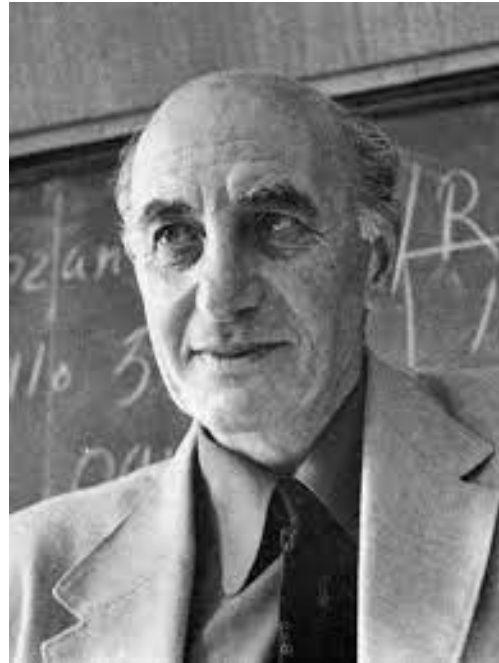


Gluckman and Structural Functionalism



Structural Functionalism

- Sees society as a complex system that has parts working together to maintain stability
 - Society functions to maintain itself
 - Organic analogy – society functions like a system of organs that work together to sustain the organism
- Approach dominated British anthropology and US sociology from the 1930s-1960s
- Limitations – in focusing on the preservation of the status quo, ignores what is changing and why it is changing
 - Approach came under attack (and went out of style) in the 1960s

Gluckman

- Social facts are contradictory
- Male principle = power
- Female principle = reproduction of children
- These principles are **contradictory**
- Cultures, social structures are not just perfect systems
- How they are organized with internal contradictions
- Important to understand the idea of systems and the idea of contradictions within this system

Radcliffe-Brown

- The most well-known of the structural functionalists
- Drew heavily from Durkheim and other French sociologists
- Society = a machine, a body (organic analogy)
- Active role of people is not important, the structure of the society is
- Different from the Boasian approach
- The structural functionalist solution: to emphasize all the different social facts that come together to form a working society

Gluckman

- Tension between the male and the female principles, between the common people and the royalty
- Acknowledgment of the female oppression and discrimination
- But there is a deeper issue at stake: the male control of politics and wealth among the Zulu (cattle)
- But there are no men without women
- Not ethically recognized and rewarded female principle necessary to men

Gluckman

- The principle of reproduction of the next generation is required (reproduction of the next generation and fertility of the society)
- No power without the hidden principle
- Creates a system but also a contradiction (by law, men inherit from men, in reality, the female principle behind the scene)
- Psychology is interesting but not relevant for the socio-anthropological analysis

Gluckman

- Two sets of social facts operating at the same time, in contradiction
- Structural functionalism and a theory of contradictions combined

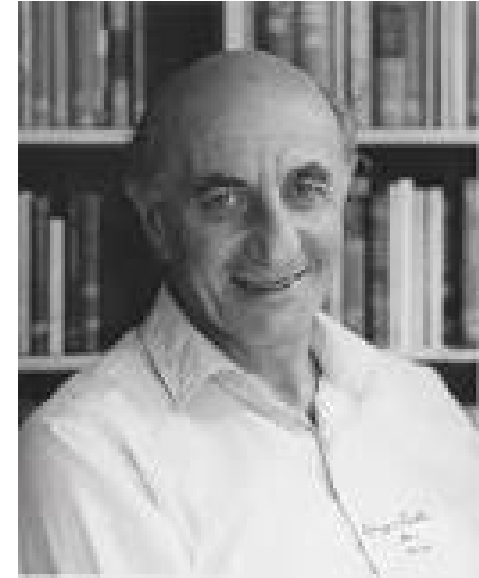
Rituals

- Rituals that do not transform anything
- Rituals of reversal (women become men but everything goes back to normal; example of elections)
- But there are points of transformation that can lead to changes in the society (not well-developed by Gluckman)
- Important: how the ritual of reversal symbolizes the hidden female principle in the normal public male principle
- Importance of roles

Gluckman

- Brings Marx into the structural functionalism
- Class struggles can lead to transformation
- These principles do not involve individual psychologies
- Interest in how people deal with each other as group members

Gluckman (1911-1975)



- Born in South Africa
- Jewish
- A political activist
- Against the systematic racial discrimination
- A radical critic of the racial segregation system and of white supremacy
- He had to leave South Africa

The Manchester School

- Gluckman built on Malinowski's initiative to train students in Africa
- He later became a professor at the University of Manchester (Britain)
- Students who trained under Gluckman collectively called "The Manchester School"
- Victor Turner (the study of symbols, rituals and religion), J.Clyde Mitchell and John Barnes (social network analysis), Ronald Frankenberg, Sheila Cunnison, Tom Lupton (development of home country studies) and others

The Manchester School

- Key contributions from The Manchester School:
 - Brought focus to the role of diversity and divisions within society
 - Engaged in multi-sited fieldwork (as teams) and cross-cultural comparisons
 - Included following people as they migrated
 - Several students central in developing symbolic anthropology
 - Main idea: importance of following event sequences and of understanding social roles where different types of people come together in struggle
 - = a situational analysis

Group Work Activity

- In groups of 2-3, do some quick internet browsing about Bitcoin
- Within your groups, discuss and take notes on the following questions:
 - How would Malinowski have analyzed Bitcoin and why?
 - What similarities exist between Bitcoin and the Kula? Differences?
 - Is there anything that you find significant about cryptocurrency that a functionalist approach would fail to consider?