
UNIT 2 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

In this unit the learners will be able to discuss the:

- genesis of the subject of social and cultural anthropology;
- historical time frame for their development including the political and economic context;
- historical roots of the differentiation of the two branches in the colonial period; and
- history of development of anthropology in India.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Anthropology, defined as the study of (Hu)Man is paradoxically among the most recent of all disciplines that was considered worthy of study. The reason was also simple, that human communities across the world took their society and ways of life as given, as a taken for granted truth for which no questions were asked. Questions and doubts, that some people naturally have, were answered through existing cosmologies and religious doctrines. In this unit you will learn about the fascinating story of how and why after many centuries of learning to read and write and after developing the astronomical, mathematical, biological and all other sciences, humans finally turned the inquisitive gaze upon themselves.

2.1 WHY ANTHROPOLOGY?

Around the 16th century, Europe underwent a paradigm shift in philosophical thinking as it expanded its geopolitical boundaries across the world in terms of travel and

trade. There was growing disillusionment with the Church and its dictums. The French Revolution as well as the American Revolution brought about the realisation that the social order was not based on divine origins but was an entity that could be shaken at its roots by human action and agency. The exposure to the rest of the globe also made the Europeans realise that societies and people could be found in varieties of forms and shapes, not only in terms of physical differences but also in terms of customs, ways of life and thinking. Even before Darwin and Wallace had formulated the theories of biological evolution, the French thinkers and the Scottish Enlightenment philosophers were formulating their hypotheses of human social evolution and the possibility of society being a human rather than a divine creation. The exposure to other cultures triggered ideas of social evolution as the European thinkers tried to explain the diversity of cultures by connecting them with their own past. Auguste Comte gave his theory of a stage by stage evolution of human societies that set the stage for further speculative thinking on these lines. Comte's thesis that human societies evolved through the ages of Theology, Metaphysics and Reason, put Europeans at the top of the evolutionary scale. When Europeans looked at other people, they thought they were looking down as well as looking back (see Aaron 1965).

While Comte concentrated on the reflective faculties of humans and their capacity for rational thought; another major contributor to theory of social evolution was Herbert Spencer, who was also a contemporary of Charles Darwin and their theories of social and biological evolutions overlapped to some extent. Spencer's rather controversial theory that societies behave like natural systems where all those parts (people) that are weak or lack survival potential get eliminated was established as the popular conception of 'survival of the fittest' that also got mistakenly grafted to Darwin's theory of evolution. Spencer's theory was also used by the emerging industrial capitalism of Europe to justify both the spread of colonial rule and the onus that capitalism put on the individual entrepreneur. Both Comte and Spencer along with other European scholars were representing what is known as the Positivist approach to the study of social phenomenon.

Reflection

The Positivist approach advocated that societies were capable of being studied and analysed as objects like any other object of scientific investigation. In other words the scholar of society was also a scientist who could apply his analytical skills to objectively scrutinise society with the same degree of objective detachment and methodological rigour that a scientist brings to his examinations. Societies were compared to organisms and like organisms they were subjects of evolution and predictable laws.

Two of the greatest 19th century thinkers, Freud and Marx also followed this positivist philosophy to put forward their 'scientific' theories of human bio-psychological and social development respectively. Like Darwin both, had great influence on later developments in social sciences and on the discipline of anthropology. A great deal of theory building in the age of positivism was triggered by the great curiosity that Europeans had about their 'origins' and ultimately it was this search for the origin and evolution of human beings that gave rise formally to a discipline labeled anthropology or the, 'Science of Man'. This original definition of anthropology indicates the two basic assumptions that informed the establishment of this discipline; one, that humans were potential subjects for scientific analysis in all aspects of their being and second, that to be really 'human' was to be a (Hu)Man.

This brings us to another philosophical paradigm of the Age of Reason or Enlightenment; the nature/culture dichotomy, and its superimposition on the female/male duality, recognised and established by almost all major thinkers of the European Renaissance, such as Francis Bacon, Freud and even Darwin. Humans with their faculty of reason were destined to dominate nature and this was also the manner of defining civilisation. Women, whom both Freud and Darwin had characterised as driven by instinct, were not guided by reason, as were men. They were more like nature, biological creatures to be dominated and also protected by men. This was the mindset that attributed all intellectual activity to the realm of the masculine while the feminine domain was confined to the domestic domain. With the result that most of the recognised theoreticians of the West were men.

Check Your Progress 1

1. Name some of the early thinkers who talked about evolution of human beings and societies.

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2. Who postulated the concept of 'survival of the fittest' in terms of social evolution?

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3. Give two reasons why anthropology is known as the 'Science of (Hu)Man'.

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2.2 THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

No theory arises in a vacuum. It is well known that Galileo and Copernicus were ahead of their times and suffered the consequences and Darwin came at the right time to put forward a theory that completely shook what was written in the Bible about Genesis, but was accepted with enthusiasm. The time of development of anthropology was at the peak of the colonising process of Europe over the rest of the world. The relatively equal relationship established through trade was being turned into one of political domination and gross exploitation. Trautmann (1997) has described how the British treated Indians with respect and almost awe as long as they were trading, but as soon as the rule of queen Victoria was established Indians and their culture was denigrated to the level of savagery and all native customs were disparagingly dismissed as 'uncivilised'. The rising needs of capitalist economy were pushing Europe to a relentless search for resources to feed its growing industries both in terms of raw materials as well for markets for selling their goods. However at the same time the Enlightenment period was the time of flowering of ideas of

Equality, Humanism and Liberty; thoughts that originated from the French and American revolutions. There was the strong belief in the Europeans as being ‘civilised’ and carriers of human values of justice and democracy. There was an obvious contradiction between this faith and the genocidal activities that accompanied colonisation.

It was the evolutionary theories that justified and supported the spread of European rule by creating the image of the ‘primitive other’. As put forward by an array of scholars from Comte, Bachofen, Maine, McLennan and others; human societies had gone through several stages that were also linearly progressive. The peak of evolution was reached by the Western societies; whose dominance was further justified by Spencer’s dictum of ‘survival of the fittest’. Thus the Europeans were succeeding because they were more ‘fit’ and also the people they were colonising were the ‘primitives’ who were compared to immature children by Freud and were considered at lower stages of mental evolution by Darwin and as regressed in stages that had not quite reached the patriarchal, male dominated civilisation of the West. Scholars such as Bachofen and McLennan for instance considered female domination as a sign of ‘backwardness’ putting matriline/matriarchy as a lower stage of human evolution. This was in compliance with the view of the nature /culture, women/men dichotomy already established (Ortner 1974). Since western societies were strongly patriarchal in both religion and law, they were superior. They were also self-professed examples of superior civilisation that justified their taking over and ‘civilising’ the primitives.

Check Your Progress 2

4. ‘The growth of anthropology was at its peak during the colonisation process of Europe over the rest of the world.’ State whether the following statement is True or False.

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5. During the Enlightenment period state the ideas that flowered owing to the French and American revolutions.

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2.3 ANTHROPOLOGY AS A DISCIPLINE

The discipline of anthropology was finally established as a distinct discipline with Edward B. Tylor assuming the chair of anthropology at the Oxford University. The goals of the discipline were to formally study and research the origins and diversity of human beings. Darwin had firmly established that the human was a single species biologically and the race theories that had attributed differences in human societies to their racial differences were discarded at the scholarly level. If race was not the criterion then one had to look for other reasons for both the physical as well as the social differences between various human groups. The discipline of anthropology then was to examine the biological as well as social evolution of humans and to

explain the observed differences of physical types and of social and cultural life. The biological evolution needed to look beyond the time when humans became humans so biological evolution was rooted in paleoanthropology or the study of fossil remains of humans and pre human hominids and also primatology or study of behaviour and physiology of higher primates. Social evolution on the other hand not only examined pre-historical remains and archaeological roots but also considered existing human societies as remains of the past of the most evolved societies namely the western European.

It was this last assumption that formed the basis of the theory of social evolution where Tylor assumed that spatial differences could be translated into temporal differences. While this theory put some people on the lower rungs of the evolutionary ladder, it also based itself on what was then recognised as the theory of ‘psychic unity of mankind’. Since humans were one species, it was believed their mental functioning would necessarily be the same. All humans were supposed to have one Culture, what Ingold (1986) has called culture with a capital C. The observed differences were then explained by saying that the different peoples had evolved to different levels of culture, with the added proposition that all would ultimately attain the same level of culture as had already been attained by western civilisation. Anthropology was at times criticised for being a colonial discipline especially as the theory of social evolution was both Eurocentric and directly or indirectly supported colonisation by its definition of ‘civilisation’ as synonymous with the West.

Reflection

Ethnocentrism refers to the feeling of considering one’s own culture as being superior as well as the ‘normal’ way of doing things. Eurocentric perspective refers to the Europeans considering their own society and culture as being at the height of social evolution and most civilised.

Anthropology diversified into four main branches, namely physical or biological anthropology that dealt with human biological diversity; linguistics that dealt with relationship between culture and language, archaeology that delved into the past of human society and social/cultural anthropology. However these branches are not totally exclusive of each other and the fact of humans evolving as cultured beings, who live in society, underlies all aspects of anthropology. The initial Eurocentric bias of anthropology was later replaced by a far more relativistic and humanistic approach. The historical transformations of the world had much to do with changes in anthropological paradigms.

Check Your Progress 3

6. Who assumed the first chair of anthropology in Oxford University?

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7. Name the four major branches of anthropology.

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2.4 THE BRITISH AND THE AMERICAN SCHOOLS OF ANTHROPOLOGY

The intrinsic relationship of anthropology with colonisation is explicit in the further development of the discipline in its British version and the development of what came to be known as the American Cultural Tradition. The academic roots of British structural–functional school was drawn from the functionalism of Durkheim (1950) who belonged to the French school of sociology. The structural–functional school critiqued the classical evolutionists for their speculative theories. Moving away from the deductive theories of evolution they moved to empiricism and developed the field study method that has today become the hall mark of anthropology.

The structural-functional school believed that each society has a structure in the form of social relationships and there is a functional logic of each part of this structure that contributes to the whole. The basic premises of structural functionalism was based on the axiom of cultural relativism, that cultures were not higher and lower manifestation of stages of the same culture, but cultures in plural were each functional wholes. Each society was bound and could be compared to a living organism whose parts contribute to the functioning of the entire body. Thus one could not study parts of cultures, like religion and kinship by using the comparative method, as was done in classical evolutionary theory, but a society needed to be studied in its entirety and in depth, and the functional relationship between its parts established by close and intimate interaction with the people concerned. The British anthropologists mainly responsible for this approach used it to study those societies under the rule of the Crown that needed to be governed to be in stable equilibrium. To some extent the desire of the administrators was reflected in the academic presumptions.

Reflection

Cultural Relativism refers to the theoretical position where aspects of any culture are seen as relevant, that is functional in their own context and not comparable to other cultures. This was a criticism of evolutionary theory and foundation of functional theory.

The fieldwork method was given its classical shape by Bronislaw Malinowski's long duration study of the Trobriand islanders. That Malinowski became a fieldworker of such dedication, not voluntarily but by the exigencies of the World War, did not deter from him being declared the master fieldworker of all times and his book *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* (1922) a manual that all anthropology students read like the Bible.

The functional studies were carried out by the British and French anthropologists in most of the colonies and they were often engaged by the colonial governments to help the administration by providing information about the people so that they could be better governed and managed. Often as in India, many administrators became anthropologists of sorts when they carried out fieldwork among the people they were required to govern. But the works of these administrators/ethnographers were not free from bias (Channa 1992). However, although anthropologists were often initially in the pay of the state, and were required to support the state agenda of colonisation; as a result of long stay and intimate contact with the people they were sent to study, they often turned up against the policies of the state. Sometimes their influence changed the policies of the government, like for example the influence of anthropologist Verrier Elwin were seen on the policies made by Nehru's government

regarding the manner in which the people of North-East of India were to be governed. Anthropologists often advocated for retention of local customs and were against undue interference in the lives of the native. The anthropologists working in India and Africa were mostly part of governments that worked from, 'outside'. India and large parts of Africa were external colonies of the British, French and Dutch governments, that retained to a large extent their native societies and cultures; similar conditions existed in Indonesia, Burma and other colonies not totally taken over by the white populations.

In America, the situation was quite different. Here the Native Americans had not only been dispersed and their societies destroyed; many tribes and communities had been depleted to almost the last survivors, when the anthropologists began to study them. The father of American anthropology, Franz Boas also drew his roots from German Diffusionism, that emphasised history, migration and a more particularistic view of social transformation. Unlike the classical evolutionist and functional roots of British social anthropology, the Americans, facing genocide and massive dissemination of societies could not face up to a synchronic, functional view of timeless harmony visualised by the structural-functionalists. First of all they focused, by necessity on the concept of culture as against that of society because what they did get to study were not functioning societies but left over bits of people's lives like myths, folklore, material culture and narratives of ways of lives that had disappeared or were going to disappear soon. The people they studied, like the Navaho were a people living in reservations, in abject poverty, mental and physical misery, practicing witchcraft not having a functioning society like the study made by Evans-Pritchard on the Azande, but to survive conditions of extreme hardship.

Reflection

Diffusionism is the theory that emphasises on the spread of cultures from centers of their origin and not on parallel evolution of similar traits. Unlike evolution it is more inclined towards the decline of cultures over the passage of time and their distance from the point of their origin. They believe that original concepts occur rarely and similarities observed in cultural traits is due to diffusion.

Kroeber, a direct student of Boas and a doyen of American anthropology, gave his famous definition of culture as 'super-organic, supra-individual'; in other words something that could still be studied even if the culture bearers were gone. Boas' Historical Particularism was not a theory of sweeping generalisations but looked upon culture as a product of history, situated in specific environmental conditions and carried by people who had particular mindsets that were conducive to the nature of culture they were carrying. In other words Boas and his followers did not limit themselves to the domain of the social exclusively like the structural-functionalists but looked to history, psychology and environment to explain the nature of culture. Boas' book *The Mind of the Primitive Man*, was a study in cognition and he was also influenced by Gestalt Psychology of the German school. The concept of ethos, developed by Kroeber, where he talks of the whole as being something other than the sum of its parts, was also influenced by the Gestalt school. Other scholars emerging from the American School developed the link between culture and personality further, bringing in psychological concepts to explain cultural differences, like Ruth Benedict's (1934) work *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, based on the patterns of culture also made use of the concept of cultural ethos. Boas transmitted his interest in psychology to his students such as Margaret Mead, Linton and others who later laid the foundations of the branch of psychological anthropology that developed out of

the culture personality school. Freudian theory of early formation of personality was reformulated by anthropologists who pointed out that early childhood experiences were embedded in culturally specific methods of child rearing and therefore culture was a prime driver of personality formation. One off shoot of this theory was the concept of national culture that found great popularity.

The American school not only branched off into psychological fields but also into ecological anthropology, economic anthropology, medical anthropology and historical anthropology from its roots of historical particularism. After the Fifties however the separation of the two traditions almost disappeared as both structural functionalism and historical particularism were replaced by more contemporary theories.

Reflection

Sigmund Freud founded the psychoanalytic school and was known for his theories of human personality development that he identified as rooted in early childhood experiences. He explained neurosis in terms of unresolved contradictions of childhood such as the Oedipal Complex.

Check Your Progress 4

- 8. Which method of study is the hallmark of anthropology?
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- 9. Who authored the book *Argonauts of the Western Pacific*?
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- 10. Who is regarded as the father of American anthropology?
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- 11. Why did the American anthropologists while studying the people like the Navaho focused on the concept and study of cultures instead of society?
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- 12. Name some of the early American anthropologists.
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2.5 DEVELOPMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY IN INDIA

India was a British colony when anthropology was developing. The initial works that may be regarded as ethnographies were done by the British administrators like Hutton, with their racial bias and Eurocentrism (Channa 1992), yet they were genuinely academically oriented and were a highly educated set of people with a great deal of curiosity about the people and cultures they were trying to rule. Following the lead given by their rulers, the early scholars who we now refer to as the fathers of anthropological thinking in India, scholars like S.C. Roy and Ananthakrishna Iyer, were influenced by European philosophy of evolution and also by a universal humanism as is evident in the writings of Roy about the central Indian tribes. They worked closely with the British administration and created some very comprehensive ethnologies combining what is now distinguished as social/cultural anthropology and biological anthropology. These works like Roy's work on the Mundas and the Oraons and Iyer's work on the Cochin tribes, included all aspects of life, like history, migration, settlements, physical features of the people, their material culture, language and social institutions.

Calcutta was the first university to have a department of anthropology in 1921, and had among its staff persons like B.S. Guha, Ananthakrishna Iyer, Panchanan Mitra, N.K. Bose and others. Although social anthropology was first introduced as part of sociology syllabus in Bombay University in 1919; initially anthropology was taught as an integrated subject that was inclusive of the physical and social aspects. It was more ethnology than anthropology as can be seen from the monographs of scholars like S.C. Roy and even those like N.K. Bose, who included all aspects of a society in their description.

The initial work on what was then known as anthropology was largely the collection of data on the tribal or primitive (as they were then known) under the evolutionist assumption that these ways of life were to disappear. This work of compilation was begun by H.H. Risley, who, after the Census work in 1931 initiated an Ethnographic Survey of India. Since not all parts of India were under British rule at that time, a request had gone to the sovereign states to co-operate with this survey. The Cochin Durbar was one entity that agreed to have an ethnographic survey and appointed L.K. Ananthakrishna Iyer as Superintendent of Ethnography of the Cochin state from 1902-1924; that resulted in the two volumes of the work; *Tribes and Castes of Cochin*, published from 1908-1912. Iyer continued his study till 1920 and then joined Calcutta University in 1921 from where he retired in 1932.

It is interesting to know that as a native anthropologist Iyer evoked huge amount of interest among his European counterparts, who were eager to listen to him deliver lectures on the 'primitive' people of India. He travelled and lectured extensively in Europe and attended the very first Congress of Anthropological and Ethnological Sciences, held in London, in 1934; where he was given huge recognition.

When anthropology established itself as a field science and the writing of individual ethnographies based on the holistic and functional study of single community was initiated, a number of anthropologists from western countries visited and worked in India. Prominent among them were A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, the father of anthropology in Great Britain, who wrote his classic monograph on *The Andaman Islanders*,

published by Cambridge University Press in 1922. Before him W.H.R. Rivers, who was on the border of evolutionism and functionalism; wrote his original work on *The Todas*, in 1911, a year when the Seligmans' had also published their ethnography of *The Veddas of Ceylon*.

S.C. Roy is well known for his scholarly compilations on the Central Indian tribes such as the Mundas and the Oraons. His work is similar to the early ethnographers. Another scholar in the same genre doing generalised comparative ethnology was Iravati Karve. Karve did a region wise compilation of the various kinship systems in India, including an appraisal of the ancient Indian kinship usages that she had retrieved from her study of Indian mythology. However, her seminal contribution was to show that caste and race were not linked in India; a hypothesis that had been generated by H.H. Risley and supported by scholars such as G.S. Ghurye.

These general ethnographies were followed by more specific and focused works like that of P.O. Bodding, whose work on Santal medicine (1925-1940) has by now assumed the status of a classic in medical anthropology. Bodding, a Norwegian scholar is also well known for his compilation of the Santal grammar (1922) and other works on Santal folklore and Santal riddles and witchcraft.

A student of A.R. Radcliffe-Brown, M.N Srinivas, is renowned not only for his excellent ethnography but also for developing critical insights into the institution of caste from an indigenous perspective. His use of the terms *jati* and *varna* and introduction of concepts such as Sanskritisation and Dominant Caste, has shown that an insider's perspective can be very enriching.

A number of scholars of both Indian and western origin worked in India from the 1930s onwards using field study methods to develop analytical concepts and to develop a more India oriented anthropology. From the year 1938 onwards, a large number of American anthropologists also visited and worked in India that included people like McKim Marriott, Oscar Lewis, Maurice Opler, Stanly and Ruth Freed, Robert Redfield, Kathleen Gough, Joan P Mencher, Pauline Kolenda and many others, who also worked in close collaboration with indigenous scholars and focused on specifically Indian issues, like caste, '*jajmani*', untouchability, village studies, and tribes. There were many analytical terms and categories that developed during this period, like Universalisation and Parochialisation, Little Tradition and Great Tradition, Tribalisation, Hinduisation and so on. A matter of much theoretical debate was the identification of 'tribe' as a category, given the Indian context; and the notion of tribe-caste continuum was phrased by scholars such as N.K. Bose and several others (Nathan 1997).

Some western anthropologists like Verrier Elwin and Christopher von Fürer-Haimendorf, practically left their original countries to go native. Elwin, a born Englishman and Christian missionary by profession and training had rejected both identities to become an Indian citizen and also to accept a Hindu identity although not a conservative upper caste one. A great admirer and follower of Gandhi, Elwin happily merged with the free and easy life of the tribes, where he married and fathered his children. He proposed his philosophy for what is now Arunachal Pradesh in terms of what he visualised as freedom of the people to choose their way of life without being subject to any external pressure. His close association with the first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, led to the policy of Panch Sheel and a tolerant attitude towards the tribes to continue with their way of life.

Reflection

Jajmani refers to a redistributive system based on agriculture found in the caste based Indian villages. The landholding castes give share of produce to specialist caste groups who provide them with services like hair cutting, washing of clothes and agricultural labour. In many parts of India the Brahmin is also a dependent caste providing ritual services in exchange for food and other subsistence.

Universalisation and Parochialisation: Universalisation is the process of cultural transmission where a trait from a simpler society gets absorbed into the universal culture and Parochialisation is the opposite trend where a trait from a complex civilisation is accepted into a local culture in a modified form.

Little Tradition and Great Tradition: These terms were coined by Robert Redfield and refer to the cultures of the simple society and complex society respectively.

Tribalisation: The acceptance of cultural traits from a tribal society into caste society so that they develop cultural traits similar to that of the tribe. It may also mean giving up of some caste based traits and accepting rituals and food that is found among the tribes.

Hinduisation: This refers mostly to acceptance of Brahmanical values and caste system.

The Indian scholars were equally influenced in this analytical phase by the American school as they had earlier been exposed primarily to the British school and the continent. Some of the early Indian scholars who made significant contribution to the study of Indian society were S.C. Dube, Leela Dube, A Aiyappan, L.P Vidyarthi and others. From the fifties onwards, as anthropology was taught as a separate subject, the combined ethnological approach used earlier was replaced by a well-developed curriculum which included in-depth study of social anthropology, physical anthropology and archaeology.

In more recent times, from the eighties onwards, Indian anthropology has matured into a far more critical and post-colonial discipline. Works are now being focused on specific issues, like ecology, gender, exploitation of caste and question of identities in a complex and transforming world. More contemporary scholars like B.K. Roy Burman, Virginius Xaxa, Felix Padel, B.D. Sharma have turned a critical gaze upon the situation of tribes in India, in terms of their exploitation and loss of identity and resources.

Some stalwarts of Indian anthropology like S.C. Dube and N.K. Bose have given their own classification of the phases through which Indian anthropology has developed. They identify an earlier phase of compilation and making of encyclopedias and data base of the tribes, a second phase of empirical fieldwork and creation of qualitatively constructed monographs on tribes, and third, the analytical work done on them. According to D.N. Majumdar, the first phase can be called the Formulation Phase (1774-1911), the second phase can be called the Constructive Phase, lasting from 1912-1937, and the Critical phase that began from 1938. However there has been considerable change from the nineties onwards when theoretical transformations have led to reconsidering the concept of tribe itself. Following the decolonising theoretical shifts, the earlier accepted terminologies and labels such as 'primitive', 'tribe', 'wild' etc., are being reformulated and considerable rethinking is being done (Channa 2015).

It is now realised that much of the classification and labelling was done, not in deference to the reality but to fulfill the administrative needs of the power holders (Xaxa 2008, Rycroft and Dasgupta 2011). A significant development has been the writings of the indigenous scholars; those that were the objects of study have now agency and a voice to speak about themselves (Hümtsoe-Nienü, Pimomo and Tünyi 2012, Kamei 2004).

Contemporary Indian anthropology is also engaged in advocacy and applied aspects of bringing the voice of the marginal to the forefront and to also bring out the real nature of tribal society, to show that they are not ‘primitive’ or less developed but have had centuries of well adapted economies and are repository of knowledge systems of great value, especially for a sustainable future.

Check Your Progress 5

13. Name the University in India where the first department of Anthropology was established in 1921.

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14. In which University social anthropology was first introduced as a part of the Sociology syllabus in 1919 in India?

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15. Who is regarded as the father of anthropology in Great Britain? Name his classic monograph?

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16. Who authored *The Todas*?

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2.6 SUMMARY

In this Unit the learners have been given a sweeping glance at the discipline of anthropology, its foundations that are rooted in the history of Europe and its relevance and spread during the early years. Colonisation was a major impetus to the foundation of this subject formally as the British and other European and later American administrators needed to know about the people they were ruling. Although anthropology initially developed as the British, French and American Schools, today we have a more integrated global perspective.

The knowledge acquired by the anthropologists by their fieldwork methods were seen as assets for understanding and administering unfamiliar people. In the process the colonisers also justified colonisation based upon the evolutionary schema but were later severely criticised by field based anthropologists who discovered that most cultural traits have a relevance in their own context and cannot be graded as high or low. This perspective known as cultural relativism later made anthropologists advocate for the rights of marginal people such as the indigenous people of the world. In India too although anthropology began as a colonial subject it soon developed into a critical discipline where anthropologists tried to defend the life ways of tribal and non-urban people and also through their intervention, many laws and policies were adopted by the Indian state to allow the tribal people to enjoy their own ways of life. As these life ways are increasingly coming under threat from the spread of neo-liberal and force of global capitalism, anthropologists are coming to the defense of the marginal communities, their ways of life. They have in the process also developed critiques of conventional economic theories and concepts of development that only take economic growth as criteria. Social and cultural anthropology is thus today a very relevant subject and especially necessary for administrators and policy makers to study. In the next unit we will be looking at how social and cultural anthropology is related to other disciplines like sociology, psychology, history etc.

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2.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress

1. Auguste Comte, Herbert Spencer, Wallace and Charles Darwin were some of the early thinkers who talked about evolution of human beings and societies.
2. Herbert Spencer
3. refer to section 2.1
4. True
5. refer to section 2.2.
6. Edward B. Tylor
7. (a) physical or biological anthropology (b) social and cultural anthropology; (c) archaeological anthropology (d) linguistics anthropology.
8. Fieldwork

9. Bronislaw Malinowski
10. Franz Boas
11. refer to section 2.4.
12. Franz Boas, A.L. Kroeber, E.Evans Pritchard, Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict and many more.
13. Calcutta University
14. Bombay University
15. A. R. Radcliffe-Brown is regarded as the father of anthropology in Great Britain. *The Andaman Islanders* is his classic monograph.
16. W.H.R. Rivers authored *The Todas*.



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