Session 6
US Anthropology and “Culture Change,” Part 1
Some Background on US Studies of “Culture Contact” and “Culture Change”
“Foundation personnel neither carry rifles into combat in support of United States overseas expansion nor do they actively support counter-insurgency training for American forces....The foundations’ contribution to American foreign policy has been mainly in the cultural sphere, and over the years they have perfected methods whereby their educational and cultural programs would complement the cruder and more overt forms of economic and military imperialism that are so easily identifiable”. (Berman, 1983, p. 3)

American Anthropologists, American Ideas

- Universal or American?
- History & Political Economy of US knowledge production
- Scientific/Academic Imperialism
- Not “cultural imperialism”—it’s “culture change”
Rockefeller Anthropology

*Private Foundations and Public Order*

→ The Ruling Class, Class Conflict, and the Technical Expert
→ Social Order
→ The Depression
The Rockefeller Foundations, Science, Social Control

→ 1863, Ohio, John D. Rockefeller
→ 1870, Standard Oil Company
→ Laura Spelman Rockefeller, John D. Rockefeller Jr., Nelson and David Rockefeller
→ The Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial (LSRM), October 1918

→ Social Control: urban crime, delinquency

1) international relations
2) interracial relations
3) industrial relations
4) personality development
5) public administration
6) community organization and planning, and,
7) economic stabilization
The Rockefellers and US Anthropology

→ University of Chicago, founded by John D. Rockefeller, 1892
→ London School of Economics (UK), the University of Sydney (Australia)
→ Melville J. Herskovits, Ralph Linton, Robert Redfield

Applied Anthropology

→ Unemployment, Indian reservations, small farmers
→ Practical Utility
→ Chicago and Harvard
"Culture Change": Acculturation

→ The Problem of Non-Vanishing Others
→ 1935, SSRC, Committee on Personality and Culture, subcommittee on acculturation - Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits

(1) what was the nature of the contact
(2) what circumstances surrounded the contact and subsequent acculturative processes
(3) what processes of acculturation were involved
(4) what psychological mechanisms underpinned the acceptance, rejection, and integration of the new elements
(5) what were the results of acculturation

→ Core Value Orientations
→ Covert Culture
→ Clyde Kluckhohn at Harvard, Bureau of Indian Affairs, covert culture
→ Dual Applicability?
The Rockefellerers and US Foreign Policy
→ MoMA, CIA
→ Office of the Coordinator of Interamerican Affairs (OCIAA), Nelson Rockefeller
→ Anthropological fieldwork in Latin America
→ Handbook of South American Indians, edited by Julian Steward
→ Indigenous Peoples in the Americas
→ further US foreign policy
Funding, Founding British Social Anthropology

→ 1927, LSRM support: Harvard, Columbia, the University of North Carolina, the University of Virginia, the University of Chicago, Stanford and the University of Texas

→ London School of Economics, the University of Stockholm, Deutsche Hochshule für Politick in Berlin

→ McGill University

→ Social Science Research Council, Chicago, 1923
The Rockefellers, “Practical Anthropology,” and “Culture Contact” in Colonial Africa

→ Rockefeller interest, Structural-functionalist social anthropology
→ efficient colonial administration / social control, culture contact
→ University of Sydney, Australian National Research Council, London School of Oriental Studies, Royal Anthropological Institute, Oxford University, London School of Economics (LSE), International Institute of African Languages and Cultures (IIALC)—Malinowski
→ Oxford Social Sciences programme, Rockefeller support since 1933
→ LSRM, Malinowski appointed to a Readership in Social Anthropology in 1924
→ “Practical Anthropology”, Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown
→ Malinowski: “become more concerned in the anthropology of the changing African and in the anthropology of the contact of white and coloured of European culture and primitive tribal life”
→ “scientific control of Colonial co-operation”
Radcliffe-Brown:

“The newer anthropology aims at giving assistance to those engaged in the administration and education of native peoples by providing an understanding of the culture and its functions, and by determining the direction in which it is changing and the probable results of these changes”.

- 1931-1939, Rockefeller Foundation provided approximately 65% of all of the IIALC’s income
- 17 research fellowships, 17 field research grants, 21 volumes on African subjects
- Ideological Convergence: Social Anthropology, Rockefeller philanthropy, Colonial administration
- stable social orders
- appropriate relations between the races
**The Rockefellers and Canada?**

- Canadian Social Science Research Council (CSSRC), 1940
- Harold Innis
- US foundation funding to Canada had mostly ceased by 1957
- Anthropology was denied full membership in the CSSRC

**Dependent, Uncritical Academics**

- The “proper attitude”

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**References**


