

History and Theory in Anthropology

In the past twenty years, there have been exciting new developments in the field of anthropology. This second edition of Barnard's classic textbook on the history and theory of anthropology has been revised and expanded to include up-to-date coverage on all the most important topics in the field. Its coverage ranges from traditional topics like the beginnings of the subject, evolutionism, functionalism, structuralism, and Marxism to ideas about globalization, post-colonialism, and notions of 'race' and of being 'indigenous'. There are several new chapters, along with an extensive glossary, index, dates of births and deaths, and award-winning diagrams. Although anthropology is often dominated by trends in Europe and North America, this edition makes plain the contributions of trendsetters in the rest of the world too. With its comprehensive yet clear coverage of concepts, this is essential reading for a new generation of anthropology students.

Alan Barnard is Emeritus Professor of the Anthropology of Southern Africa, University of Edinburgh. His many books include *Hunters and Herders of Southern Africa*, *Social Anthropology and Human Origins*, *Genesis of Symbolic Thought*, *Language in Prehistory*, and *Bushmen: Kalahari Hunter-Gatherers and Their Descendants*, all published by Cambridge University Press. In 2010 he was elected a Fellow of the British Academy.

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Second Edition

Alan Barnard

University of Edinburgh



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-83795-8 — History and Theory in Anthropology
Alan Barnard
Frontmatter
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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India
103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108837958
DOI: 10.1017/9781108936620

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First published 2000
Second edition 2022

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Barnard, Alan (Alan J.) author.

Title: History and theory in anthropology / Alan Barnard, University of Edinburgh.

Description: Second edition. | Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, [2022] | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2021019847 (print) | LCCN 2021019848 (ebook) | ISBN 9781108837958 (hardback) | ISBN 9781108947039 (paperback) | ISBN 9781108936620 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Anthropology–Philosophy. | Anthropology–History. | BISAC: SOCIAL SCIENCE / Anthropology / General

Classification: LCC GN33 .B34 2022 (print) | LCC GN33 (ebook) | DDC 301.01–dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021019847>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2021019848>

ISBN 978-1-108-83795-8 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-108-94703-9 Paperback

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Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-83795-8 — History and Theory in Anthropology
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For Joy

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Preface

I started the preface to the first edition with a comment: the book began as a set of lectures. Yet I also pointed out that in toying with my ideas on the history of the discipline, for me that book evolved into something quite different. What indeed is the history of anything? Does change take place because people think up new things? Or perhaps because a younger generation replaces an older one? Do national traditions come and go? Are there truly inspirational new thinkers, or just the old hacks with a new idea or two?

Actually, it is probably all these things. Anthropology is a social science. This implies that we are influenced by the society around us. But, of course, anthropologists come from *different* societies. I don't think I had really taken this on board when I wrote the first edition, which was published in 2000. Yet as translations eventually appeared, I did take note.

There are translations into (in order) Italian, Korean, Japanese, Chinese (simplified characters), Polish, Vietnamese, Albanian, Croatian, Chinese (traditional characters), and Vietnamese (again). And I understand that contracts for it have been issued for Turkish, Arabic, and Kazakh versions too. Since then I have come to see anthropology in a fuller way, and this new edition, I hope, does reflect that. The changes I have made are mainly in the first chapter and in some of the later chapters, to reflect newer ideas on things like globalization, theories of ethics, materiality, and ontology after the 'hosthuman' turn. Obviously, anthropology's reach is greater than I had thought. I sometimes wonder though whether we all have the same anthropology.

The first version of anthropology I knew was from my undergraduate days in the United States. This was a 'four-field' sort of anthropology, with cultural anthropology standing alongside physical anthropology, archaeology, and linguistics. These all changed their names in later times, although not their fundamental subject matter. I studied later in Canada, which shares a similar configuration, and later still in the United Kingdom. In the United Kingdom, I studied at University College

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London, where social anthropology is taught along with biological anthropology and prehistoric archaeology (but not linguistics of any sort). I taught in South Africa too, and within the United Kingdom I have spent most of my life in Scotland. Even here, I can sometimes detect subtle differences, at least in emphasis, between different kinds of anthropology. As in many other universities, development studies and medical anthropology have become common fields at Edinburgh, where I taught for thirty-seven years. Can a single discipline really reach this far, with no differences? I rather doubt it, and I have seen different versions of anthropology in other countries too.

But never fear! All this is in the nature of the subject. After all, we can do fieldwork in very unusual places (in my case with San or Bushmen in southern Africa). To narrow things down a little, I should point out that this book is specifically about *social anthropology* (as it is usually called in the United Kingdom) or *cultural anthropology* (the usual term in North America). It touches only ever so briefly on the other ‘three fields’. These other fields have largely gone their own separate ways. I have revised the entire book and added a good deal of new material. As one might expect, this is mainly in the later chapters. The earlier chapters have changes too, mainly through my reconsideration of what a larger anthropology might look like. And I am always conscious of what theory is for: Beyond all the -isms, what is it that anthropologists are trying to explain?

I thank again those who advised on the first edition: Joy Barnard, Iris Jean-Klein, the late Charles Jędrej, Adam Kuper, the late Jessica Kuper, Peter Skalnik (Petr Skalník), and Dimitri Tsintjilonis. And on the present edition, Lotte Buch Segal, Neil Thin, and the anonymous reviewers for Cambridge University Press. I also thank Andrew Winnard of Cambridge University Press for his suggestion that I write a second edition; Isabel Collins, also of Cambridge University Press, for her helpful advice; and of course my many students through the years.