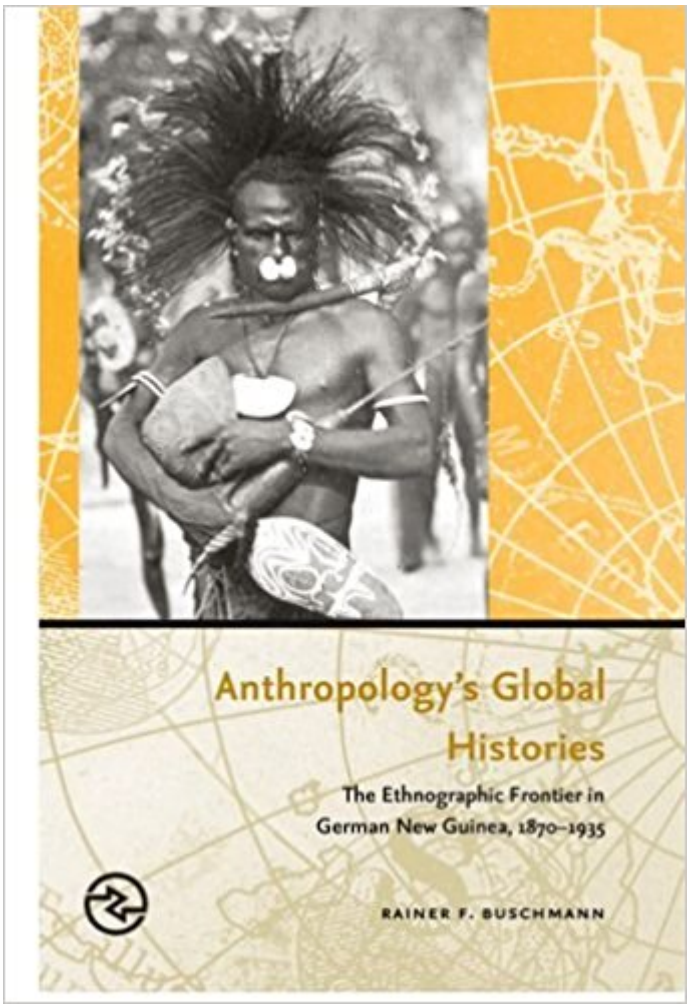
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Anthropology's Global Histories: The Ethnographic Frontier In German New Guinea, 1870-1935 (Perspectives On The Global Past)



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Synopsis

Anthropologists and world historians make strange bedfellows. Although the latter frequently employ anthropological methods in their descriptions of cross-cultural exchanges, the former have raised substantial reservations about global approaches to history. Fearing loss of specificity, anthropologists object to the effacing qualities of techniques employed by world historiansÃ¢â ¬â ¢this despite the fact that anthropology itself was a global, comparative enterprise in the nineteenth century.Rainer Buschmann here seeks to recover some of anthropologyÃ¢â ¬â„¢s global flavor by viewing its history in Oceania through the notion of the ethnographic frontierÃ¢â ¬â ¢the furthermost limits of the anthropologically known regions of the Pacific. The colony of German New Guinea (1884Ã¢â ¬â œ1914) presents an ideal example of just such a contact zone. Colonial administrators there were drawn to approaches partially inspired by anthropology. Anthropologists and museum officials exploited this interest by preparing large-scale expeditions to German New Guinea. Buschmann explores the resulting interactions between German colonial officials, resident ethnographic collectors, and indigenous peoples, arguing that all were instrumental in the formation of anthropological theory. He shows how changes in collecting aims and methods helped shift ethnographic study away from its focus on material artifacts to a broader consideration of indigenous culture. He also shows how ethnological collecting, often a competitive affair, could become politicized and connect to national concerns. Finally, he places the German experience in the broader context of Euro-American anthropology.Anthropology's Global Histories will interest students and scholars of anthropology, history, world history, and Pacific studies.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

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