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Malinowski's Formative Contribution to Anthropological Performance Studies

Abstract

Bronislaw Malinowski (1884-1942) was a formative force in the development of functionalist theory in the discipline of anthropology. Based on intensive fieldwork in the Trobriands, his pragmatic theory stimulated much discussion and debate in anthropological circles. Lesser known is the influence that Malinowski had on the development of modern performance studies in the United States. My paper focuses on Malinowski's writings concerning the language of myth and magic, since that is the dimension of his work that appealed most to American scholars of performance in the 1970s.

Oberseminar