

Bronislaw Malinowski

- Born: April 7, 1884 in Krakow, Poland
- Could speak many different languages, such as, Polish, Russian, German, French, English, Italian and Spanish.
- He is fluent in the languages that are spoken in the Native tribes because of all the time he spent there.
- Bronislaw attended King John Sobieski public school then graduated to the University of Krakow (where he received his Ph.D in Philosophy, Physics and Mathematics in 1908).
- In 1909, he studied physical chemistry at the university of Leipzig.
- In 1913, he earned his Ph.D in Science lecturing, at the London School of Economics.
- In 1914-1918 he studied the people of the Trobriand Islands off New Guinea, then he began teaching at the University of London, becoming a professor.
- In 1938, Bronislaw went to the United States, where he accepted a post at Yale University.
- In 1922, he produced his most famous work "Arogonauts of the Western Pacific"
- Died on May 14, 1942 in New Haven, Connecticut.

Field of Research

- Founder of Functionalism (meaning function, and purpose to the elements within a whole)
- Developed methods and primacy of anthropological fieldwork
- Wanted to understand the islanders ways of life in functional terms of how they were created and maintained in their society.

Contributions

- First field study took place in 1915-18, when he studied the Trobriand Islanders of New Guinea. He studied the natives social interactions including the annual Kula Ring Exchange, which he found may be associated with magic, religion, kinship and trade.
- In 1934 Bronislaw, traveled to Africa where he brought together a generation of anthropologists who documented African tribal societies.
- In 1941-42, visited Oaxaca Valley of Mexico

Why Bronislaw Malinowski is important in our study of the social sciences

- Founded the field of Social Anthropology known as functionalism
- Believes that in order to have a balanced system, all of the components of a society must interlock.
- Viewed culture as a system of collective habits, but still emphasized its instrumental character.

-Major achievements was establishing cultural theory with psychological science.

Interesting Information

-Many anthropologists tried to conduct fieldwork by doing interviews, and never mixed their research subjects with daily life. Where Bronislaw emphasized the importance of participant observations, and argued that anthropologists must observe on a daily basis if they would like to understand the different cultures.

-Bronislaw also believed that culture functioned to meet the needs for individuals rather than as a whole society.

-Is famous for his lectures and influential writings