
PREFACE



Anthropology offers a unique perspective. Through its lens we can see, at once, both our kinship with all the rest of humanity as well as our uniqueness. Students peering through this lens for the first time often ask, “How are they the same as we are?” “How are they different?” It is usually with delight that they discover both striking similarities and surprising differences.

This volume is an introduction to 15 societies, and each glimpse is brief and necessarily incomplete. It is my hope that any student who is intrigued will look further into the past and present lives of these people. The following chapters are aimed more at sparking interest than appeasing it.

The groups selected are all peoples whose traditional cultures are uniquely their own. Each has distinctive patterns and practices; each has faced the challenge of an encroaching world, with differing results. Moreover, they often provide the prime illustrations of important concepts in introductory anthropology courses: Azande witchcraft, Aztec human sacrifice, Trobriand *kula* exchange, Minangkabau matriliney. As such, this volume can stand alone as an introduction to those central concepts through these 15 societies, or serve as a valuable companion to anthropology texts, most notably Kottak’s introductory texts, which use all of these societies as examples.

Many of the peoples presented herein are involved in the diaspora; some struggle to preserve old ways in new places. While Ojibwa culture flourishes, tribal members contemplate how gaming on the reservation may challenge tradition. Kaluli music has been the vehicle for an aggressive campaign to prevent rainforest destruction. The isolation of the Tiwi was a salient feature in the development of much of their indigenous culture. Today, they are no longer isolated. They encourage tourism, while making sure younger generations are still taught to gather preferred “bush foods.” Haitian immigrants and Hmong refugees have envisioned their place in American society quite differently. Nomadic pastoralists like the Basseri face challenges from both governments who think sedentary peoples are more “civilized” and environmental analysts who are concerned about the impact of pastoralism and expanding deserts on agricultural lands. Resettlement and development, such as that undertaken among the Azande, cannot succeed if motivated solely by goals of industrial development but uninformed by indigenous culture.

Our world is more than ever a world of change. The exploration and promotion of cultural diversity has been embraced as a mission on some

campuses, feared as a strategy of separatism by others, used as a weapon in other venues. As we are increasingly faced with a global culture, anthropology takes on an even greater responsibility to foster respect for differences in the face of change.

➔ THE FOURTH EDITION

This edition updates most chapters from the third edition to include recent ethnographic information. Each of those contains an expanded discussion of the contemporary situation of each group. The volume includes all new maps in each chapter, showing the location of the group in its region, as well as a world map with each group indicated. Expanded references have been moved to the end of the volume to serve as a bibliography. Also new to this edition are additional sources for further learning about each group, including museums, Web sites, and videos; these can be found on the Web site that accompanies *Culture Sketches* at www.mhhe.com/peters4. This Web site also provides links to maps and other pedagogical aids, including a test bank of multiple-choice questions.

The following is a brief overview of the chapters with the most significant additions:

The Azande

Included is a new section entitled “Azande Today: Resettled, Unsettled,” which retains the discussion of the “Zande scheme” and adds a discussion of Azande involvement in Sudan’s civil war, their internal displacement, and the struggle to control resources.

The Aztecs

This chapter includes five new ethnographic references, several of which suggest a rereading of the conquest from an indigenous perspective.

The Basseri

Reasons for sedentarization unique to the Basseri are expanded upon in this chapter. Included is a new last section entitled “Customary Strangers: Nomadic Pastoralists in the Modern World” which discusses educational programs for pastoralists (“Iranian tent schools”). This new section contains contemporary scholarship regarding nomadic peoples, examining the changing nature of their social systems, which are challenged by political and environmental transformations in numerous nation-states throughout the world. Also discussed is the demarcation and enforcement of new international borders, which in these tense political times have transformed some pastoralist travel along traditional migration routes.

Haiti

This edition updates the political situation in Haiti, noting the replacement of Aristide's government.

The Ju/'hoansi

An updated section, "The Ju/'hoansi Today," discusses the San court case contesting their displacement, as well as the modern challenges of alcohol abuse and HIV/AIDS in the region. Botswana is the nation with the highest rate of HIV/AIDS in the world; Namibia is fifth. This places the San, 90 percent of whom reside in these two nations, at the epicenter of the epidemic.

The Kaluli

This chapter includes a new section, "'Before' and 'Now': Modernity and the Language of Missionization," that examines cultural change as evidenced by language change.

The Nuer

This chapter has a new section, "Modern Challenges: Civil War and Resettlement." It includes a consideration of the Nuer involvement in Sudan's civil war, its inclusion of the tribal rivalry between Nuer and Dinka, and also expands the examination of Nuer in the United States with a section on the "Lost Boys of Sudan," tens of thousands of children who fled their villages and walked hundreds of miles to refugee camps, 4000 of whom were eventually resettled in the United States.

The Ojibwa

This chapter includes a new section, "Environmental Degradation: Triumph over *Pijibowin*" (poison), that focuses on environmental degradation and land endangerment by industrial development.

The Samoans

This chapter introduces a discussion of the renewed visibility of chiefs in a number of modern nation-states, who mediate local realities and larger spheres of national and transnational interaction.

The Tiwi

This chapter considers the way dance in the *pukamani* ceremony demonstrates kin ties.

The Trobriand Islanders

This chapter includes a new section on tourism that discusses the ways in which Trobrianders create for their “customers” the performance tourists expect to see.

The Yanomamo

This chapter now includes information on the controversy surrounding Patrick Tierney’s book *Darkness in El Dorado*.

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Holly Peters-Golden