UNIT 3  CONVENTIONAL AND NEW APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF CULTURE

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3.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit you will be able to:

- understand the broad scope of what culture encompasses;
- understand how culture is approached as a subject of study;
- describe the various approaches to culture; and
- list the various ways in which culture has been studied, both in the past as well as now.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

It is important for us to know how culture is defined. The following section will discuss its meaning.

3.1.1 What is culture?

Raymond Williams in his book Keywords says that the word culture is "one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language". There are varying opinions and points of view as to what the word actually means or signifies. It is a good point of departure, as it suggests the problems inherent in the defining of the word, and points towards its complexity. According to Chris
Jenks culture embraces 'a range of topics, processes, differences and even paradoxes'. This seems to point more towards the difficulties in circumscribing the word culture rather that resolving what the term signifies.

More and more, we find ourselves encountering the word at every turn in our daily life and also in academic discourses. If we hear the common man, the newspapers and our neighbours lamenting the degradation of our culture, or talking about our ancient traditions and values implicit in our culture, and how our culture is being threatened or destroyed by the changing times, we also hear and see how culture as a discipline is increasingly being studied at various organizations and universities. This has led to the development of MA courses in Cultural Studies. In fact even as you read this, you might be aware that the study material you are reading is for a course on Folklore and Culture Studies. You must have realized that the difficulty of circumscribing the word culture comes from the varied ways in which the word is approached. Cultures can thus be “understood as systems of symbols and meanings that even their creators contest, that lack fixed boundaries, that are constantly in flux, and that interact and compete with one another”.<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Culture>  

3.1.2 Some discussions on the evolution of the concept of culture

It becomes important for one to know the differences between nature and nurture (as a cultural concern) and also the characteristics between civilization and culture. The following sections given below will discuss them in detail.

3.1.2.1 Nature versus nurture

The ambit of the cultural was a sense of the ontology of humankind as distinct from other 'natural' kinds. Culture is a distinct category. The idea of the cultural thus focused on the symbolic, ideal aspects of human society, which are constituted through and in language and linguistic medium and other forms of human interaction. Human beings, as they developed, became very different from the other creatures of the world in the sense that they were not governed by the forces of nature in a way that other creatures were. Rather nature too was viewed through the symbolic mode of culture. This symbolic mode was, as mentioned, primarily linguistic, but with the passage of time included customs, rituals, and conventions also. In course of time, this conglomerate of symbols led to the formation of groups, various classifications and categorizations. It can be thus said that, "Culture is roughly anything we do and the monkeys don't." Lord Raglan. Culture, considered in this way, means something determined by human beings themselves. Animals function on a natural or genetic level. For example, a puppy instinctively knows the danger posed by fire. A human baby, on the other hand, needs its parents to tell about the danger or else the risk of being hurt. Culture is the repository of human knowledge that is learnt and built up over generations, transmitted through language. As soon as humans were able to pass on knowledge, orally or materially, they passed down culture.

Thus culture meant the domain of the human as different from that of other creatures. This idea of the word culture foregrounds the idea of a unified human race as different from other species. From here, the dimensions and interpretations of the word culture took an entirely different route amongst the scholars, and the
idea of culture became synonymous with the ideas of categorization, classification and establishment of hierarchies within it.

There are many different accounts of how the word culture originated. The most plausible one is that which dates back to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when there was a change from the agrarian to industrial and technological way of life. There had never been anything remotely like it in the history of mankind before, and consequently, there was a tremendous upheaval in the nature of human experience. Machines and technology generated massive changes. In order to be able to comprehend these changes and also to be able to come to terms with them, a number of social theories also proliferated during this time.

Urban high-rises are the manifestations of modern civilization. They exemplify human achievement, the progress of the human intellect and the triumph of the will of man. The picture here shows how these buildings help us envision an urban culture.

The unprecedented changes of the times were all justified on the grounds that they were necessary for the 'progresses of mankind. Many felt though, that machines were becoming too dominant for man's good, some others felt that man was going away from his original character. Thus culture, which was, as we have just seen, initially used to differentiate between man and nature, is subsequently used to differentiate between man and machine. (Jenks 7)

Culture is thus different from human nature as it is closely linked up both to progress and civilization. We need to understand its interaction and relationship which will be discussed in the next section.
Check your progress 1

Note: 1) Your answers should be about 30 words each;
2) You may check your answers with the possible answers at the end of the Unit.

1) Explain the difference between culture and nature of man.

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3.1.2.2 Culture and civilization

The first human who hurled an insult instead of a stone was the founder of civilization. ~Sigmund Freud

The term civilization is often used synonymously with the word culture. Often, culture/civilization is used to refer to complex agricultural/urban modes of living, which are distinguished from other cultures in their organization and activity. Civilization/culture is also used in a normative sense to distinguish from vulgar, barbaric, savage and inferior. In this sense, civilization signifies a state of belonging to a certain community - a static concept; the term culture is more dynamic, associated with the ideas of growth and development. This can be made clear from the below quote,

Thus we move into the ideas of socialization as 'cultivating' the person, education as cultivating the mind and colonization as 'cultivating' the natives. All of these uses of culture, as process, imply not just a transition but also a goal in the form of 'culture' itself; it is here that hierarchical notions begin to emerge such as the 'cultured person' or 'cultivated groups or individuals' and even the idea of a 'high culture', all of which reduce the metaphoricity of process and begin to coalesce with the original notion of a descriptive state of being not essentially unlike the formative idea of civilization itself (Jenks 8).

Culture is a process that is vibrant and one which causes changes. It also sees the emergence of hierarchical notions such as elites and intelligensia unlike civilization.

The synonymity of the two words culture and civilization are rooted in the historical and social realities of the European world. You should look carefully into how the distinctions of culture/civilization are realized, and see the functioning of binaries like nature/culture, identical/different, civilized/barbarian and so on. In fact these binaries sustained the logic of the 'civilizing missions' of European societies, which were looked upon as 'cultivating' processes, however different the realities might have been. In one of his novels, the famous novelist and short story writer Joseph Conrad comments on the concept of the so called 'civilizing missions'.
The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much. (Heart of Darkness 10).

Thus, implicit in the concept of culture is a much more complex functioning than the mere hierarchical distinction it attempts to describe. For example, you must all have heard about the Holocaust. The Holocaust was a regretable manifestation of the culture/civilization equation in which the 'superiority' of one race over the other provided the logic, however skewed, for the extermination of millions of Jews. The Jews were deemed inferior and lesser than the German race, and hence fit to be wiped off from the face of the earth. Here we can see how this wiping off an entire race was founded in the reasons of creating a civilized, cultured and pure race. The above example makes the relationship of culture and civilization clear.

We have to now look at the different approaches to the study and development of culture which will be discussed in the next section.

3.2 APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF CULTURE: AN OVERVIEW

Culture as a term has evolved through the passage of time. According to Raymond Williams, there is a stage by stage evolution of the concept of culture. The original meaning of the word was related to the tending of crops and animals. Culture in that sense was hence synonymous with agriculture. As we have discussed just now, during the Enlightenment, the word 'culture' was used synonymously with 'civilization'. Thus the use of the word was related to the progress being made during the Industrial phase of European society in particular, and was by and large referred to in the singular.

Williams, further goes on to say that the next phase in the development of the word, culture, was provided by Herder and the German Romantics, with the rise of nationalism. In this phase, culture was looked at as the ways of life as could be seen in the different countries of the world, and also the variations in the ways of life in different regions of those countries. This was developed in the nineteenth century. Williams adds that by the second half of the nineteenth century, there was a clear direction towards seeing how these cultures would compare with each other, and there developed a hierarchy of cultures. Williams goes on to say that it was around this time that the word culture became associated with the 'high arts' - literature, music, painting, sculpture and the discipline of philosophy.

But it was at the turn of the century ie. in the early twentieth century that the word culture came to be associated with everything around us. This was also in part brought about by the emergence of disciplines like Sociology and Anthropology. We can quote Williams in this context from the book The Long Revolution (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1961):

Culture is a description of a particular way of life which expresses certain meanings and values not only in art and learning but also in institutions and ordinary behaviour. The analysis of culture, from such a definition, is the clarification of meanings and values implicit and explicit in particular ways of life, a particular 'culture'.
Thus emerges the idea that 'culture is ordinary'. Culture is all around us, and to study culture, we have to study society at large.

However, this is not to say that the concept of culture followed a well designated path. For a term like culture, which has a very long history, right from the Greek thinkers to now, there is bound to be some commonality as well as diversity. In the next section we shall look at how the study of culture can be approached from different perspectives, and thus try to formulate a road map for the study of the term.

### 3.3 DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF CULTURE

#### 3.3.1 Initial approaches to the study of culture

One of the first definitions of culture was attempted by the anthropologist E B Tylor. According to him, culture was a conglomeration of our entire resources: 'that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society'. (Tylor, E B. *The Origins of Primitive Culture*. New York: Gordon Press, 1871).

While some of are the view that Tylor was egalitarian in his approach in that in his perception, everyone had a culture, some others opine that the hierarchical notion was implicit in the differences between cultures which is a natural conclusion of the evolutionary terms in which he described culture.

According to another anthropologist, L H Morgan thought, the cultural development of peoples ranged from the savage to the civilized. This clearly hierarchical concept of culture was further glaring, in that much of Morgan's study of culture was clearly subjective and judgmental. Morgan held that the relative levels of civilization are a result of a competition in which the better equipped go ahead, while the lesser are left behind. This hierarchical model was followed by others. Herbert Spencer's model of the study of culture was also hierarchical and followed the developmental model of the organism, it determines that culture belonged to a particular people/group, was bounded and could thus be categorized.

Nineteenth century anthropology was much more than a hierarchical approach to the study of culture. Its field of discourse - various kinds of people and cultures on the globe - made it a natural resource for political gains. The model from evolution, and side by side the arguments about the progress of culture, made for a fertile ground to prove the superiority of the colonizer over the colonized, the white man over the black or brown, man over woman, rich over poor, and even adult over child. The science of craniology is an important example, in which the heads and dark skin of non-Europeans marked them as lesser beings than the white man. The superiority of men over women was sited in their bodies. Another example is of Cesare Lomboso. Cesare Lombroso's thesis on criminology linked the idea of the criminal to the shape and size of his body. Thus the theorization of culture in the nineteenth century was of a practical nature and not an abstract one, and the anthropological approach can be classified as an organized system of knowledge about the peoples of the world.
While the anthropologists mentioned above believed in the heterogeneity of culture, they were also very clear about which cultures were developed and which were not, thus laying down a clear set of formulations about the hierarchical structure of cultures on the globe. The diffusionists, on the other hand were talking about an entirely different perspective to culture. Henry Pitt Rivers, Frank Boas and Smith, among others, were of the opinion that all cultures of the world were not to be seen independently of each other. There was one mother culture from which all other cultures spread, as these cultures adapted themselves to local conditions. Many were of the opinion that the Egyptian culture might be the one from which all other cultures branched out. The diffusionists also held that while the European culture evolved to a higher plane, other cultures degenerated. This was an important break from the evolutionary line of thought that was being forwarded by earlier anthropologists, where the question of degeneration of cultures did not arise. However, on the level of ideas, both the evolutionists and the diffusionists can be seen to follow the same line of thought.

The approach to the study of culture, for all anthropologists, right from the beginning, was global. While people like James Frazer wrote several books about various cultures without actually moving out to observe or study those peoples, a significant change in this respect can be seen in the work and approach of Malinowski. Malinowski is important because he was one of the first persons to reflect on the functional approach to the study of society and culture. He was also one of the first to focus on the individual. Malinowski moved into specific locations in order to study and observe the day to day life of people and then transcribe it culturally. This 'fieldwork approach', motivated by a desire to inculcate the native's point of view in to the study, is still the dominant methodology that is practiced by anthropologists today, although they are more conscious of various other factors, as we shall now see. (Malinowski, Bronislaw. Argonauts of the Western Pacific: An Account of Native Enterprise and Adventure in the Archipelago of Melanesian New Guinea. London: Routledge, 1922.)

Today it is commonly acknowledged that the fieldwork method that was adopted by Malinowski and subsequent anthropologists is not without flaws. As the observer and recorder are never disinterested, and bring into play their own views and interpretations, their reflections are important. This is not to say that the work of cultural transcription is totally wrong, but that there should be a great deal of thought given to the position from which the translation is being carried out as well as the dynamics of the process of culture itself.

Malinowski held that individual responses were the result of cultural conditioning. Not just in anthropology, but in other social sciences too, there were analyses about the possibilities and limits of individual action and social change. In fact, studies of culture linked conveniently, as seen in the initial discussions, to ideas of progress and civilization. It was thought that with the appropriate interventions and directions, all people could be guaranteed progress and transformation to better ends.

Without going into the merits or demerits of the anthropological and sociological ways of approaching culture as an object of study, we can see that the way in which people approached the study of culture in these fields, they point towards culture as the study of the day to day lives of people. Studying or analyzing a culture is not just the study of the lives of people. There are examinations of the
interrelatedness of the cultural and the economic aspects of society, and this is most explicitly discussed in Marx's materialist approach to culture.

### Check your progress 2

**Note:** 1) Your answers should be about 30 words each;

2) You may check your answers with the possible answers at the end of the Unit.

2. What is the diffusionists' school of thought?

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### 3.3.2 Culture and Marxist thought

Karl Marx was the seminal thinker on the issue of culture in relation to materialism. Broadly, according to his theories, the way of life, or the culture of a people, is determined by economic forces. Culture is linked to the dominant interests in society, and these dominant forces manifest their power through the existing systems of stratification in society in ways that are manifest on the level of ideas. Thus the ideas of dominance of the ruling class are what are propagated. However this is done in a way that is subtle and disguised. Further, these ideas, or ideologies as Marx referred to them, did not just further the interests of the ruling classes, but also disempowered the majority by making them feel inadequate and lacking. Moreover, the ideology of dominance is propagated through ways and means that involve the powerless majority in ways that serve to secure their assent, and also to arrive at a consensus.

It was Antonio Gramsci who provided modern society with a way of linking culture and class through his theory of hegemony. Using Marx's theories, Gramsci showed how dominant ideas come to hold the imagination of the majority, and the ways in which these ideas function to control the masses. Hegemony is the name that he gives to this principle through which consensus is created. It could be in the institutional context, or through values, beliefs, norms and traditions within a culture (which people usually think are apolitical and beyond the ambit of the state). While Marx held that revolution was inevitable, Gramsci talked of culture as a contested space in which social forces struggle to achieve prominence.

Raymond Williams is also an important figure in the study of culture. His analysis of the important theorists of culture, from the standpoint of their being rooted in and proceeding from the circumstances of their lives, underlines the view of cultural production as stemming from social and political life of individuals in society. Thus the circumstances that govern a particular age and time have a role to play in the evolving dynamics of culture of any society.

Earlier approaches to the study of culture did attempt to comprehend it, but they were crude. They did not have the methodological sophistication that was required to analyze cultural dynamics. In the materialist (Marxist and others) approach to
culture, there is a definite attempt to address this lack, and we see how it tries to work out the logic of how culture functions. Still there is an attempt to privilege a particular 'standard' form of culture. Now we shall look at approaches that move beyond these systems of study.

Check your progress 3

Note: 1) Your answers should be about 30 words each;
       2) You may check your answers with the possible answers at the end of the Unit.

3. How does Gramsci define culture?

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3.3.3 Cultural Studies as a discipline

The shift in interpretation from Marx to Gramsci was a significant one, one which acknowledged the complex nature of social order. If the Gramscian concept of hegemony talks of the circular nature of struggle, since it is impossible for any group to dominate another completely, Mikhail Bakhtin's envisaged culture as a dialogic activity, in which meaning is constructed through dialogue. Many new approaches to culture have developed henceforth.

While the materialist approach addressed culture from the point of view of class differences, in the 1960s and 1970s, age, gender, ethnicity and sexuality also came to be identified as important factors in the analysis of culture. This led to the realization that there could be no one way in which the experiences of all the various groups of people could be taken into account.

The Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, Birmingham University, was established in 1964. This was the time that marked a shift in the focus of studies on culture. Now on, the focus of interrogation was the home and the civilized, rather than alien people and strange cultures. Cultural Studies, as this approach came to be known, was quite distinct from all that was done before this, and the direction forged by the CCCS was later taken up all over the globe. What is interesting is that while all the important figures in the earlier discussions were from the social sciences, the important people associated with the CCCS were all from the humanities. Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams, E P Thompson and Stuart Hall are the important people associated with the CCCS. Although an entirely new direction was provided by these people to the study of culture, Stuart Hall, says

In serious, critical intellectual work, there are no 'absolute beginnings' and few unbroken continuities...What we find instead, is an untidy but characteristic unevenness of development. What is important are the significant breaks - where old lines of thought are disrupted, older constellations are displaced, and elements, old and new, are regrouped
Conservation and Preservation: Some Ethical and Legal Issues

around a different set of premises and themes... Cultural Studies as a distinct problematic, emerges from one such moment, in the mid-1950s. Hall says that Hoggart, Williams and Stuart, with total disregard for the debate concerning high/low culture, treated of mass culture as an active component of the culture of a particular society which could be studied and located in history. Whereas earlier the distinction between high and low culture marked the limits for the study of culture, with the Birmingham School, this distinction itself emerged as an area of study. However there are clear distinctions between the ways in which Hoggart, Williams and Thompson approach the high/low dichotomy of culture.

Thompson's primary emphasis was on a culture created by the working class as different from one created for it. Williams talks of three types of cultural forms - the dominant, the residual and the emergent. The dominant cultural mode is an expression of the values and principles of the ruling order. The residual refers to forms that were once dominant, and though they are now no longer so, they still have some influence. The emergent cultural forms are the points of resistance and innovation. They could either mark a point of departure, or be subsumed within the dominant cultural forms. The initiatives of these thinkers led to cultural studies branching into youth and popular culture, ethnic cultures, race as well as class cultures, among other things.

Here then, culture comes to mean the way of life of a group or even a society, the production, transmission and reception of meanings in the group/society, the ways in which this meaning is either established or abandoned. Cultural Studies, thus, meant the study of meanings and their communication, in conjunction with the study of the operation of power.

The different approaches to the study of culture reveals a gradual shift in emphasis from the idea of culture as what you are to culture as what you do. If we look into the theorizing of the French philosopher Michel Foucault, we see that he talks of the fact that power is present everywhere, and that power operates as much through larger structures as through local ones. He also goes on to say that power depends on knowledge for its successful operation. It is from here that Cultural Studies hypothesizes that dominance can be interpreted as being linked to knowledge, while resistance of any kind can be analyzed as counter-knowledge.

3.4 WHAT DOES CULTURAL STUDIES DO?

In order to thus lay down what Cultural Studies does, I shall use the formulations of Agger (qtd. in Jenks 157).

1) Cultural Studies operates with an expanded concept of culture. It rejects the assumptions behind the 'culture debate' and thus rejects the high/low culture binary or, indeed, any attempts to re-establish the grounds for any cultural stratification. It adheres more closely to the anthropological view of culture as being 'the whole way of life of a people', though it does not subscribe to the view of culture as a totality.

2) Following from the above, cultural studies legitimate, justifies, celebrates and politicizes all aspects of popular culture. It regards popular culture as valuable in its own right and not as a 'shadow phenomenon' or simply a vehicle for ideological mystification.
3) The proponents of cultural studies, as representative of their age, recognize the socialization of their own identities through the mass media and communication that they seek to understand.

4) Culture is not viewed in stasis, as fixed or as a closed system. Cultural studies regard culture as emergent, as dynamic and as continual renewal. Culture is not a series of artifacts or frozen symbols but rather a process.

5) Cultural studies are predicated upon conflict rather than order. It investigates, and anticipates, conflict both at the level of face-to-face interaction but also, more significantly, at the level of meaning. Culture cannot be viewed as a unifying principle, a source of shared understanding or a mechanism for legitimating the social bond.

6) Cultural studies are 'democratically' imperialistic. As all its aspects of social life are now 'cultured', then no part of social life is excluded from its interests - operas, fashion, gangland violence, pub talk, shopping, horror films and so on ... they are no longer colonized, canonized or zoned around a central meaning system.

7) Cultural representations are viewed by cultural studies at all levels - inception, mediation and reception, or production, distribution and consumption.

8) Cultural studies are interdisciplinary, it acknowledges no disciplinary origin, it encourages work on the interface of disciplinary concerns and it acknowledges a shifting and sprightly muse.

9) Cultural studies reject absolute values - it does what it wants (and sometimes, it shows!).

### 3.5 LET US SUM UP

The trajectory of the study of culture reveals a gradual shift in emphasis from the idea of culture as what you are to culture as what you do. If we look into the theorizing of the French philosopher Michel Foucault, we see that he talks of the fact that power is present everywhere, and that power operates as much through larger structures as through local ones. He also goes on to say that power depends on knowledge for its successful operation. It is from here that Cultural Studies hypothesizes that dominance can be interpreted as being linked to knowledge, while resistance of any kind can be analyzed as counter-knowledge.

The study of culture, as we initially saw, marks a progress from the basic, pre-social aspects of man's life, through a variety of approaches and theories which attempt to study culture as the lived experience of people, to the modern day 'discipline' of Cultural Studies. Cultural Studies is not an academic discipline in itself, but one that encompasses/uses many different methods, approaches and disciplines. At the same time, what is evident is the growing popularity of the 'discipline' in universities and academic circles. This probably points to the growing relevance and topicality of the idea of Cultural Studies.

### 3.6 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READINGS

Conservation and Preservation: Some Ethical and Legal Issues


### 3.7 ACTIVITIES

1) The best way to understand culture is to explore your own!

You grew up at a particular time and place. How did your location, your economic status and the time when you grew up shape your view of the world? Think of the differences between you and a student in America, or how your aspirations differ from that of your friends' who belong to different economic strata, and also the differences in views between you and your parents. How does your gender influence your choices and aspirations in life? You might idolize certain people. What are the reasons for it? What are the various festivals and events that you celebrate? How are they linked to your life? What would you feel if you were not allowed to celebrate them anymore?

You will need 15-20 minutes to write down your responses to these questions. After you have done this, you will see that what we understand by culture is not a single consolidated entity. It encompasses attitudes and beliefs about identity and difference in society. It traverses the realms of social class, nationalism, political allegiance and generation. You probably realize how all the things mentioned above are in a state of flux. Your status as an Indian today is different from what it was for the pre-1947 generation or even later ones. Your parents' views differ from yours. Males and females function in different ways from each other and also in quite different ways than what they did 10, 20 or 40 years back. The choice of idols has also changed. So have the choice and range, and even the nature of festivals. While earlier the festivals were agrarian and later religious in their nature, now we have a much more commercial aspect to them.

2) Now look at the picture below. The picture is taken from the website <www.nassaulibrary.org/hewlett/olamj06.html>. Can you identify how you relate to many of the things depicted in this collage?

These are all specific. Make a list of all that you relate to in this picture. You will see that all the listed items - cricket, kurta, dhoti, angavastram, sitar, classical music, dance, all these help you to identify your culture.
In this unit we engage in a brief survey of the use of the word ‘culture’ and also discuss the various ways in which culture has been approached as a discipline.

3) Kwame Nkrumah was an influential African leader and a vociferous critic of neo-colonialism. Look at this information concerning him, as narrated by John Hutnyk.

On the wall behind the desk in Nkrumah’s presidential office after he took power in Ghana in 1957, there was displayed a picture of an African man breaking the chains that had bound him. The heroic figure in the foreground was surrounded, in the four corners of the picture, by fleeing Europeans. These were in turn, a colonial administrator, a missionary with a cross, a trader, and an anthropologist carrying the book African Political Systems.

Why do you think that the revolt against colonial powers also included in its purview a revolt against the way in which the colonizers depicted them? Look at the ways in which the culture of a people is studied in the above discussions. In particular, go through the discussion on Malinowski. Now try to think why the revolt against colonial rule also involves a revolt against the anthropologist, as the picture above represents.

3.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS: POSSIBLE ANSWERS

1) The ambit of the cultural was a sense of the ontology of humankind as distinct from other ‘natural’ kinds. Human beings, as they developed, became very different from the other creatures of the world in the sense that they were not governed by the forces of nature in a way that other creatures were. For example, a puppy instinctively knows the danger posed by fire. A human baby, on the other hand, needs its parents to tell about the danger or else the risk of being hurt.

2) Henry Pitt Rivers, Frank Boas and Smith, some important diffusionists, were of the opinion that all cultures of the world were not to be seen independently of each other. There was one mother culture from which all other cultures spread, as these cultures adapted themselves to local conditions. Many were of the opinion that the Egyptian culture might be the one from which all other cultures branched out. The diffusionists also held that while the European culture evolved to a higher plane, other cultures degenerated. This was an important break from the evolutionary line of thought that was being
forwarded by earlier anthropologists, where the question of degeneration of cultures did not arise.

3) It was Antonio Gramsci who provided modern society with a way of linking culture and class through his theory of hegemony. Using Marx's theories, Gramsci showed how dominant ideas come to hold the imagination of the majority, and the ways in which these ideas function to control the masses. Hegemony is the name that he gives to this principle through which consensus is created. It could be in the institutional context, or through values, beliefs, norms and traditions within a culture (which people usually think are apolitical and beyond the ambit of the state). While Marx held that revolution was inevitable, Gramsci talked of culture as a contested space in which social forces struggle to achieve prominence.