

Connecting Models

- Things archaeologists find in the ground
- Focus on death ways, not psychological reactions to death
 - Based on the study of many cultures (so useful cross-culturally)
 - Are general, abstract frameworks
 - Good at explaining the “weird”

Robert Hertz (1882-1915)

- French sociologist
- He looked at the treatment of death in French colonies in the Pacific
- Died before he could fully develop his theories

Hertz's Observations

- Death is a process
 - **“Intermediary period”** – in some cultures, people don't immediately die; there is a sort of process gone through between living and dead; this is the intermediary period (people are neither alive nor fully dead)
 - **Secondary burial** – there are multiple burials; one for one they biologically die, and then the second for when they are considered to have gone through the intermediary period; the corpse is recovered from the initial burial and then is buried elsewhere
 - Usually **bundle burials** (they are usually just a bundle of bones; not placed in the anatomical position)
 - In the primary burial, the bones are anatomically correct
 - Secondary burial ceremony (in Schiller 2007 article)
 - All relatives attend
 - Soul of dead returns to village (from heavenly waiting room)
 - Soul given food, sacrifices, money
 - Priests chant to transport soul to family home in “prosperous village” (village of the ancestors; where the soul goes at death)
 - Relatives clean bones, put in **sandung** (a type of crypt; is considered the only way the person will go to the afterlife)
- Condition of body is linked to the state of the spirit
 - “Fate of corpse models the fate of the soul” – the family thinks that you could tell the state of the soul by how the corpse looked; they also believed moving the body, cleaning the body, etc. would do different things for the soul
 - Ex. Until body reaches permanent state (dry bones), spirit of deceased can't enter final world of the dead
 - As corpse rots to dry bones, the soul slowly transforms into final spirit form
 - Intermediary period = length of time it takes the body to fully decay (between 8 months and 2 years for Berawan)

- Spirit/ghosts of dead is dangerous to the living in this transitional, intermediary period
 - Spirit is sad, lonely, jealous in its painful limbo
 - Must be appeased
 - Must be fed because can't yet sustain itself like spirits of the fully dead
- Death is a "tear" in the fabric of society
 - Loss to the social collective (every individual is connected to other individuals through relationships and roles they play, so death takes this individual out of society)
 - Roles lost to society
 - Relationships severed by death
 - "Psychological and social amputation" – reduces survivors too, transforms them to mourners, widows, etc.
 - One of the functions of funerals (according to Hertz) is to repair that tear in society and to allocate some of the roles of the dead to the living (social, emotional, legal roles of dead need to be adjusted and reallocated to living)
 - How? **Deathways** – the socio-psychological function of deathways in any culture
 - Steps to reallocating roles (period of adjustment for dead and loved ones):
 - Disaggregation – the removal of the deceased from society (physically and socially)
 - Reestablishment of social order (example, the "head of the household" is replaced)
- Scale of funerary ceremony reflect the scale of "tear" in fabric of society (extent of the loss to society)
 - The larger the ceremony, the more important the individual, bigger the "tear"
 - This explains why the scale of funerals vary cross-culturally
 - Deathways express social standing
 - Different for people of different statuses
 - Potter's Fields – groups of unmarked graves for people of low status, specifically mental patients
- Funerary ceremonies resemble birth, initiation, marriage ceremonies
 - Parallel structure
 - Exclusion (leaving one status) → integration (having a new status)
 - Double change in status
 - Individual status
 - Social membership
 - Example: when you are engaged, you're excluded from being both single and married (not single anymore, but still not officially married)
 - The " exclusionary ceremony" between single and engaged is the engagement ring and maybe engagement parties

- The “integration ceremony” is the marriage ceremony, the actual act of getting married
 - When engaged, there is a change in an **individual status** (you go from single to being a fiancé)
 - When married, you move from your parents household (or a single household) to a married household (this is a **social change**)
- In death, there is a similar pattern
 - Individual status - goes from living person to spirit (the intermediary period is the equivalent of being engaged in that it is the in-between period)
 - Rites of passage are included at each transformation (from living to intermediary to spirit)
 - Society – goes from living in society to living in the world of dead; in the intermediary period, there is no specific place, but the spirit is not in society as normal
- Reunion of bones
 - Grave setting symbolizes the living social order
 - Society of dead parallels the society of living
 - Where kinship is strong, there is a collective burial (ex. in clans or lineages); family crypts
 - **Ossuary** – a big collective burial place of many bodies (often secondary)
- Sacrifice
 - Things must disappear from this world to pass into the next
 - Examples:
 - Hindu cremation (reduce the body to almost nothing)
 - Viking funeral pyres (they would burn whole boats)
 - Asia: burning ghost money (you burn money, food, etc that the spirit will need in the next world)
 - “Killed” grave goods (you break or damage the good that is put in the grave, like textiles etc, to make it able to be used by the dead)

Why is the Corpse Scary to the Berawan?

- Time of social uncertainty due to tear in fabric of society
- The living are socially “contaminated” by death (they are now “widow” instead of “wife”, etc.)
- Intermediary period dangerous
 - Corpse can be reanimated by evil spirits
 - Ghost might menace the living if they aren’t taking care of the body like they should