

Morgan (1818-1881)

Tyler (1832-1917)

Marx (1818-1883)

Materialist perspective

Focus on economy

Diachronic

No sense of agency

→influence on anthropology→went completely underground, no discernible influence until 1950s. Remains important within the discipline.

Durkheim (1858-1917)

material versus idealist perspectives irrelevant—focused on society and social structure

focus on society and social structure

synchronic

no sense of agency

→influence on anthropology→ignored by early American anthropologists but extremely influential among early British anthropologists. Remains important but not as “cutting edge” as two others.

Weber (1864-1920)

Idealist perspective

Focus on power—government, state

Diachronic

Agency through focus on creative individual

→influence on anthropology→pretty much ignored until Geertz came around in 1970s, but is now probably the most influential thinker in the discipline!

Boas (1858-1942)

They were sociologists, not anthropologists

--did not do any fieldwork with non-Western peoples

--concerned mainly with “the great transformation” rather than traditional culture

BUT their ideas are more important to contemporary anthropologists than the ideas of their contemporaries: Morgan, Tyler, and other social evolutionists.