

BRANDEIS UNIVERSITY
Department of Anthropology

ANTH 201a
History of Anthropological Thought
Fall 2007
Tu/Fri 10:40-12:00 noon

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Office Hours: Tuesday 3:00-5:00 p.m. and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is designed for graduate students at the masters and doctoral levels in the anthropology department. In order to focus this historical survey of anthropological thought many of the readings compare different perspectives on the study of symbolic classification (e.g., totemism, worldview, cosmology) and social organization (e.g., kinship systems, marriage classes, lineages). Of particular concern are the following general themes: the conflict between materialist and idealist explanations of cultural phenomena; arguments about evolutionary vs. synchronic analysis; debates about the degree of integration or patterning of sociocultural systems; methods and critiques of cross-cultural comparison; the status of the mind and psyche in sociological inquiry; the link between anthropological discourse and surrounding political and institutional contexts; and the reciprocal borrowing of ideas and models between anthropology and other scientific and humanistic disciplines, including sociology and psychoanalysis.

READINGS: The assigned readings for the course are available at several locations. Textbooks are available for purchase at Back Pages books in Waltham (see: <http://www.backpagesbooks.com/>); some readings are available in e-journals in PDF; some articles are available via LATTE; all books are on reserve at the main library; and a collection of readings is placed in Brown 229. Please bring hard copies of the readings to class along with your notes.

The following required paperback textbooks are available for purchase, via Back Pages books, <http://www.backpagesbooks.com/>:

Raymond Williams, Keywords (2nd edition)
The Marx Engels Reader (ed. Robert Tucker)
Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism
Marcel Mauss, The Gift
Evans-Pritchard, E. E., The Nuer
Emile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss, Primitive Classification
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, Discourse on Inequality

Note: I expect you to be intimately familiar with Raymond Williams' Keywords, and to

consult it frequently during the semester.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING: A primary requirement for the seminar is active, informed participation in class discussion based on careful preparation of the readings assignments (20%). Assigned readings should be completed prior to class. There are four written assignments responding to questions listed in this syllabus (20% each). Attendance will be taken; a student who misses three or more classes for any reason will lose one third of a letter grade. Masters students and doctoral students will be evaluated by standards that take into account different academic backgrounds and trajectories. In this class a grade of “A” represents outstanding performance reflecting a combination of hard work, careful thinking, clear writing, and proper scholarly apparatus. A grade of “B” represents solid, competent, and altogether satisfactory performance, on these same criteria. A student who receives a grade of “C” on papers 1,2, or 3 should regard that as a provisional grade only; you will be allowed to rethink, reorganize, and rewrite the assignment. Revisions are due one week after the paper is returned to you. This option does not apply to the fourth and final essay, however.

A grade of B- or better is needed for graduate credit. Because this course is the foundation for further graduate study in anthropology no incompletes will be allowed for graduate students.

Please bear in mind that plagiarism of any sort is regarded as an extremely serious academic offense and as a fundamental breach of the relationship between student and instructor. Please be sure in each assignment to cite (with scrupulous care) all sources and material referred to, quoted or consulted. Be particularly careful to cite all internet or on line sources consulted.

SPECIAL NOTE: If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

Course Outline

Friday, August 31. **Overview of Course; Aristotle and Inequality.**

LATTE posting: In this initial posting, by 5 pm on Monday, Sept 4, please reflect on representations of "Others" and "Selves" in the Herodotus, Tacitus, Las Cases and/or Montaigne readings. In what respects is the self in these texts constituted contrastively through models and images of others? In what respects are the practices and motivations of others presented as opaque or as intelligible? You may wish to give particular attention to how the problem of inequality is addressed in the text: inequality in one's own society, in the other society, and between societies. If possible, try to respond to a point or insight raised by a fellow student, so that we can get some productive threads going.

Tuesday, Sept 3. (Lecture): Views of the ‘Other’ in Historical Perspective

Herodotus, Egypt (selections on LATTE)

Tacitus, on Germany (selections on LATTE)

Bartholome de las Casas (selections on LATTE)

Montaigne, On Cannibals (selections on LATTE)

Friday, Sept. 7. (Lecture): Social Theory in the Enlightenment

Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan [1651], chs. 11, 13-14, 17-19, 21 [full text on line at Renaissance Editions].

John Locke, "An Essay Concerning the True Original, Extent, and End of Civil Government" [1698], The Two Treatises of Government (ed. Peter Laslett), Book II, chs. 1-9 (commonly known as the "Second Treatise") [full text available on several web sites].

Giambattista Vico, The New Science [1744], bk. 4, "The Course the Nations Run." (LATTE)

Tuesday, Sept. 12. Rousseau

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origins and Foundations of Inequality among Men" [1755], A Discourse on Inequality (text and notes).

Friday, Sept 14. No class.

Tuesday, Sept. 18. Victorian Social Theory and the Darwinian Revolution

James Cowles Pritchard, Researches into the Physical History of Man [1813] (ed. George W. Stocking, Jr.), ch. 1, "Inquiry whether the human kind contains more than one Species."

Auguste Comte, "Plan of the Scientific Operations Necessary for Reorganizing Society" [1822], System of Positive Philosophy, vol. 4, pp. 551-89; reprinted in Comte: Early Political Writings (ed. H. S. Jones).

Henry Maine, Ancient Law [1861], ch. 2 [available on line].

E. B. Tylor, Primitive Culture [1871], vol. 1, ch. 1-2; vol. 2, ch. 19.

Friday, September 21. Evolutionary and Critical Marxes

Karl Marx, The Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, First Manuscript: Estranged Labor, pp. 106-69.

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, The German Ideology [1845-1846], Part I: Feuerbach, A.

Idealism and Materialism, pp. 39-79.

Karl Marx, "Forms Which Precede Capitalist Production," Grundrisse (ed. Martin Nicolaus) [1857-1858], pp. 471-98 (commonly known as "Precapitalist Economic Formations") [The writings of Marx are available online at Marx & Engels Internet Archive].

Recommended background: Lewis Henry Morgan, Ancient Society [1877], part I, chs. 1-3;

Tuesday, September 25. Marx as Ethnographer of Capitalism

Karl Marx, Capital I [1867], chs. 1-2.

Friday, September 28. Weber: Capitalism and Historical Process

Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism.

Tuesday, October 2. Weber and Simmel: Objectivity, Subjectivity, and the Sociological Method.

Max Weber. "Objectivity in Social Science and Social Policy." In The Methodology of the Social Sciences. (LATTE)

Georg Simmel. "On the Nature of Historical Understanding." (LATTE)

Georg Simmel. "The Metropolis and Mental Life." (LATTE)

Georg Simmel. "The Stranger." (LATTE)

***Paper 1. Social Inequality and Evolutionary Thought. Critically assess and compare how Marx and at the least two other authors we have encountered have attempted to account for the development and reproduction of inequality in human societies. Your discussion should give particular attention to the status of evolutionary thought in these analyses. (8 pages double-spaced)
(Due: Thursday, October 4 by 10:00 am. In Dr. Schattschneider's office)*

Friday, October 5. Sigmund Freud: Psychoanalysis on Trauma and Religion.

Freud, "Fixation to Traumas-The Unconscious" (Lecture 28, The Complete Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis) (LATTE)

Freud, "Obsessive Acts and Religious Practices") (LATTE)

Freud, "Reflections upon War and Death" (LATTE)

Freud "One of the Difficulties of Psychoanalysis" (LATTE)

Tuesday, October 9. No class (Brandeis Thursday)

Friday, October 12. Freud: Culture and Psychoanalysis

Freud, Civilization and its Discontents

Tuesday, October 16. French Sociological School

Fustel de Coulanges. The Ancient City (selections) (LATTE)

Emile Durkheim, "Individual and Collective Representation" [1898], Sociology and Philosophy (ed. D. F. Pocock), pp. 1-34.

Emile Durkheim, "The Dualism of Human Nature and Its Social Condition," in Essays on Sociology and Philosophy by Emile Durkheim et al. (ed. Kurt H. Wolff), pp. 325-340.

Emile Durkheim, The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life [1901], pp. 13-33, 121-49, 235-72, 462-96; Introduction; Bk. 2, chs. 1, 7; Conclusion.

Emile Durkheim, "The Realm of Sociology as a Science" [1900], Social Forces 59 (1981): 1054-1070. JSTOR

Friday October 19. Durkheim and Mauss

Emile Durkheim and Marcel Mauss, Primitive Classification [1903] (ed. Rodney Needham), chs. 1-3, 5.

Tuesday October 23. The Durkheimian Legacy: Mauss and Hertz

Marcel Mauss, The Gift.

Robert Hertz. "Death and the Left Hand" (LATTE)

Required; Thursday, October 25. Jok Madut Jok, Anthropology Department seminar.

Friday, October 26. The Diffusionist Moment in British Anthropology

James G. Frazer, "On Certain Burial Customs as Illustrative of the Primitive Theory of the Soul," Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland 15 (1886): 63-97 [skip appendix] . JSTOR

A.C. Haddon, "Migration of Cultures in British New Guinea," Journal of the Royal

Anthropological Institute 50 (1920): 237-280 [skip appendix]. JSTOR

W. H. R. Rivers, "On the Origin of the Classificatory System of Relationships" [1907], Social Organization, pp. 172-192.

W. H. R. Rivers, "The Unity of Anthropology," Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland 52 (1922): 12-25. JSTOR

Paper 2. (8 pages double-spaced) Freud and the Durkheimians. Consider the approaches of Freud and the Durkheimians (in this case, Durkheim, Mauss, and Hertz) to symbolism and representation. To what extent do their analyses seem reconcilable? To what extent are they fundamentally at odds with one another? Defend your argument with careful references to the texts we have encountered. You may wish to illustrate your argument through your own proposed "Durkheimian" and "Freudian" analyses of a specific instance of symbolism or representation, of your own choosing. (Due: Tuesday, October 30 at start of class.)

Tuesday, October 30. Radcliffe-Brown

A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, "The Mother's Brother in South Africa" [1924], Structure and Function, pp. 15-31.

A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, "On Social Structure" [1940], Structure and Function in Primitive Society, pp. 188-204. JSTOR

A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, "The Comparative Method in Social Anthropology," Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland 81 (1951): 15-22. JSTOR

A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, "On the Concept of Function in Social Science," American Anthropologist 37 (1935): 394-402. JSTOR

Friday, November 2. Malinowski

Bronislaw Malinowski, "The Group and the Individual in Functional Analysis," American Journal of Sociology 44:6 (1939): 938-64; reprinted in Sex, Culture, and Myth, pp. 223-44. JSTOR

Bronislaw Malinowski, "Baloma," Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland 46 (1916): 353-430. JSTOR

Bronislaw Malinowski, Coral Gardens and Their Magic, vol. 2: The Language of Gardening and Magic, pp. 37-62.

Bronislaw Malinowski, Argonauts of the Western Pacific, Introduction.

Recommended: Meyer Fortes, Malinowski and the Study of Kinship. In Man and Culture: An evaluation of the work of Bronislaw Malinowski. Ed Raymond Firth. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul 1970 (1957). Pp. 157-188.

Tuesday, November 6. Psychoanalysis and Society: The Jones-Malinowski Debate

Bronislaw Malinowski. Sex and Repression in Savage Society (New York, 1964), selections (see esp. p. 76)

Ernst Jones, "Mother-Right and Sexual Ignorance of Savages," Essays in Applied Psychoanalysis 2[1924] 145-73)

Parsons, A. [1964] 1965. "Is the Oedipus complex universal? The Jones-Malinowski debate revisited." In A. Parsons. Belief, Magic and Anomie: Essays in Psychosocial anthropology, pp. 33-66. New York: Free Press.

Friday, November 9. Integrative Ethnography: Evans-Pritchard

Evans Pritchard. The Nuer (begin)

Tuesday, November 13. Integrative Ethnography: Evans-Pritchard

Evans Pritchard. The Nuer (conclude)

Recommended: Kathleen Gough, "Nuer Kinship: A Reinterpretation". In The Translation of Cultures. T.O. Beidelman. "Nuer priest and prophets." In The Translation of Culture.

Friday, November 16. Boasian Anthropology

Franz Boas, "The Aims of Ethnology" [1889], A Franz Boas Reader, pp. 67-71.

Franz Boas, "Human Faculty as Determined by Race" [1894], A Franz Boas Reader, pp. 221-42.

Franz Boas, "The Limitations of the Comparative Method" [1896], Race, Language, and Culture, pp. 270-80.

Franz Boas, "Growth of Indian Mythologies," Journal of American Folklore 9:32 (1895): 1-11; reprinted in Race, Language, and Culture, pp. 425-436. JSTOR

Clark Wissler, "The Culture-Area Concept in Social Anthropology," American Journal of Sociology 32 (1927): 881-891. JSTOR

Edward Sapir, "Do We Need a Superorganic?" American Anthropologist 19 (1917): 441-47. JSTOR

Ruth Benedict, "Configurations of Culture in North America," American Anthropologist 34 (1932): 1-27. JSTOR

Edward Sapir, "Culture: Genuine and Spurious," American Journal of Sociology 29 (1924): 401-429; reprinted in Selected Writings of Edward Sapir, pp. 308-331. JSTOR

Background: Alfred L. Kroeber, "History and Science in Anthropology," American Anthropologist 37 (1935): 539-569. JSTOR

*Paper 3. Due Tuesday, November 20 at start of class.
You have two choices for this essay. (8 pages)*

Option 1. Although Evans-Pritchard's The Nuer contains virtually no explicit references to anthropological and sociological theorists, it is generally considered to be a key work of integrative social theory, implicitly commenting upon and engaging with much of the prior history of social thought. Locate the book in the broader intellectual history of social science, discussing his approach to social analysis in light of at least three authors we have encountered.

Option 2. Beidelman cleverly uses Weber's theoretical typology of power and authority to re-interpret Evans-Pritchard's material on Nuer prophets. In a comparable fashion, propose a reinterpretation of some aspect of Nuer ethnographic material drawing on the conceptual apparatus of at least one of the following theorists: Marx, Freud, Durkheim, Weber, or Simmel. (For example, how might Simmel's approach to the stranger account for Nuer relations with Dinka? Or, how might Freud account for Nuer age-sets?) Explain how your reading supports or departs from E-P's analysis of the phenomenon or institution in question.

(Due, Tuesday, November 21 at the start of class)

Tuesday, November 20. Intellectual Foundations of Structuralism.

Claude Levi-Strauss, The Elementary Structures of Kinship, chs. 5, 28-29. (LATTE)

Claude Levi-Strauss, "The Structural Study of Myth," Journal of American Folklore 78 (1955): 428-44; reprinted in Structural Anthropology, vol. 1. (JSTOR)

Claude Levi-Strauss, "Social Structure" [1953], Structural Anthropology, vol. 1. (LATTE)

Claude Levi-Strauss, "The Scope of Anthropology," Current Anthropology 7 (1966): 112-123; reprinted in Structural Anthropology II. (JSTOR)

Friday, November 23. No class: Thanksgiving. (think about Durkheim, Boas, and the superorganic!)

Tuesday, November 27. Structuralism

Levi-Strauss. "The Science of the Concrete." In The Savage Mind. (LATTE)

Thursday, November 30. No class (AAA meetings in Washington D.C.)

Tuesday, December 4. Special class meeting at the Rose Art Museum for the Bricolage roundtable. (Please bring your copy of The Science of the Concrete, and please be sure to have viewed the Tom Sachs exhibition beforehand.)

Friday, December 7. Final discussion.

Paper 4 is due Tuesday, December 11. At 10:00 a.m. in Dr. Schattschneider's office

Essay # 4. You have two choices for this final essay. (8 pages)

Option 1: Assess the intellectual sources and integrative force of Levi-Strauss' essay "The Science of the Concrete." In what respect has he in this essay reiterated the broader themes in the history of anthropological thought that we have encountered this semester? Where precisely in your judgment are his original contributions?

Option 2. Levi-Strauss has often acknowledged his intellectual debts to Boas and the Boasians. In what respects does Levi-Strauss appear to build on the Boasians? In what ways does he appear to go beyond them (and how successful is he in these attempts)?

Option 3. To what extent may Levi-Strauss be located in an intellectual tradition stretching from Rousseau to Durkheim and Mauss?