowledge that its elements may not only be disparate but controversial or even contradictory as well.

One problem is definitions. Anthropologists are notorious for disagreeing, and nowhere is this more obvious than in their attempts to define terms such as "marriage" or "religion." The more general a definition, the more specific instances it can accommodate; the more precise the definition, the fewer. Broad or narrow: which to choose?

Another problem is empirical generalizations. Anthropologists have been conditioned by experience to avoid these, yet in interpreting features of social life we find it impractical to do so. Topical and geographic specializations are essential, but paradoxically they must be transcended if our discipline is to progress, for without cross-cultural generalization, cultural anthropology would have no academic justification. So we generalize, but our generalizations almost invariably result in some distortion.

We ask colleagues who may be concerned—and rightly so—about the distortions that our particular definitions or generalizations may have introduced into *Cultural Anthropology* to help us find our way through the semantic or conceptual minefields we

have no doubt wandered into by interpreting our material for their students in their own ways.

Acknowledgments

We owe a great debt of thanks to the following colleagues, friends, and family members, whose generous support and in many instances painstaking labor have helped us immeasurably.

For editorial help, we thank our developmental editor, Michael Kimball of HarperCollins, and especially our acquisitions editor, Alan McClare, also of HarperCollins, whose continuing encouragement and support has sustained us through years of work. HarperCollins project editor Shuli Traub capably steered us through the final stages of manuscript preparation.

For thoughtful criticism of the manuscript we are grateful for the help of Diane E. Barbolla, San Diego Mesa College; Richard Bordner, Chaminade University of Honolulu; William Coleman, University of North Carolina–Greensboro; Kim M. King, Hiram College; Victoria Lockwood, Southern Methodist University; Barbara Mueller, Caspar College; Martin Ottenheimer, Kansas State University; Evan C. Ragsdale, Yavapai College; Michael R. Rhum, Northern Illinois University; Jill B. Smith, University of South Dakota; Jeffrey P. Williams, Cleveland State University; and Dorothy D. Wills, California State Polytechnic–Pomona.

More often than not, we incorporated the suggestions of these reviewers, whose opinions and criticisms we valued highly, into the final version of *Cultural Anthropology*. Lack of space and our inability to reconcile the diversity of reviewers' opinions made it impossible to include every suggested change or addition, but this does not at all lessen our appreciation of each reviewer's efforts.

For specialist advice, we are grateful to our colleagues Najwa Adra, W. Arens, Michael Clatts, Shirley Fiske, Nancie Gonzalez, Roger McConochie, Lorna McDougall, Maria Messina, Dolores Newton, Loretta Orion, Paul B. Roscoe, Edwin S. Segal, John Shea, Elizabeth Stone, Dan Varisco, Zhusheng Wang, and Patricia Wright.

For photographic help, we appreciate the assistance of Julie Tesser and our talented spouses.

For constant and stimulating feedback, we affectionately salute our undergraduate students at SUNY/Stony Brook since 1968.

For personal support, we acknowedge, with love and gratitude, our spouses and children: Maxine, Tom, Cathy, Ellen, Emma, Meg, Nik, Paul, and Thad.

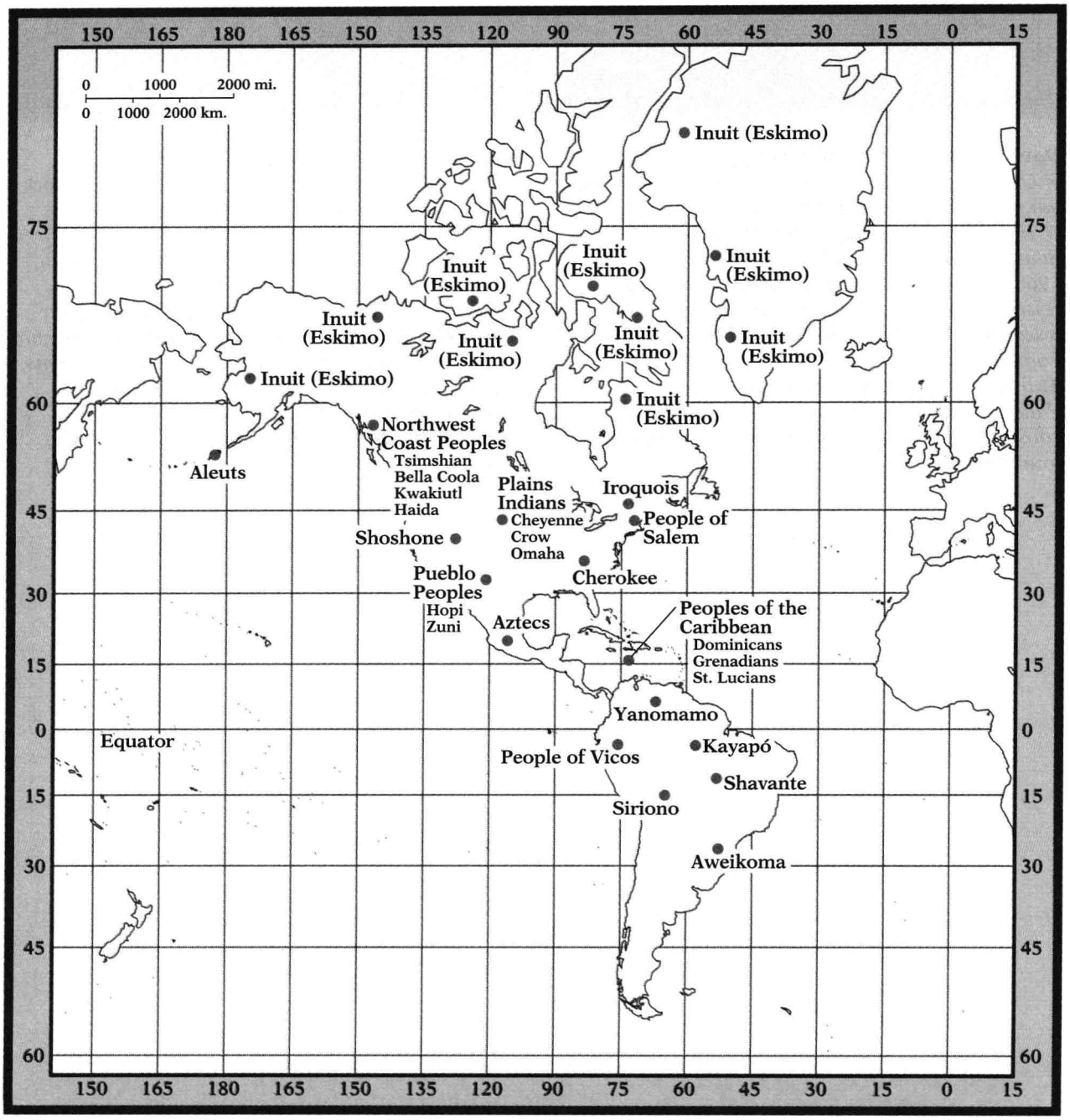
David Hicks

Margaret A. Gwynne

About the Authors

David Hicks *studied anthropology at the University of Oxford, where he earned his Ph.D. after carrying out nineteen months of field research on the island of Timor, in eastern Indonesia. He has taught at the State University of New York at Stony Brook since 1968, and has returned to Indonesia for further research on several occasions. He has received research awards from the National Science Foundation, the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, and the American Philosophical Foundation. He has also served as a consultant for the World Bank. He is the author of four previous books.*

Margaret A. Gwynne *received her Ph.D. in anthropology from the State University of New York at Stony Brook. She has taught anthropology at SUNY/Stony Brook and Dowling College, and as a specialist in international health and development, has worked as a consultant, mainly in Eastern Caribbean countries, on projects sponsored by the World Health Organization, the United States Agency for International Development, private foundations, and consulting firms. She is the recipient of two teaching awards from SUNY/Stony Brook and of research grants from SUNY/Stony Brook and The Pew Charitable Trusts.*



Selected Groups Mentioned in the Text, Showing Their Approximate Locations.

A Visual Guide To:

Cultural Anthropology

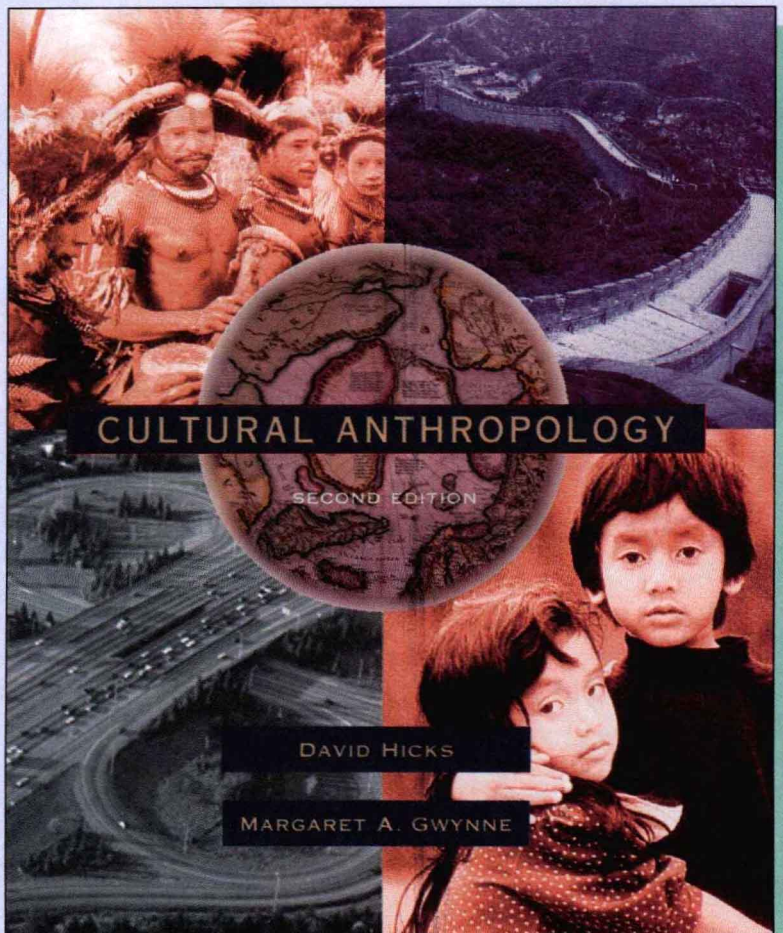
Second Edition

David Hicks
State University of New York
at Stony Brook

Margaret A. Gwynne
State University of New York
at Stony Brook

ISBN 0-673-99875-4

While writing *Cultural Anthropology,* authors Hicks and Gwynne were guided by two related and equally fundamental premises: that American college students are interested in their own cultural experience, and that the comparative study of their own culture with others will result in a deeper appreciation of all cultures. Hence, the authors' focus of familiar aspects of Western culture that find parallels in other cultures fosters readers' awareness of, and tolerance for, ethnic diversity. *Cultural Anthropology* is designed around four distinct themes: cultural relativism, holism, women and anthropology, and applied anthropology. While treating the most influential perspectives in cultural anthropology with an even hand, the authors use the structural-functionalist and cultural materialist approaches to express their holistic view of anthropology.



EMPHASIS ON CULTURAL RELATIVISM

The authors reject the improper distinction between "us" and "them," and consistently promote one of cultural anthropology's most important lessons: cultural relativism, the ability to evaluate a culture in terms of its own values rather than those of another culture. The result is a refreshing and distinguished treatment of the discipline of cultural anthropology.

Cultural Relativism

A fourth concept central to modern cultural anthropology, and one of the most important in this book, is **cultural relativism.** This is the idea that a culture must be evaluated in terms of its own values, not according to the values of another culture. For example, the marriage of one man to two women at the same time, unacceptable in Western culture, is entirely acceptable in certain other cultures. Who is to say that the Western custom of limiting individuals to only one spouse at a time is superior?

The concept of cultural relativism has an opposite, **ethnocentrism,** the idea that one's own ethnic group, society, or culture is superior to others. This notion is inconsistent with the findings of cultural anthropology, which have repeatedly shown that—in the absence of any universal yardstick against which cultures can be measured and compared—no ethnic group, society, or culture can be said to be superior to any other.

Sometimes the concept of cultural relativism has been interpreted narrowly, as implying that anthropologists must suspend their cultural values when studying the cultures of others. But this is tantamount to saying that people have the right to engage in any practice, however reprehensible, simply because it is "part of their culture" (Maybury-Lewis 1988:378). In the wider sense, cultural relativism means that an anthropologist should refrain from making value judgments about other peoples' beliefs and practices until she has understood these beliefs in their own cultural terms (Maybury-Lewis 1988:378–379). Under this definition, the Holocaust could never be justified on the grounds that it was part of Nazi culture, nor the racism practiced in South Africa on the grounds that it was a part of South African culture.

Cultural relativism a central idea in modern cultural anthropology—that a culture must be evaluated in terms of its own values, not according to the values of another culture

Ethnocentrism the belief that one's own society or culture is superior to all others

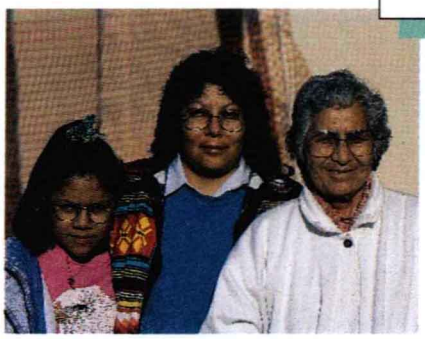
Nonliterate lacking a tradition of reading and writing

Illiterate lacking the ability to read and write while living in a literate society

• Specialties in Cultural Anthropology •

In the past, cultural anthropologists almost exclusively studied societies that were small-scale and **nonliterate**—lacking a tradition of reading and writing. (The term *nonliterate* distinguishes such people from **illiterate** people, who do not read or write either, but who live in societies in which others do). Nonliterate societies used to be called *primitive* societies, but because Westerners are inclined to equate that word with inferiority, most anthropologists today prefer using either *nonliterate* or *small-scale* when referring to such societies. They do not consider nonliterate societies to be inferior to literate societies, nor do they equate them with prehistoric societies (as scholars of the Victorian

Small-scale, nonliterate societies are characterized by simple technologies. On the island of Flores in Eastern Indonesia, a Manggarai man, wearing a hat made from half a coconut shell, sets a rat trap.



Although males as well as females are matrigroup members, the core of a matrigroup consists of women of different generations bound together by consanguineal ties. Above, three generations of matrilineal Navajo women.

grew older, did a husband acquire some standing in his wife's household.

In economic matters, a Zuni husband was a contributing member of his wife's household, but for religious purposes he remained a member of his sister's. He grew corn for his wife's household, not for his sister's, but returned to the latter's house to officiate at rituals. A man's allegiance as brother carried more weight than his allegiance as husband because of his importance in his sister's home as the performer of her household's rituals. This conflict of loyalties brought about frequent divorces. An ex-husband would return to his sister's house, leaving his children (who, of course, belonged to his wife's matrigroup, not his) with his ex-wife. A Zuni woman had no similar conflict of interest. The only family to which she owed allegiance was her own household, which was one of many that made up her matrigroup.

Matrilocal residence does not accompany matriliny in all matrisystems. In some matrilineal societies, a male resides with his mother's brother, a custom known as **avunculocal residence.** This is a more efficient way than matrilocal residence of keeping matrilineal property under the control of the men who have a stake in it. If widely practiced in a society, avunculocal residence also tends to keep brothers together after they have married because, unlike matrilocal residence, wives must come to live with their husbands, not vice versa. Among the matrilineal Tsimshian, neighbors of the Kwakiutl, children of both sexes spend their early years living with their parents. A daughter remains with her parents until she marries, when she goes to live with her husband. A son, however, usually leaves his father's household sometime between the ages of 8 and 14 to live with his mother's brother. One result of avunculocal residence is that a core of males, related matrilineally, is established as a local group. Since it is these males who control their matrilineage's property, their common residence makes it easier for them to protect it than if they lived dispersed in matrilocal fashion like Zuni husbands (Vaughan 1984:60–61).

avunculocal residence the residence pattern by which male ego resides with his mother's brother

FOCUS ON WOMEN AND ANTHROPOLOGY

This new edition features strong coverage of women's roles and gender issues. Coverage features the contributions of female anthropologists, as well as a wide range of anthropological research on women. While not wholly uncritical of contemporary feminist research, the authors draw upon it frequently in their attempt to fashion a coherent, balanced account of the contributions of women to the cultures they have helped create.

UNIQUE FULL-CHAPTER TREATMENTS ON "SEX, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY" AND "CULTURE AND THE HUMAN BODY"

These two unique chapters provide insightful examinations of cross-cultural constructions of sex, gender, and sexuality and the cultural implications of the human body. From premarital sex, postmarital sex, and extramarital sex to body adornment, body alteration, and body language, the authors also explore how a broad range of cultures reconstruct the human body to reflect their own cultural image.

Premarital, Extramarital, and Postmarital Sex

Some societies forbid premarital sex entirely, but many more either permit or encourage it. In fact, the idea that young people should not have sex before marriage is quite unusual, cross-culturally. Western society is one of only a few in which premarital sexual activity short of intercourse is common among the unmarried as a way of preserving virginity and/or avoiding pregnancy (Masters, Johnson, and Kolodny 1985:627).

The Maasai of East Africa provide an example of a society in which premarital sex is encouraged. After rituals marking the end of boyhood, young Maasai males leave the villages where they were born and go to live in remote camps called *kraals*. For the next 10 or 15 years, which a young man spends as a warrior, the kraal is his home. Here, older warriors teach him how to fight and to raid other tribes' herds of cattle. The warriors cannot marry, but they are permitted to have sex with young women who live with them in the kraal. Such liaisons are not expected to lead to marriage. A girl who gets pregnant returns to her village, where she marries. She is not stigmatized for having had premarital sex nor for having become pregnant, because the Maasai welcome children—and anyway, at one time or another the majority of Maasai females have sexual relations with the warriors in the kraal. When his period as a warrior comes to an end, a man returns to his village, marries, and assumes the rights and duties of a husband and father (Saibull 1981; Saitoti 1988).

In contrast, there are various societies around the Mediterranean where girls must remain virgins until they marry or else suffer public shame and greatly reduced chances of marriage. Since marriage is the "overriding criterion for a fulfilling life" for females in this region (Brandes 1985:113), parents vigorously protect the chastity of their unmarried daughters. In the town of Monteros, Spain, for instance, the "main prerequisite to marriage for women . . . is virginity" (118). Since potential husbands believe that premarital sex for females (but not for males) is somehow defiling, an unmarried woman's chances of marrying are much reduced if she loses her virginity, but a virtuous daughter can readily find a husband. Parents in Monteros tell their daughters "Good linen, preserved in a trunk,

In Kenya, unmarried Masai men live in remote cattle camps called kraals. Here they have sexual relationships, not expected to lead to marriage, with young Masai women. Above, Masai youths and their girlfriends clasp hands.

tal sex are encountered universally. The first, called the **double standard,** is the notion that the rules governing sexual behavior should be different for males and females living in the same society. Of a sample of 61 societies compared by Frayser (1985:203), 18 percent sanctioned premarital sexual activity for males but not for females. In contrast, not a single society permitted females to engage in premarital sex while forbidding the same behavior to males. Cross-culturally, then, the double standard is strongly biased in favor of male premarital sex. Frayser adds, however, that in 82 percent of the societies she sampled, no double standard exists. In these societies, members of both sexes must either avoid premarital sex, or else both males and females are allowed to indulge themselves.

The second idea, often found where premarital sex is permitted, is that the females involved must not become pregnant (Frayser 1985:204). Premarital sex is permissible for enjoyment but not for reproduction. Sexual relationships are, in other words, classified as physical rather than social. One might assume that this restriction would characterize modern societies with access to reliable birth control methods, but it applies in nonindustrial societies as well. Typically, if a girl becomes pregnant the pregnancy must be terminated through abortion or the child must be killed. Alternatively, by marrying its father the girl may be permitted to transform a physical relationship between two indi-

Double standard the notion that within a single society the rules governing sexual behavior should be different for males and females

Cosmetics

Another way in which people adorn their bodies is by temporarily decorating their skin with **cosmetics,** the general term for preparations designed to improve the appearance of the body, or part of it, by directly but temporarily applying them to the skin. In Western society, cosmetics take the form of various mass-produced, petroleum-based, colored creams, oils, or powders. These are usually applied to the face, and are much more frequently used by females than by males. In other societies, the term *cosmetics* may refer to body as well as face paints, usually made by combining animal or vegetable oils with colored powders made from naturally occurring minerals.

The extent to which cosmetics are used in human societies, from the remote jungles of South America to the high-fashion capitals of western Europe, suggests that the notion of adorning or enhancing the surface of the body, like the idea of covering it with clothing, comes close to being a human universal. There are differences of placement, emphasis, and extent among various traditions of cosmetic use, but the reasons for wearing cosmetics are similar.

In every society with a cosmetic tradition, including Western society, one reason bodies are decorated is to enhance them—to make them appear more perfectly in accord with society's ideals of beauty (although, as we shall see at the end of this chapter, what is considered attractive varies widely from society to society). But in some societies, the use of cosmetics quite consciously provides other benefits as well. Cosmetics may protect people from harm, express their social status, or identify them as members of particular classes or families. Benefits of this kind are probably part of the reason behind Western cosmetic use also, although Western cosmetics users may not be aware of it.

If Westerners differ little from members of other societies in their primary motivations for applying cosmetics, they do differ from some in the relatively modest extent to which they decorate themselves. Cosmetic use in some societies is so extensive it would make the heavy-handed application of cosmetics to a female American screen star by a Hollywood makeup artist seem moderate.

A well-turned-out Nuba male from Kordofan Province in the Sudan of northern Africa is literally painted from head to foot. Among the Nuba, body painting begins in infancy, when a baby's scalp is decorated with either red or yellow paint, depending on its family membership (Faris 1972:30). Thereafter, body painting is used to suggest one's social and physical status as well as to beautify, and it becomes more and more complex with advancing age. A young Nuba boy, for example, wears simple, inconspicuous, red and greyish white decorations on his scalp, gradually earning the right to use increasingly elaborate, colorful, and extensive designs as he matures (38). Each change of age and status means a new kind of decoration for the boy, as with advancing years he earns the right to use more products in a wider range of colors and designs. (Westerners, too, sometimes use cosmetics as an age marker, as when an American girl is forbidden by her parents to wear lipstick until she has reached a certain age.)

Cosmetics are universally used to beautify people, protect them from harm, express their social status, or identify them as members of particular groups. In Liberia, a Bassa girl being initiated into the Sande, an all-female secret society, is elaborately decorated with a chalky white clay.

Cosmetics preparations designed to improve the appearance of the body, or part of it, by directly but temporarily applying them to the skin

APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

Hicks and Gwynne emphasize this growing subdiscipline and give it special attention in four different chapters, "Anthropology and Anthropologists," "Fieldwork" (another unique chapter), "Economics," and "Culture Change and Anthropology's Response," as well as in "The Anthropologist at Work" boxes throughout the text.

For cultural anthropologists, much of what motivates the desire to follow up on earlier work is the pace of change in today's world. Technologically complex cultures are affecting technologically simpler ones at an ever-increasing rate, and the thrust of ethnographic research has shifted in response. Many cultural anthropologists today are interested in studying the process of change at "their" research sites. At the end of this chapter we discuss the work of Napoleon Chagnon, who in the course of his anthropological career revisited his original fieldwork site in the Amazon jungle some twenty times.

• Ask Yourself •

What changes have taken place in the community into which you were born, in the time that has passed since then? What factors best account for these changes?

Applied Fieldwork

Fieldwork is sometimes undertaken not to test hypotheses but to achieve some practical end. This work, as noted in Chapter 1, is called *applied research*, and it is quite different from theoretical research. In the last decade or two, applied anthropology has grown dramatically in both scope and popularity. Today virtually every field and subfield of anthropology incorporates applied as well as theoretical research.

Cultural anthropology, because of its origins in the collection of data on foreign cultures for commercial or political reasons, has always included an applied component of sorts. However, the reasons for undertaking applied work have changed significantly in recent years, along with the proportion of cultural anthropologists engaged in such work. No longer a tool used for global political advantage, applied cultural anthropology today may have either commercial or social objectives. In many instances it serves the practical and humanitarian needs of governments, other public institutions, or private agencies such as charitable organizations or relief agencies.

A project undertaken by English anthropologist Emma Crewe, who worked for a nonprofit British g in helping people in the orld to develop clean, riate technologies, pro- 995). Crewe did applied fieldwork in Sri Lanka to help find a solution to a long-standing health problem: indoor air pollution caused by the wood- and dung-burning clay cookstoves traditionally used in Sri Lankan households (Crewe 1995). When wood or dung are burned in a traditional Sri Lankan stove, the resulting smoke contributes to a variety of serious ailments, including cancer and acute respiratory infection (ARI). A woman using such a stove in an unventilated room is exposed to the equivalent of more than a hundred cigarettes a day, and ARI is the single biggest killer of children in the developing world, annually taking the lives of 4 to 5 million children under age 5. Living in a Sri Lankan village, Crewe observed how the clay stoves were made, bought, used, and cleaned, as well as the social and economic contexts in which they were used. Later she helped introduce a safer, cleaner-burning stove. Inexpensive and locally made, it gives off less smoke, retains heat better, uses fuel more efficiently, and reduces cooking time. Today the new stoves are helping to improve local people's health, conserve their resources, and protect their environment.

• Field Methods •

In this section, we describe and explain the array of methods and tools used by ethnographers to collect data. These methods and tools differ depending on whether the fieldwork is theoretical or applied, and also on the theoretical perspective and cognitive or topical specialty of the anthropologist. At the end of the chapter, we will describe how two modern ethnographers collected data in the field and coped with the unexpected difficulties that often arise during fieldwork.

Participant Observation

As remarked in Chapter 1, participant observation is the most important strategy used by cultural anthropologists to collect data in the field. Rather than reading about or briefly visiting the people they are interested in studying, ethnographers—like Emma Crewe, whose work in Sri Lanka we mentioned a moment ago—live among the members of a community under study, usually for many months or even years at at time, participating in the people's lives, speaking their language, and observing their behavior and customs.

In addition to participant observation, ethnographers also use other research methods and tools, some in conjunction with participant observation

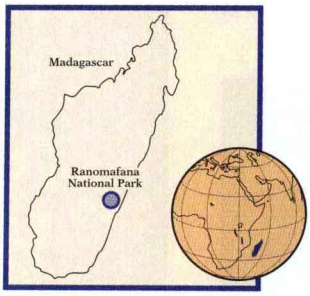
The Anthropologist at Work

Patricia Wright

In Madagascar, a huge island lying off the southeast coast of Africa, lies Ranomafana National Park, one of the richest yet at the same time most endangered natural areas in the world. The park is so extensive and remote that parts of it have yet to be explored. At one time, Ranomafana was home to a thriving population of lemurs, rare primates that exist only in Madagascar. By 1985, however, environmentally destructive practices such as hunting by local people, slash-and-burn agriculture, and cattle herding in the forest, as well as deforestation resulting from fuelwood collection and industrial logging, had seriously depleted Ranomafana's lemur population. If the lemurs and their habitat were to be protected, these practices would have to be halted.

An international conference was convened to help the Malagasy government decide how both the rainforest and its rare denizens could best be protected. Participants realized they needed to formulate policies that would simultaneously preserve the land and its animal and plant species, and also address the economic needs of the local people, the Tanala and Betsileo, who depended on the rainforest for their livelihood. A project to achive these goals was established.

Anthropologist and primatologist Patricia Wright was appointed director of the new Ranomafana National Park Project. Wright quickly realized that any plan of action that failed to combine conservation with development, or to win the cooperation of the Tanala and Betsileo people in maintaining the park, would be doomed to failure. To learn what the villagers' needs would be if the use of their traditional lands were denied to them, she led a survey team on foot over rugged hillsides to Tanala and Betsileo villages. In each village, the team first met with the elders, then called a general meeting of village members at which their need for schools, health clinics, women's cooperatives, and agricultural assistance could be discussed. As the team listened, the scope of the project increased (Wright 1992:28).



owned three ranches, several cars, and an airplane with his likeness painted on the fuselage. Two years later he died of hypertension, his doctor placing some of the blame on the chief's fondness for "white man's food"—chocolate and sugar.

In some Pacific island nations, the customary diet is changing from one based on high-fiber, low-fat foods like root crops, fresh fish, green leaves, and coconuts to one based on white flour or rice, canned meat and fish, and large quantities of sugar and salt. In Fiji, the proportion of total energy deriving from less nutritious imported foods has steadily increased: high enough at 43 percent in 1977, it had risen to 63 percent by 1981 (Hull 1991:25).

"THE ANTHROPOLOGIST AT WORK" BOXES

These boxes highlight the contributions of anthropologists and the ways in which their real-world applications relate to the discussion of the material at hand. Each of them focuses on a practicing anthropologist and his or her work, or suggests a way that students might apply an undergraduate education in anthropology toward a specific career path. Highlights include the works of Roger McConochie, Elizabeth Briody, Applied Medical Anthropology, Fieldwork Coordination, and many others.

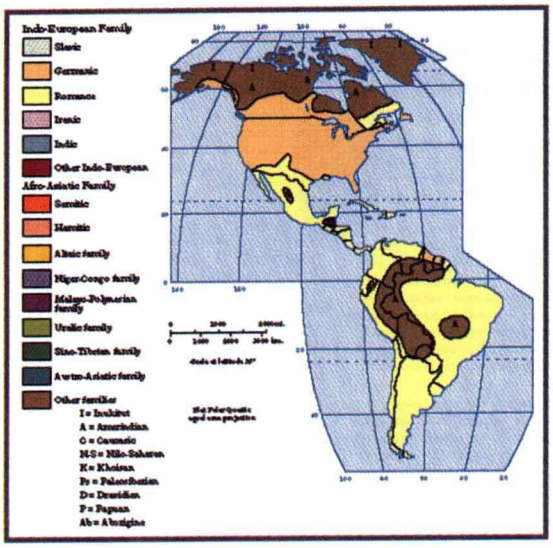
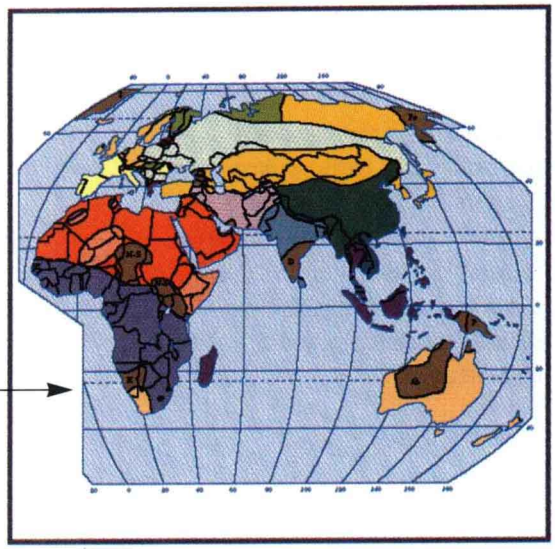


Figure 5.2
The distribution of the major language families in the world. (Source: From Jordan et al. 1994.)

If this is said in a way that the speaker's voice falls on the second *he*, the utterance is probably intended as a flat statement, with which the speaker expects the listener to agree. However, if the words are spoken so the second *he* is uttered with a rising tone, the meaning changes. In this case, the speaker is in doubt about the validity of the statement, and is making a request for information (Crystal 1975:165–166).

One important focus of contemporary paralinguists is the ways in which paralanguage affects communications between the sexes, a subject discussed later in this chapter (see Gender and Language, below). Another is the overlap between paralanguage and body language—the nonverbal ways human beings convey ideas, feelings, and intentions through bodily movements and facial expressions,



unconscious or conscious (see Chapter 15). Paralanguage manifests itself differently depending on who is speaking, what language is being used, and the context of the conversation, but it is a feature of all spoken languages.

Historical Linguistics

Historical linguistics approaches the study of language diachronically, rather than synchronically as descriptive linguistics does. Historical linguists are interested in the histories of the world's living, or currently used, languages (see Figure 5.2) and in the decipherment of dead, or obsolete, languages.

historical linguistics the branch of linguistics that studies the histories of languages, both living and dead, and the relationships between languages and dialects

MAPS EMPLOYED THROUGHOUT THE TEXT

The pedagogical program incorporates maps to cross-reference and shed further light on the material covered within each chapter. These maps illustrate a wide range of key topics, including the distribution of major language families and the distribution of the world's major religions.

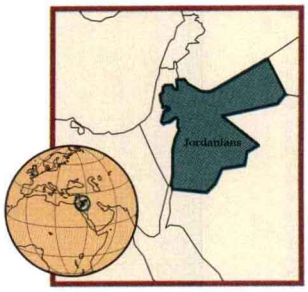
not come to *your* aid when you and your clan were attacked.

Affinal alliances require regulations that spell out how suitable marriages can be brought about. The rule of exogamy, of course, requires descent group members to choose spouses from groups other than their own, thus bringing two groups into alliance. But in many cases a society will not want its members to choose spouses from groups so distant or so alien that useful affinal alliances cannot be formed. So, in addition to rules of exogamy, many societies have rules of **endogamy:** spouses must be chosen from *within* a certain group. Usually the endogamous group within which one is encouraged to find one's spouse is relatively large, such as a religious or ethnic group. Indeed, one reason for endogamy is to preserve a religious or ethnic tradition. Many people living in Jordan, for instance, identify themselves as Palestinian rather than Jordanian, and are encouraged to choose spouses from within the Palestinian

endogamy the custom in which one's spouse must be chosen from within one's own group

Allocate Goods and Services

In many societies, including Western society, marriage may involve the transfer of goods and services among affines, either at the time of marriage or later (Goody and Tambiah 1973). The terms *bridewealth, bride-service,* and *dowry* are used to



LOCATOR MAPS FOR GEOGRAPHICAL REFERENCE

Found throughout the text, these helpful guides supplement extended discussions of indigenous peoples and ethnographic material while enabling students to easily locate the cultures discussed within their appropriate geographical contexts.

"ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE ENVIRONMENT" BOXES

Each isolating a particular environmental issue, these sections illustrate how different cultures view and interact with the environment, as well as how the condition of the environment affects them socially, economically, and in other ways.

Anthropology and the Environment

Women and Water in Kenya

Water covers nearly three-quarters of the earth's surface, but only 3 percent of it is fresh, and most of that amount is frozen in the polar ice caps, buried underground, or otherwise inaccessible for human use. Thus fresh, clean water accounts for less than 1 percent of the total water on earth (Miller 1994:336), and the supply is constantly decreasing due to pollution by human beings. Today over one-fifth of the world's population—1.2 billion people, most of them in developing countries—do not have adequate access to the clean water they need for drinking, bathing, cooking, laundering, disposing of wastes, or irrigating crops. Yet adequate amounts of clean water are essential for human life.

Especially in developing countries, women are primarily responsible for obtaining the fresh water their families need. Many do not have running water at home, so they must walk to a well, stand in line for a turn at the hand pump, draw water to the surface, and carry it home in heavy jars or cans. At home, women are the managers of the water they have procured, since they are the family members who are usually responsible for cooking, dishwashing, and laundry. When supplies of fresh water are scarce or located at great distances from homes, it is women who pay the greatest price, and when new wells are dug that bring clean water closer to their homes, they are the primary beneficiaries.

Kwale, a poor, rural district on the coast of Kenya, East Africa, with a rapidly growing population, lies in an area of seasonal droughts. By the mid–1970s, the wells in Kwale no longer provided sufficient quantities of clean water reliably all year round (Mwangola 1995). To supply her family with fresh water, a village woman, carrying heavy water containers, would have to walk two or more miles to a slippery-sided, dangerous well—even further, when local wells dried up (Mwangola 1995). Depending on family size, some women had to make this round trip as many as eight times a day. When water was available, it was often tainted, causing a wide variety of illnesses; 80 percent of all illnesses in developing countries can be attributed to unsafe water and poor sanitation (WASH 1992:2). There was an urgent need for new, reliable sources of clean water.

In 1975, Kenya's National Council for Women, made up of some 40 small women's groups, took on the challenging task of increasing rural Kenyan

that each male has a limited quantity of "life force," some of which he loses each time he has sex with a woman. Beliefs of this kind encourage the segregation of males from females, and New Guinea is famous for its men's associations.

Other men's groups exist for different reasons. **Military associations,** common to many traditional and modern societies, are groups of males who have fought or may fight together. In some societies, military associations are combined with age grades. Among the Shavante, for instance, the role of warrior belongs to the mature men's age grade. In other societies, military associations exist without age grades, although in any society men who go to war together are likely to be members of the same generation.

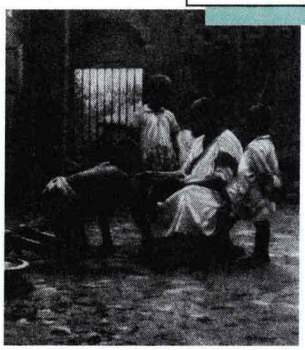
military association a group of males who have fought or may fight together

Military associations formed an important part of the culture of the Native Americans of the Great

• The Concept of Culture •

What Is Culture?

The concept of culture is fundamental to anthropology, yet it is so complex a notion that anthropologists have never agreed on a single (much less a simple) definition of the term. We provided one definition in Chapter 1, briefly introducing culture as all the things people collectively think, do, say and make—in other words, their shared ideas, behaviors, languages, and artifacts. These include institutions (such as marriage), political ideas (such as democracy), religious beliefs (such as witchcraft), customs (like fireworks on the Fourth of July), rituals (like saluting the flag), objects, stories, art styles, games, and much more. But culture cannot adequately be defined in terms of its outward manifestations alone; we must also take account of its other properties.[1]



Because they are deprived of culture, children who grow up in isolation behave differently from other human beings. Kamala, found living alone in the jungle in India, may have been deprived of culture since babyhood. She moved about on all fours and ate from her caretaker's hand.

•Ask Yourself•

What does the term *culture* mean to you? As popularly used, the word is often defined in terms of certain activities, such as going to the opera or reading poetry. What is the relationship between that definition and the one we are proposing?

Culture Is Unique to Human Beings. Cultural anthropologists sometimes define culture as that which distinguishes human beings from all other forms of life. This definition has not gone unchallenged; some scholars, most of them in disciplines other than cultural anthropology, feel it is either insufficient or incorrect. Among them are some primate ethologists, students of the behavior of nonhuman primates (human beings' closest biological relatives), who argue that the nonhuman "higher primates" (all the monkeys and apes), and especially chimpanzees and gorillas ("great apes,") possess culture of an elementary kind. We will take this subject up again in a moment (see the section entitled "Animal Symbols," below). For now, suffice it to say that as cultural anthropologists we do not consider the behavior of any nonhuman creatures to be cultural. At the same time, however, we recognize that the concept of culture is only incompletely understood in terms of the distinction between human beings and other creatures.

Culture Is Patterned. The ideas, behaviors, languages, and artifacts that constitute the outward manifestations of any culture are elements of patterns that are widely recognized and repeated within that culture, both in the present (synchronically) and down through the generations (diachronically). Therefore, nothing that is unique to one individual can be considered an element of that individual's culture. Someone native to the United States might create a flag with alternating purple and green stripes and a pink field of stars in one corner. This unique object would not be considered art of American culture, although a similar flag with alternating red and white stripes and a blue field of stars in one corner would be. As we pointed out in Chapter 1, however, caution is in order: just because an idea, behavior, word, or artifact cannot be considered an

[1]We need to distinguish between culture as we defined it in Chapter 1, and the coulture of a particular society, which is all the cultural things that characterize that particular society.

THOUGHT-PROVOKING "ASK YOURSELF" SECTIONS

Sprinkled throughout each chapter, these brief, open-ended questions encourage students to formulate their own personal opinions while answering questions—many of which are ethical in nature—as they relate to the text.