



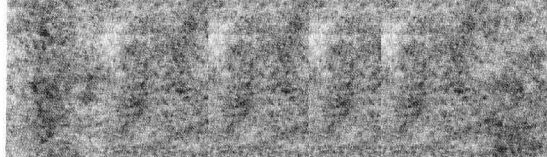
DISCOVERING



ANTHROPOLOGY



DANIEL R. GROSS



DISCOVERING ANTHROPOLOGY



Daniel R. Gross

THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY
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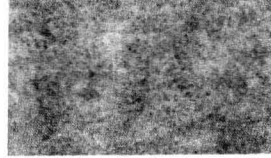
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PREFACE



Discovering Anthropology is a comprehensive introduction to anthropology that presents both the theoretical and applied sides of the field. My principal aim in writing this book has been to demonstrate the dynamic, changing, and challenging nature of anthropology today—its bearing on contemporary issues and problems, its vitality and diversity, its holistic perspective on humankind, its increasingly applied emphasis. I have tried to show students that anthropology is a vibrant, “real-life” discipline with innumerable implications for their own lives.

THE AIMS OF DISCOVERING ANTHROPOLOGY

In writing this book I have emphasized the fact that anthropology is still a young science, scarcely a century old. Many of its most basic questions are as yet without firm answers, and the answers we do have are subject to revision because research is constantly producing new knowledge. In this dynamic environment, I believe that a textbook should focus more on questions and pathways to answers than on firm conclusions. The emphasis here is on methods, concepts, and tools—on how anthropologists frame questions and go about discovering answers. In taking this ap-

proach, the book does not slight the basic topics, themes, or content areas of anthropology; on the contrary, all are covered comprehensively. But within this framework, my intent is to focus on how anthropological knowledge is acquired and used rather than on an encyclopedic account of everything known to anthropology.

Additionally, I am interested in discussing specific issues, problems, questions, and debates, especially those that demand our attention today. Although it is important to acquaint students with the founders of the field—our “ancestors”—our emphasis should be on the here and now. Urgent contemporary problems everywhere in the world—the gap between rich and poor countries, the degradation of the environment, competition for resources, violence and warfare, ethnic conflict—pose a formidable challenge, particularly to the young people who will increasingly be the ones dealing with them. Anthropology not only takes a long, hard look at these problems but offers the tools for addressing and perhaps resolving them. It also fosters a global awareness that functions as one of the most effective antidotes to ethnocentrism we have. Another aim of this book, therefore, is to focus particularly on contemporary problems, patterns, and trends. This book is different from most other textbooks in its coverage of current issues. Separate chap-

ters are devoted to economic development and underdevelopment (Chapter 19), the anthropology of urban-industrial society (Chapter 20), and medical anthropology (Chapter 21). These growing areas of interest and research are the primary focus of many anthropologists' work.

I am also eager to show the vitality and diversity of anthropology today. To do so, I have used abundant samples and descriptions of fieldwork and research and of anthropologists' personal experiences. In Chapter 1, for example, to bring to life the various subfields of anthropology, I have included extended descriptions of fieldwork in several areas—the discovery of Lucy by biological anthropologist Donald Johanson; the excavation of ancient settlement sites on the Deh Luran Plain of Iran by archaeologists Frank Hole, Kent Flannery, and James Neely; the participant-observer study of the Xavante of Brazil by ethnologist Nancy Flowers; and the application of anthropological expertise in the running of a plantation in Peru by cultural anthropologist Allen Holmberg.

This focus on personal field and research experience is carried through the book in 23 original essays included at the ends of chapters under the heading “Anthropologists at Work.” These pieces, written especially for this book, are described in detail below under “Features and Learning Aids.” With samples like these, I hope to give the student a feeling for what it's like to be an anthropologist as well as to demonstrate that the field offers abundant opportunities for involvement and fulfillment.

Discovering Anthropology is also designed to reflect the strongly applied nature of the discipline today. Over half the anthropologists who completed their doctorates since 1980 are currently working outside academia, in development projects, medical outreach programs, cultural resource management, and many other areas. I believe students will be intrigued to discover the many ways that anthropological knowledge is used in today's world. Some of the “Anthropologists at Work” contributors are involved in endeavors outside the traditional academic area; they have provided samples of their work in such areas as forensic anthropology and economic development in the Third World. Throughout the book I emphasize the many applied areas that call for the expertise provided by the study of anthropology.

Another aim of this book is to emphasize the holistic perspective on humankind that anthropology

uniquely offers. Like every other discipline, anthropology has become increasingly specialized as research problems have become more sharply focused and as mastery of even a small part of the discipline has become more of a challenge. I believe there is a need for teaching materials that show how the discipline hangs together and how the subfields of anthropology collaborate in search of answers to major questions. In taking this holistic approach, I am encouraged by the fact that many of the most widely read anthropological authors draw on different parts of the discipline to address major issues. The general public itself seems to expect anthropology to maintain a broad, holistic stance, linking the biological and cultural nature of humankind and bridging the growing chasm between science and the humanities.

The “problems and issues” approach that I have adopted in this book fits well with this aim, since the full exploration of many subjects—the rise of bipedalism, the development of agriculture, the nature of human intelligence, to name just a few—calls on many different subfields. When appropriate, I even range beyond anthropology to sociology, psychology, and other disciplines, incorporating their methods and findings into my discussion.

I believe that these various aspects of my approach to introductory anthropology will help students understand and appreciate the nature of anthropology today. My own experience—teaching at the university level for 20 years, doing field research in Brazil, Guatemala, and Mozambique, and working as an administrator and applied anthropologist for the National Science Foundation, various consulting firms, and the World Bank—has given me a broad perspective on the discipline. It is my enthusiasm for anthropology as well as the excitement and energy of the field that I most want to share with students.

ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT

Discovering Anthropology comprises 24 chapters arranged in 8 parts. **Part One, What Is Anthropology?** provides an introduction and an orientation to the field. The extended examples used in Chapter 1, *Studying People: The Work of Anthropology*, show students that anthropologists need to be curious, flexible, systematic, tolerant, sensitive, and tough, sometimes all at the same time. Chapter 2, *Using Scientific*

Methods: The Tools of Anthropology, explains anthropological research techniques and methods and also addresses the problems of objectivity and bias.

Part Two, Language and Meaning, plunges right into what many consider the heart of anthropology—the world of meaning. The chapters in this part show how anthropology uses various methods to uncover culturally encoded meanings and understand symbolic communication. Chapter 3, Cultural Meanings, is a unique chapter that includes a discussion of current thinking about the concept of culture and presents four models for understanding meaning. Chapter 4, Language, discusses not only the formal properties of language but also what language can tell us about the development of the human mind and how it functions in relation to complex social contexts.

Part Three, Evolution and Origins, delves into the biological side of anthropology, exploring where we came from, where we are now and how we got here, and where we may be headed. Chapter 5, Evolution and Genetics, discusses the principles of Darwinian evolution, non-Darwinian factors in evolution, Mendelian inheritance, and the basics of modern genetics. Chapter 6, Primates and Early Hominids, discusses the taxonomy of the human species, the evolution of the primates, and the appearance of the first hominids. Chapter 7, The Rise of Homo, traces human evolution, including the development of lithic technology and new patterns of subsistence, from *Homo erectus* to modern *Homo sapiens*. Chapter 8, Human Variation, explores the operation of natural selection on contemporary human populations and includes extended discussions of race and intelligence.

Parts Four through Eight present various facets of social and cultural life. **Part Four, Society and Adaptation**, examines the means by which humans survive physically and their interaction with the environment that makes survival possible. Chapter 9, The Elements of Social Life, explores social behavior and theories about its evolution as well as the elements of social life among humans, nonhuman primates, and other animals. Chapter 10, The Foraging Life, focuses on the ecological and social adaptations of foraging peoples, with extended discussions to two contrasting hunting-gathering groups, the !Kung San of Botswana and the Kwakiutl of the Pacific Northwest. Chapter 11, Ecology and Exchange, discusses the variety of transac-

tions carried out between people and nature—focusing on how environmental systems operate and how humans act on the environment—and among people—looking at the different types of exchange systems people have devised to satisfy their wants and needs. Chapter 12, Intensification and Technology, describes the evolution of societies from one social and economic type into another, focusing on the process of intensification, the development of food production, and finally the emergence of technology as humankind's single most important means of modifying the environment.

Part Five, Basic Social and Cultural Patterns, explores the systems of social organization that emerge from basic adaptive patterns, emphasizing the enormous versatility of human social groups. Chapter 13, Sex, Gender, and Sexuality, examines basic gender and sexual patterns and roles, drawing on evidence from various primate species for comparison and exploring the question of biological versus cultural differences between males and females. Chapter 14, Marriage, Family, and Kinship, examines kinship institutions in their cultural setting, treating them as metaphors for biological relatedness. Chapter 15, Following the Leader, addresses the rudiments of political behavior by discussing various social mechanisms for achieving order and cooperation as well as the nature of leadership in different societies. It also looks at the question of women and political power.

Part Six, Conflict and Formal Institutions, explores some of the customs and institutions that humans have developed and elaborated over many centuries. Chapter 16, Warfare, Violence, and Law, examines the forms that aggression and violence have taken and the ways that different societies handle them. Chapter 17, The Rise of the State, looks at the powers claimed by the most influential social structure of modern times and considers the evidence, mainly archaeological, supporting various theories of state formation. Chapter 18, Social Inequality, explores social class, social mobility, stratified versus unstratified societies, and stratification by ethnic group and gender.

Part Seven, Contemporary Cultural Patterns, examines important areas of current anthropological interest. Chapter 19, Development and Underdevelopment, looks at the gap between rich and poor countries, considers the role of colonialism in creating this

gap and of neocolonialism in maintaining it, and discusses several theories of underdevelopment. Chapter 20, *Urban and Industrial Culture*, explores the dominant settlement pattern of many if not most of the countries in the world today, considering how people adapt effectively to the special conditions of urban living, how industrialism affects people's lives, and what role the environmentalist movement plays in society. Chapter 21, *Health, Disease, and Culture*, presents the basics of medical anthropology, identifying cultural components in the recognition, categorization, and treatment of illness. It discusses the culturally prescribed actions and attitudes of practitioners and patients, the role of the social support system in healing, and pluralism in medical choices. The three chapters that make up Part Seven are unusual in an introductory anthropology text, as is Chapter 3 on cultural meanings; I believe that it is important to give expanded coverage to these areas of current interest and concern.

Part Eight, *Expression in Society*, is concerned with how individual impulses, aspirations, and traits are shaped and channeled by society into religious, artistic, or other forms. Chapter 22, *Religion and Social Structure*, looks at some of the elements of religious experience and practice and considers theories about the relationship of religion to its social context. Chapter 23, *Art and Culture*, explores the different roles art and artists play in different societies as well as the relationship of art to social organization and complexity. Chapter 24, *Society and the Individual*, examines the relationship between personality and culture, looks at the question of cultural personality, and considers several theories of personality formation and organization.

FEATURES AND LEARNING AIDS

The features and learning aids incorporated in the book are designed to support the aims and approach I have outlined here. Primary among these are the 23 essays called "Anthropologists at Work," which appear at the end of every chapter beginning with Chapter 2. These essays, which were commissioned especially for this book, provide a rich sampler of anthropological pursuits, interests, and methods. Tied

in with the chapters they follow, they allow students to hear first-hand accounts of research and field work in a variety of voices and to encounter different points of view.

A feature called "Get Involved," appearing at the end of chapters, invites students to participate in anthropology themselves through projects and exercises related to the chapter content. For example, students are asked to do a time-allocation study among a small sample of people they know; investigate an ecosystem in their area; survey the forms of nonmarket exchange that occur in their community; make a kinship chart for a variety of television families and consider what trends are reflected in their structures; and select a series of films or novels depicting the colonial experience in a particular country and analyze them for clues about colonial relationships. The "Get Involved" items include both individual and group projects.

Boxed material reinforces the student's sense of anthropology's diversity and vitality. Ranging from theoretical to anecdotal, the boxes cover topics of special interest, research findings, historical background, and personal experiences.

Many other learning aids help students organize, learn, and remember the material presented in the book. Each part begins with a brief introduction explaining how the following chapters relate to the overall field of anthropology and fit into the scheme of the book. Each chapter in turn opens with an outline to further orient the student, along with a color image capturing some aspect of the chapter material. Within the chapter, important terms appear in bold type and are defined at the bottom of the page in a comprehensive running glossary. At the ends of chapters, in addition to the "Anthropologists at Work" essays and the "Get Involved" projects, there are chapter summaries and listings of suggested readings for students, and at the end of the book there is an extensive bibliography. A gallery of maps helps students locate the areas and peoples described in the text.

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

Available with *Discovering Anthropology* is a complete package of supplementary materials to enhance both teaching and learning.

The *Instructor's Manual* includes a test bank of more than 1,000 questions, as well as topics for class discussions, a list of recommended films and their sources for use in the classroom, and transparency masters for use in teaching.

The *Study Guide*, prepared by Ester Maring of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, contains for each of the 24 chapters learning objectives, chapter overviews and outlines, key terms and definitions, review questions (multiple-choice, fill-in, and true/false), and study questions, which may also be used as essay questions.

The *Computerized Test Bank* is a powerful, easy-to-use test generation system that provides all test items on computer disk for IBM-compatible, Apple, and Macintosh computers. Instructors can select, add, or edit questions, randomize them, and print tests appropriate for their individual classes. The system also includes a convenient "gradebook" that enables the instructor to keep detailed performance records for individual students and for the entire class; maintain student averages; graph each student's progress; and set the desired grade distribution, maximum score, and weight for every test.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This book was by no means a solitary undertaking. I had help from many, many people in ways too numerous to mention. I must first thank my wife, Silêde, and my children, Sylvia and Tony, for their encouragement, for their hundreds of hours of tedious, unpaid labor, and above all for their patience when I was too busy for other things because I was working on this book.

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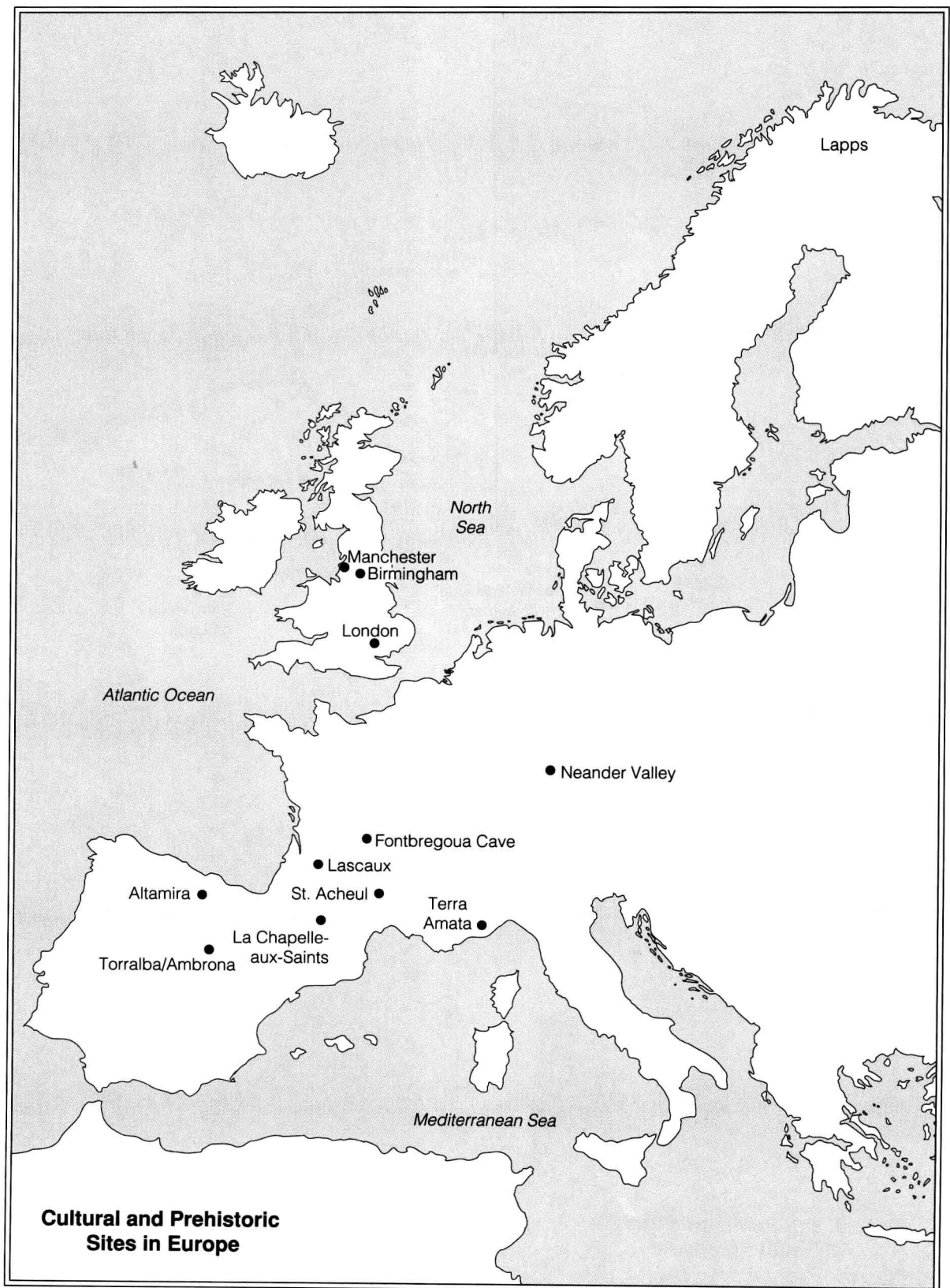
I am grateful to the many contributors who provided fascinating samples of their work for the "Anthropologists at Work" sections; their names appear on their essays. I also want to thank the anonymous reviewers as well as the following academic reviewers, whose ideas helped to shape the book. I deeply appreciate their advice, even though I was not always able to follow it.

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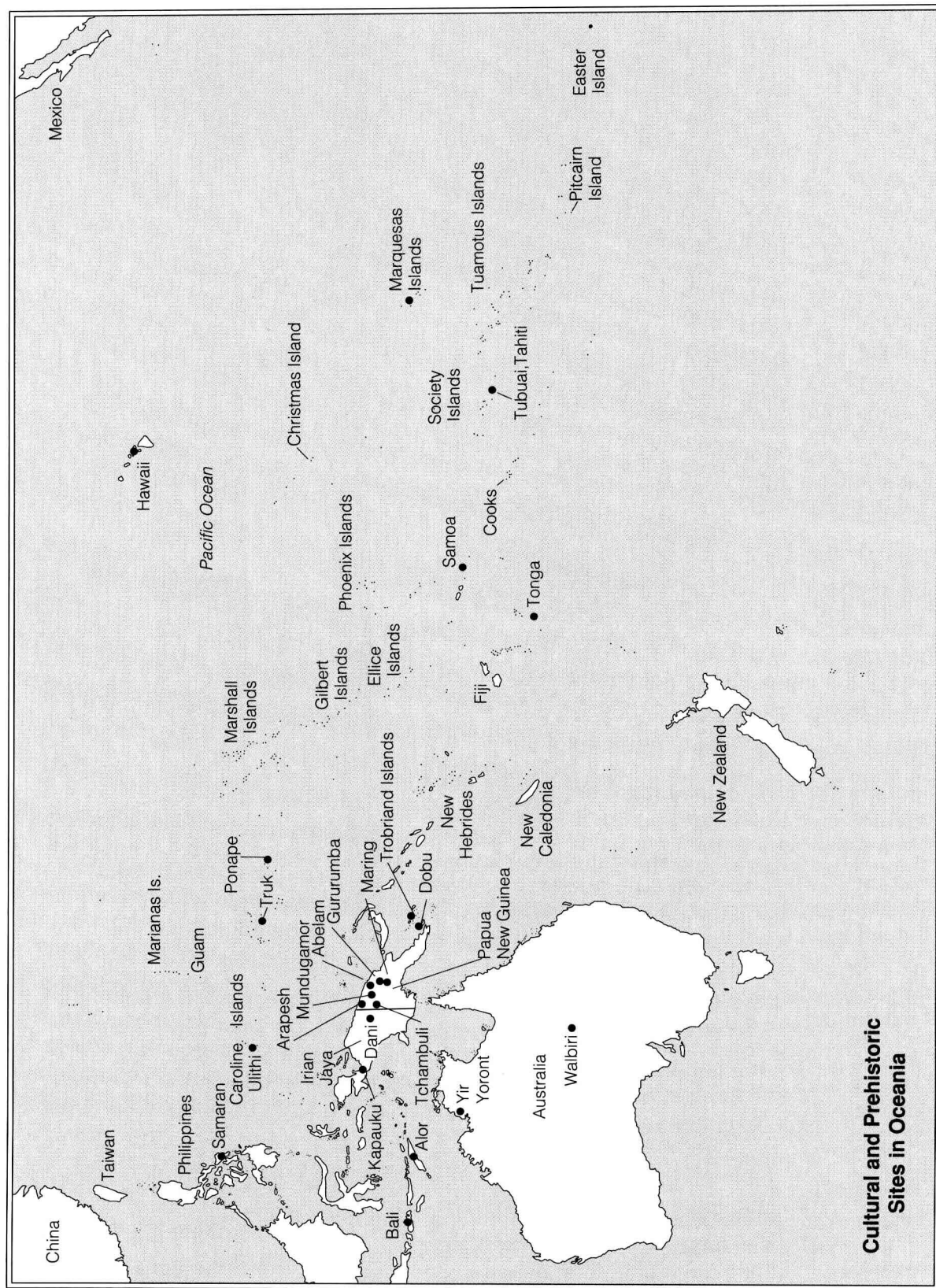
To Silêde, Sylvia, and Anthony
with love and devotion













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