



BLACKWELL ANTHOLOGIES IN SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

"This splendid selection demonstrates the issues to which contemporary anthropology is heir, and thus serves as an insightful reminder that the topics raised are of more than mere historical concern."

Lawrence Rosen, *Princeton University*

"Robert Launay's critical introduction and carefully selected texts brilliantly portray how anthropology's predecessors, European and non-European, framed central issues in understanding their own and other societies. *Foundations of Anthropological Theory* is must reading – and also a pleasure."

Dale F. Eickelman, *Dartmouth College*

The formal discipline of anthropology emerged out of centuries of European reflection on the nature of non-Europeans, but the roots of this field were laid down long before. *Foundations of Anthropological Theory* presents a selection of key texts that reflect the broad scope of writings on human behavior across cultures that are the basis for the modern study of anthropology. Editor, Robert Launay reveals how the concerns of contemporary anthropology were first formulated by early thinkers, from observations by Herodotus and Ibn Battuta to the works of Adam Smith and Adam Ferguson. The readings explore the origins and nature of different social and political systems, as well as the origins of inequality, and the presumptive rights of Europeans to judge the inherent moral worth of non-Western civilizations. These illuminating selections provide fascinating insight into the ways historians, philosophers, missionaries, and even writers of fiction have made valuable contributions to modern anthropological inquiry. Accessible and thought-provoking, *Foundations of Anthropological Theory* will be of interest to students and scholars alike.

Robert Launay is Professor of Anthropology at Northwestern University. He is the author of *Traders Without Trade: Responses to Change in Two Dyula Communities*, *Beyond the Stream: Islam and Society in a West African Town*, which won the Amaury Talbot Prize, and numerous articles on the anthropology of Islam and Muslim societies in West Africa. He has written extensively on both the contemporary and early history of anthropology, and is completing a new book, *Savages, Despots, and Romans: The Urge to Compare and the Origins of Anthropology*.

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