

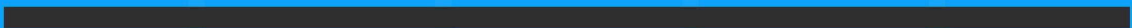


School of Social Sciences
Indira Gandhi National Open University

BANE-145

APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY





APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

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**School of Social Sciences
Indira Gandhi National Open University**

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IGNOU

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School of Social Sciences
IGNOU

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Discipline of Anthropology
School of Social Sciences
IGNOU

Dr. Palla Venkatramana
Discipline of Anthropology
School of Social Sciences
IGNOU

Dr. K. Anil Kumar
Discipline of Anthropology
School of Social Sciences
IGNOU

COURSE COORDINATOR

Dr. Mitoo Das
Discipline of Anthropology
School of Social Sciences, IGNOU

Editor (Content, Formatting and Language)

Dr. Mitoo Das, Discipline of Anthropology, School
of Social Sciences, IGNOU

COURSE PREPARATION TEAM

Block	Unit Writers
Block 1 Introducing Applied Anthropology	
Unit 1 History of Applied Anthropology	Prof. R. P. Mitra, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi
Unit 2 Approaches to the Study of Applied Anthropology	Prof. R. P. Mitra, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi
Unit 3 Ethics in Applied Anthropology	Dr. Prashant Khattri, Assistant Professor Department of Anthropology, University of Allahabad, Allahabad
Block 2 Various Areas of Applied Anthropology I	
Unit 4 Applied Anthropology and Development	Dr. Indrani Mukherjee, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi
Unit 5 Applied Anthropology and Market	Dr. Indrani Mukherjee, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi
Unit 6 Applied Anthropology and Health	Dr. Vijit Deepani, Project Technical Officer (Sr. Investigator), National Institute of Medical Statistics, Indian Council of Medical Research, New Delhi
Unit 7 Applied Anthropology and Evaluation of the Body	Dr. Meenal Dhall, Assistant Professor Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi
Block 3 Various Areas of Applied Anthropology II	
Unit 8: Applied Anthropology and Forensic Anthropology	Dr. Monika Saini, Assistant Professor Department of Social Sciences, National Institute of Health and Family Welfare (NIHFW), New Delhi
Unit 9: Applied Anthropology and Multimedia	Dr. Indrani Mukherjee, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi

Unit 10: Applied Anthropology and Disaster Management	Dr. Prashant Khattri, Assistant Professor Department of Anthropology, University of Allahabad, Allahabad
Block 4 Utilising Applied Knowledge in Practice	
Unit 11: Tools and Techniques	Mr. Ubaid Ahmad Dar, Research Scholar and UGC Senior Research Fellow, Discipline of Anthropology, SOSS, IGNOU, Delhi
Unit 12: Capacity Development	Dr. Indrani Mukherjee, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi
Unit 13: Involvement in Civil Societies and the State	Prof. Avanish Kumar, Public Policy and Governance, Management Development Institute, Gurgaon

Cover Design: Dr. Mitoo Das

Academic Consultants: Dr. Pankaj Upadhyay and Dr. Smarika Awasthi

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Mr. Rajiv Girdhar
Assistant Registrar
MPDD, IGNOU, New Delhi

Mr. Hemant Prida
Section Officer (Pub.)
MPDD, IGNOU, New Delhi

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BANE-145 APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

Course Introduction

Applied Anthropology deals with the application of anthropological data, perspectives, theories, and methods to recognise, evaluate, and solve social concerns. This means it is the practical aspect of anthropology where theories and methods are utilised to address the needs of people and institutions by providing a way out for their problems and circumstances. Due to this, this subfield of anthropology has become quite relevant in today's times and is now considered as one of the main branches of anthropology.

This is a six credit course. The course is divided into four blocks. The first block introduces the learner to applied anthropology by providing a historical brief followed by approaches to its study and ethical concerns involved in the practice of applied anthropology. The second and third blocks inform comprehensively the various areas in which anthropology can be applied pragmatically to make people's lives better and finally the last block attempts to engage the learner with the tools and techniques used in applied anthropology, how capacity can be built or developed to actually work in circumstances to create change and how anthropologists in collaboration with civil societies and the government can earnestly strategise and work for human society's advancement.

Course Outcomes

After completing the course, a learner is expected to:

- Define the meaning of applied anthropology;
- Describe the different approaches through which anthropology can be applied in varied scenarios;
- Identify arenas in which applied anthropology can constructively participate; and
- Recognise the tools required in applied anthropology to do the above, along with building capacity to do such work with the government and civil societies.

Course Presentation

The Course is divided into four blocks. Each block carries a theme which is reflected in the form of units. There are a total of 13 units in this course. Below we provide you with a brief explanation of what each unit covers in the thematic blocks.

Block 1 Introducing Applied Anthropology

This block as the name suggests is an introduction to what applied anthropology is and what it does. The block is divided into three units. The

first unit titled, *History of Applied Anthropology* will provide you with an elaborate explanation of what applied anthropology is, how it grew to become an established branch in anthropology, how it significantly also developed in India as a specialised branch and prepare you to better understand how with training in applied anthropology, you can be equipped to manage actual local and global concerns. The second unit is *Approaches in Applied Anthropology* and it will, while differentiating between an applied and a practicing anthropologist explain to the learner the approaches that are available in studying and doing applied anthropology, and how each is important in different scenarios and is used accordingly. The unit will tell you how applied anthropologists can partake in action anthropology or corporate anthropology in today's globalised world etc., and provide practical solutions. The third and last unit of this block is *Ethics in Applied Anthropology* and it will discuss how ethics developed in anthropology's history with concrete examples from its past. The unit will inform you about how the primary goal is to safeguard the interests of the people whom applied anthropologists study. To assist in this, institutional bodies like SfAA has designed ethical norms to be followed by applied anthropologists which has been provided in this unit for your better understanding.

Block 2 Various Areas of Applied Anthropology I

This block as the name suggests will take you through different areas where applied anthropologists can make their presence felt significantly. The first unit in this section that is, Unit 4, is called *Applied Anthropology and Development*. This unit other than providing you with a definition of what development is, will explain how anthropology engages with the idea of development, and how applied anthropologists work in the areas of development keeping in mind the importance of sustainable development goals. Unit 5 which is *Applied Anthropology and Market* will make you know about the different kinds of market and how anthropologists view market. This will be followed by how anthropological methodology is used to ethically and effectively used in studying markets. Unit 6 is *Applied Anthropology and Health*. It will along with describing the anthropological notion of health, tell you how applied anthropologists manage health concerns and also contribute to research on health in general and India specifically. The last unit, Unit 7, *Applied Anthropology and Evaluation of Body* will, taking into consideration the human body, deal with the concepts of anthropometry, design anthropometry, physiological anthropology and kinanthropometry. You will get a clear glimpse of each area mentioned above and see how applied anthropology employs itself with each to come out with viable solutions in everyday life.

Block 3 Various Areas of Applied Anthropology II

This block is a continuation of the previous block wherein we provide you with more arenas where applied anthropologists can work diligently to provide better solutions to people. The first unit in this block is Unit 8 and is

entitled *Applied Anthropology and Forensic Anthropology*. In this unit you will learn to define what forensic anthropology is along with the roles and functions of a forensic anthropologist. You will be taught to identify the methods used by them in identification of persons and learn about the profile of forensic anthropology in India. The next unit, Unit 9 is *Applied Anthropology and Multimedia*. This unit will let you know how multimedia is understood and researched in the context of anthropology. It will give you a perspective on intersectional and applied areas of research between anthropology and specific socially relevant areas of concern within the framework of multimedia. The last unit in this block, Unit 10 is *Applied Anthropology and Disaster Management*. This unit will inform you about how anthropologists view disasters and how they offer their knowledge and expertise to its management. It will thus assist you to the application of anthropology to disaster management and appreciate anthropologists' involvement in managing disasters.

Block 4 Utilising Applied Knowledge in Practice

This is the last block in the course and the first unit is Unit 11. It is called *Tools and Techniques* and will discuss varied tools and techniques used by applied anthropologists in their research. It will let you know how tools and techniques used in applied anthropological research are different from basic anthropological research tools depending on the kind of settings they research in. The second unit is Unit 12 and is called *Capacity Development*. This unit will help you know about the conceptual difference between capacity building and capacity development while describing the idea behind capacity development within the development discourse. The unit will also help to recognise some complexities related to capacity development. The last unit of this block and this course is Unit 13, *Involvement in Civil Societies and the State*. Besides learning about the concepts of civil society and state, you will learn how anthropologists have contributed to development and policymaking. You will also learn how you yourself can hone the skills to work with anthropological knowledge in civil societies and the state. It will assist you to understand and undertake holistic research on human society in order to bridge the gap between state and society.

With this brief about the course, you are now ready to go through each lesson in a comprehensive manner. As you will be doing the major part of the studying on your own, the lessons have been created in such a way to assist you understand the course in an inclusive manner. It is advised that you go through the course sequentially so as to not lose the thread of clarity. As you would find a teacher in a classroom teaching a course in a thematic and chronological manner, similarly you too need to study your course from Unit 1 and end it with the last unit, in this case, Unit 13. Units are further divided into sections and sub sections for your easy reading and better understanding. Each unit comes with learning outcomes which outline what is expected from

you after the unit is read. Units also contain Check your Progress throughout so as to help you test yourself to see, if you have learnt what you have read. This is a good way to go about the lesson and will help you prepare well for your Term End Examination later as you will learn to frame your answers in your own words rather than just copying and pasting from the sections. Each unit also contains a Summary towards the end which gives you a brief about what the lesson entailed. The units end with References which are cited works mentioned through the lesson and Answers to Check Your Progress, which assists you to know where the answers to your questions are placed. It is reiterated that though the sections where the answers can be sought are given, you should attempt to frame the answers in your own words which will bring clarity in your understanding of the units.

Good luck with your reading and it is hoped that this course will provide as a basic preliminary training in your journey towards becoming an applied anthropologist.



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BLOCK 1
INTRODUCING APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

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Unit 1
History of Applied Anthropology

Unit 2
Approaches to the Study of Applied Anthropology

Unit 3
Ethics in Applied Anthropology

UNIT 1 HISTORY OF APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY*

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Applied Anthropology: The Concept
- 1.2 Historical Development of Applied Anthropology
- 1.3 Applied Anthropology in India
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References
- 1.6 Answers to Check my Progress

Learning Outcomes

After reading this unit the students will learn to:

- Define what applied anthropology is;
- Describe the growth of applied anthropology;
- Explain in what ways applied anthropology is practiced in India; and
- Identify the various roles of an applied anthropologist

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Ever since Rene Descartes in his famous treaty *Discourse on Methods* in the seventeenth century brought out the distinction between theory and practice, all disciplines are broadly divided into what is called their theoretical and their applied aspects. A theory or a 'systematic body of objective knowledge to understand a range of phenomenon' is closely linked to its applied aspects. They feed from one another, a theory being refined by its application and a modified theory in turn enriching its applied aspects in a dialectical manner. In this regard anthropology is no exception and like other disciplines it also has its body of theoretical knowledge and its applied aspects. In certain disciplines like physics or psychology this division is fairly marked in the sense that there are different departments and places where knowledge is created and applied. For example there are departments like applied psychology or applied geology in many universities. This is not so pronounced in anthropology where theoretical and applied anthropology have greater similarities than distinctions and both are embedded in one another. Some anthropologists like Margaret Mead say "all anthropology is applied" (1975:13). This is more so in case of Indian Anthropology. The same anthropologist could be an applied anthropologist and a 'theoretical anthropologist' depending upon the context. The reason for this will become

* **Contributor:** Prof. R. P. Mitra, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi

clear as we proceed with the lesson. We begin with trying to define what applied anthropology is.

1.1 APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY: THE CONCEPT

Applied anthropology can be defined as anthropology which is used for solving a problem. It is anthropology in use. Malinowski, the founding father of modern anthropology in the introduction of his article 'Practical Anthropology', (1929) wrote that all sciences came into being with their applications and same is the case for anthropology. He strongly advocated application of anthropological knowledge in understanding the situation of indigenous people and their efficient administration by the colonial government. He referred to it as practical anthropology. Practical anthropology is a discipline which bridges the gap between theoretical anthropology and its applications. Anthropologists have talked of applied anthropology in terms of its influence through affecting social relationship, behaviour or the cultural systems

In 1941, Margaret Mead, Elliot Smith and others who founded the Society of Applied Anthropology, the most well recognised professional body of applied anthropologists, defined applied anthropology as:

'Application of anthropological perspectives through interdisciplinary scientific investigation of human relationships for solving practical problems'. The definition emphasises applied anthropology as a science and points out the following:

- a) Location: They located applied anthropology as a part of interdisciplinary team where anthropologists work in tandem with specialists from other disciplines.
- b) Focus: Applied anthropology for them is concerned with understanding and analysis of human relationships and how it can help in solving a social problem.

Charles Winnik, in one of the earliest dictionaries of anthropology defined applied anthropology as a type of 'anthropological knowledge'. He defined applied anthropology as:

"The application of anthropological knowledge to meet the needs of the group for which the anthropologist is working. This may include giving advice, administration or giving instructions". (1958: 28)

George Foster, author of one of earliest text books on applied anthropology in 1969 define it as those 'professional activities of anthropologists concerned primarily with changes of human behaviour to solve a social, economic or a technological problem. For Foster applied anthropology is concerned with solving problems rather than dwelling on anthropological theories (1969: 54).

One of the criticisms of his definition has been its limited scope of restricting applied anthropology to the study of ‘change situation’ only.

Van Willigen, one of the most well-known applied anthropologists defined applied anthropology in terms of its impact on cultural systems. Applied anthropology according to him is “a complex of related, research-based, instrumental methods which produce change or stability in specific cultural systems through provision of data, initiation of direct action, and/ or the formation of policy. This process can take many forms, varying in terms of problem, role of the anthropologist, motivating values, and extent of action involvement”. (2002: 11).

Check Your Progress

- 1) Define the term applied anthropology.

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- 2) What are different focus areas of change in applied anthropology?

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1.2 HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

History and growth of applied anthropology is closely linked to development of anthropology as an academic discipline and applied anthropology has been part of mainstream anthropology right since its beginning. Anthropology as a discipline emerged during the nineteenth century with human evolution as its central concern (Ingold 1994: XIV). The ‘progressive evolutionary theory’ was the first comprehensive paradigm that legitimated the rise of a separate discipline of anthropology. The central concern was the biological and cultural evolutionary history of humankind. For them the contemporary western civilisation was the final stage of the progressive transformation process during which social organisation passed through various stages. The aboriginal and native communities of Africa, Asia, Oceania and South and North America were seen as representative of these past forms. Therefore they were labeled as ‘primitive societies’ and their culture as ‘primitive

culture'. The objective of anthropology was to study them in order to know the past of humankind and the earliest forms of social organisation. Thus anthropology started as a quest to understand what the Euro-American scholars referred to as the 'other cultures'. Physical anthropology was a quest to understand the biological aspect of human evolution and archaeological anthropology was to understand the prehistoric aspect of this culture. Although reconstruction of the past from the study of contemporary primitive communities, biological and material culture remnants were the broad mandate of anthropology, it was anthropological accounts of tribes and indigenous communities that brought them recognition and deference from the others. According to Barnett, applied anthropology begins during the last decades of the 19th century in United States and England. The first area of application was tribal studies and anthropological insights were used to 'manage the affairs of the tribes and indigenous people by the colonial administrators. We can divide the history of applied anthropology into four different phases with subdivisions within them.

a) Applied Ethnology Phase

It was an American anthropologist called Brinton, who first talked of Applied Anthropology as early as 1896 for the management of the indigenous communities (Foster 1969: 198). With rapid assimilation of indigenous Amerindian people, often at a great cost to their well-being, it was felt that there is every possibility of complete disappearance of their identity and their cultural obliteration. In 1879, the Government of United States founded the *Bureau of Ethnology* to collect information about the indigenous Amerindian people to manage their affairs (Bennett 1994: 25). It employed the services of the anthropologists to advice the federal government to introduce reformation and changes to facilitate their gradual assimilation to the American way of life. Anthropological knowledge was also sought to document the fast disappearing customs, traditions and social practices of these communities (ibid: 27). Thus applied anthropology began as a tool of public administration in indigenous areas and as salvage anthropology to document the disappearing cultural practices of these communities. A function similar to Bureau of Ethnology was played by the Colonial office of the British Empire during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Services of anthropologists as a specialist of tribes were sought as an aid for the administration of Colonies in different parts of Africa and Asia (ibid: 27). Mooney has refereed to this phase as applied ethnology (Ferraro and Andreatta 2014: 55). Radcliffe-Brown founded the 'School of African Studies' at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. The primary objective of the school was to improve the relationship between the indigenous people and the white colonisers. Malinowski also advocated that anthropologists should work for improving the efficiency of colonial administrators. He called it as *practical anthropology* as already mentioned above (O'Driscoll 2009:14).

b) Applied Ethnology and Colonialism

It is now a well-accepted fact that applied anthropology in its initial years was looked upon by the colonial administrators as a useful aid, facilitating the administrative handling and control of natives. The same was the case in context of India. Anthropological knowledge in its initial years was an important constituent of what is infamously called as 'cultural technology of rule' (Dirk 2001: 9). You should understand that colonial conquest and domination was not only made possible through superior military technology but also through social and cultural interventions and manipulations which enabled them to rule and exploit the native population. In India services of anthropologists were utilised by Colonial government for enumeration, classification and census operations. Herbert Risley and J.H. Hutton, two very well-known anthropologists of their time were called upon to head the census of India in 1901 and 1931 respectively (ibid: 51). Other than this service, anthropologists were also sought for training of colonial administrators (Van Willigen, 1993: 25). Anthropologists also advised the colonial governments in handling uprising and protests in tribal areas. In defense of applied ethnology it can be said that there were not many instances of any direct collaboration between anthropologists and colonial governments. On the flip side the application of anthropology made anthropology popular. It also helped changing the perception of tribes as primitive people and drew people 'awe of their nobility'. Later this challenged the moral justification of colonisation as 'civilising the savages'.

c) Applied Anthropology and Multidisciplinary Movement

The year 1929-30 was marked by severe economic recession, collapse of market, closing down of business, unemployment and economic misery for people. This phase is commonly known as the great economic depression. This called for a new more humanistic perspective in business and industry and greater attention to economic hardships and suffering experienced by people. The economic crisis led to changes in the way in which business and industry operated. It called for a focus on human relationships in industrial management and recognition of humans as an important resource other than natural resources essential for productivity. Anthropologists' expertise in dealing with human relationships albeit with tribes as a part of ethnological studies made it possible for anthropologists to associate themselves with new development. They also addressed these new challenges convincingly and this marks the beginning of engagement of anthropologists with real problems. The 1930s saw anthropologists like W. Lloyd Warner, Fred Richardson and Elliot Chapple joining multidisciplinary teams working on human relations and industrial management. Elliot referred to this new engagement as *Engineering Anthropology* (Bennett 1996: 27). It

was this nascent beginning which later emerged as an important focus of applied anthropology. It was being felt in that there is no single cause for a problem. Multiple causalities also called for a multidisciplinary approach in solving social problems and applied anthropology also become part of this multidisciplinary team. It was this thread which later led to the development of applied anthropology in days to come as a discipline concerned with facilitating change and enhancing human welfare (ibid: 39).

d) Applied Anthropology and Problem Oriented Research

This phase marks the involvement of anthropologists in solving problems posed by the government and other agencies. Large numbers of anthropologists were employed to work on wide range of issues including impact of food rationing and food choices, national morality, public opinion surveys, national character studies of citizens of enemy nations etc. The famous work of Ruth Benedict, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, appeared in 1946, to explain the Japanese national character. Some of the famous anthropologists like Margaret Mead also helped the state to handle social crisis arising out of War. It was around this time the department of agriculture also took the services of anthropologists to work on problems on rural development problems. It was during this stage in 1941 the Society for Applied Anthropology, the official professional body of applied anthropologists was founded in the United States with a stated objective of '*studying the principles of human behavior and the application of these principles to contemporary issues and problems*'. It was during this stage foundation of applied anthropology as an **ameliorative science** was firmly established (Ibid, 29).

e) Post-Colonial Phase or the Development Phase

The end of the second world also marks the end of colonialism and emergence of new independent nations. A new world order came into being with nation building, international cooperation and development, economic growth and removal of poverty and improving quality of life as important concerns. The paternalistic scientific and state centric stance of pre-war era anthropology came under increasing criticism and there was a call for more people-centric (rather than problem-centric) engaged applied anthropology. As Sol Tax famously said, anthropologists should not look at people only as subjects but also as objects of their study (1964: 251). This phase saw many developments in applied anthropology and an attempt to redefine the field itself. Sol Tax, for example coined the term action anthropology. Action anthropologists directly worked with the community themselves to solve the problems faced by the community and help improve the quality of their life. Sol Tax believed that those who are working in the institutional set up whether be it government or the non-government organisations, they are too hemmed

by their organisational constraints. This only allowed for a regulated engagement. He advocated a more direct action from anthropologists and he referred to this as **action anthropology**. One of the most important features of this phase was application of anthropology in development sector. After the critique of economic paradigm of development and the modernisation theory, the focus of development shifted to human, social, cultural and sustainable development. This shift from non-human to human factor in development ushered in a new era for the engagement of anthropologists in the field of development studies. They became associated with all aspects of development from planning, implementation, evaluation to program review. So integral was the role of anthropology that no community development can be complete without the involvement of the anthropologists. This phase saw a more proactive, direct engagement of applied anthropology with social problems and social issues.

Check Your Progress

3) What are the four different phases of development in applied anthropology?

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4) Who were the anthropologists who headed the censuses in colonial India?

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5) Who wrote the famous book, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*?

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6) Discuss action anthropology briefly.

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1.3 APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY IN INDIA

a) Applied Anthropology as a Colonial Aid

Anthropological research in India can be traced to the Asiatic Society of Bengal, founded by the Orientalist and Indologist Judge Sir William Jones, to conduct systemic ethnological studies of communities. As mentioned earlier, anthropology started in India as a colonial applied ethnology to conduct research on tribes and caste and to collect information for the colonial government to assist them in their administration. Most of these works were done by European scholars which included missionaries, administrators, judges and military officials who were posted in India or had Indological interest. The work primarily highlighted facts which helped the administrators to understand the system property, landholding and its inheritance, and maximise their revenue collection (Dirk 2001: 29). We have earlier seen how these studies emphasised on variations, distinction, exoticness, divisions and classification of people so as to check the rising tide of nationalism to spread across the country and allow the colonial policy of divide and rule.

b) Indian Applied Anthropology : Pre Independence Era

Applied anthropology in true sense can be attributed to Sarat Chandra Roy (1871–1942), the father of Indian Anthropology (Guha 2018: 18). As a practicing lawyer at Ranchi, he was deeply moved by the plight of the Mundas, Hos and Oraons, who visited the court for land related problems. They were treated inhumanly with disdain and contempt by the colonial officers. S.C. Roy started helping them in legal matters often communicating between them and the judges (ibid. 18). Many of these tribals stayed at his place when they came to the city for land alienation cases. S.C. Roy’s approach was quite similar to the action approach of Sol Tax, and like him he would also intervene and helped the tribals on legal matters. Although S.C. Roy was not formally trained in anthropology but he was in touch with top anthropologists like James Frazer and W.H. R, Rivers of his time and later also lectured anthropology at Ranchi and Kolkata universities. In 1921 he founded the first official anthropological Journal called as *Man in India* (ibid. 20).

A more direct contribution to applied anthropology was made by Tarak Chandra Das (1898-1964), a trained historian but who taught anthropology in Calcutta University. He spoke of how the knowledge of

cultural anthropology can be in useful in service of individual and nation in his Presidential address of Anthropological Session in the Indian Science Congress, 1941. He talked how knowledge of cultural anthropology is important in education, trade, legal studies, agriculture and administration (Guha 2011: 260). He was much ahead of his time in emphasising how cultural factors are important and the expertise of anthropologist in deciphering them. His emphasis upon empirical understanding of social problems is best reflected in his pioneering work of 1940's Bengal famine, and its impact on urban and rural population of Bengal province. He carried out actual ethnographic fieldwork in 1943 with his students and other staff using traditional ethnographic methods of genealogy, case studies, questionnaire and interviews to understand the causes and impact of famine on the destitute urban and rural population. The report was submitted to the provisional government and many of its recommendation were adopted by the commission which inquired about the famine and ways to avoid them in future. His detailed account was published in the *Bengal Famine* in 1949, published by the Calcutta University. The data in the book was later used by Amarty Sen, the famous economist in his land mark study of *Poverty and Famine* (ibid 251). The work was exemplary in term of its policy implication and future of applied anthropology in India.

c) Applied Anthropology in Post Independent Era

It was only after the post independence era that applied anthropology emerged as an important field contributing to nation building by furthering the goals of development of marginalised sections of society. The focus was upon the tribal and rural development. The British had followed a policy of isolation through conservation and protection towards the tribal communities. The 1857 rebellion to British Raj had made the colonial government edgy and suspicious of large sections of the Indian population. They did not want the rising tide of nationalism to sweep the tribal communities and at the same time they wanted to continue to extract and exploit the natural resources from the tribal areas. To serve these ends they formulated a policy of protectionism through isolation and exclusion towards the tribal communities. With the onset of independence the policy of isolation was found to be regressive and not in the best interest of the tribes. Tribes were integral part of Indian Civilisation and were to be included in nation building. With this objective the Indian government envisaged a twin approach of integration through development and protectionism through safeguards to uphold the culture and identity of the people. Thus applied anthropology came to play a significant role in this approach.

d) Applied Anthropology and Government Agencies

Since mid-nineteenth century anthropologists were advising the government on issues of population enumeration, diversity and

classification of people of India. As mentioned earlier Herbert Risley and J.H. Hutton both of whom were trained anthropologists headed the census of 1901 and 1931, which played an important role in administrative categorisation of the people of India. At the twilight of the British rule they established the Anthropological Survey of India in 1945 with B.S Guha as its first director and Verrier Elwin as its Deputy Director to advise the government on tribal matters. In post independent era the organisation came to play a major role in advising the government on tribal issues as well as other matters relating to bio-cultural diversity of the Indian population. At present it is the largest single government anthropological organisation with eight regional centers located at different parts of the country. Other than Anthropological Survey of India there are networks of tribal research institutes at state levels to undertake tribal studies. They were established in 1953 in the first five year plan to fill the gap in knowledge about the tribal communities and make it available to the policy makers. There are at present 25 centers in different states of India to conduct activities, programs etc., for the promotion of tribal cultures and festivals. They also carry out sensitisation programs for the government officials posted in the tribal areas. Anthropologists are also associated with many other government bodies including Scheduled Tribe and Scheduled Caste commissions, the office of Registrar General and Census Commissioner, Ministry of Culture etc. Other than these anthropologists are also associated with health research organisations like Indian Council of Medical Research and National Institute of Health and Family Welfare to carry out research on public health issues.

e) Applied Anthropology and Planned Change and Rural Development

The most important contribution in this regard was made by Shyama Charan Dube (1922 -1996). S.C. Dube was a leading anthropologist of his time and held positions in administration as well as academics. He led the community development program, which was initiated in 1952 as a part of the first five year plan which the Planning Commission of India initiated as a program and also named it as Community Development Program to bring about rural transformation and planned change through participatory development for a better life in rural India. According to A. R. Desai this program was different in the sense that by moving away from the “philanthropic spirit, it aimed for a community development movement to create a psychological change in the villagers... inculcating them with new desires, new incentives, new techniques, and a new confidence so that this vast reservoir of human resources may be used for the growing economic development of the country” (Desai 1953: 53). S.C. Dube pioneered the collaborative applied researches in solving social problems. He was also instrumental in highlighting the role of human resources in development.

f) Expanding Role of Applied Anthropology in India

There has been an ever expanding role of applied anthropology in India. As identified by Van Willigen (2002:13) applied anthropologists in India have contributed to the following three domains of application very successfully. They are:

At the level of Information: This has been the traditional role of applied anthropology. With its emphasis upon subjective, participative, polyvocal and reflexive understanding anthropologists have been most adept at providing quality information inputs on any topic. They have also been very successful in translating the local concepts for the sponsoring agencies to make them understand their significance. They are also experts in participatory appraisal studies, need assessment and evaluation which have provided important feedbacks to policy makers.

At the level of policy making: Application of anthropological expertise at policy formulation and anthropology as a policy science has made rapid strides since 1990s. The period following it saw a rapid shift in the policy making terrain wherein globalisation, social and environmental issues came to dominate policy science. Sustainable development issues of equity and justice along, structural adjustment programs and dynamics of global and local forces have to impinge on all aspects of policy making. In this changing domain role of anthropologist have become critical in policy formulation and many anthropologists are associated with think tanks which shape policies in India.

At the action level: Applied anthropologists have also been very active at the level of direct interventions. There has been expanding role of anthropologists in execution of programs. They have also been collaborating with local people as advocacy groups. Working with people many are associated with training self-help groups.

In the last few decades applied anthropologists have also entered into new areas of studies like management and study of complex organisations like public sector, hospitals, etc. In this regard notable contributions were made by N. R. Sheth's work on *Social Framework of Indian Industry* in 1968 and D. P. Sinha's work on *Culture Change in an Inter-tribal Market* which are some of the early works in applied anthropology. D. P. Sinha was also a pioneer of urban anthropology and his article on Calcutta city is one of the pioneering accounts on applied anthropology in urban areas and problems of city dwellers (Saran 1976: 221).

Present Scenario: Applied anthropology is a vibrant discipline with avenues for employment in contemporary India. Applied anthropologists are involved in all the roles as envisaged by Van Willigen (1993:7). They are policy researchers, evaluators, impact assessors, need assessors, planners, research analysts, advocacy trainers, cultural brokers,

administrators, change agents and therapists. If anthropology was the study of exotica in the last century, this century is seeing a greater involvement of anthropology in handling frontline issues ranging from urban problems like pollution, poverty, disaster management, sustainable development, lifestyle diseases, public health issues, ecological crisis, farm distress, business and industry and making its presence felt in all these areas and more.

Check Your Progress

- 7) Discuss the role of applied anthropology in India from its beginning to its present times.

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- 8) What are the three domains of application of applied anthropology in India?

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- 9) Name the anthropologist who led the community development programme.

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- 10) Name the professions applied anthropologists are involved with in India?

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1.4 SUMMARY

This lesson is the beginning of your journey into what entails in the world of applied anthropology. It prepares us for a better understanding of the various

areas of applied anthropology and how anthropologists with their training become equipped to handle actual local and global concerns. You have hence here been provided with the concept of applied anthropology, a historical outline of its growth and how it significantly developed into a concrete area of specialisation in India passing through different decades, evolving and growing to solve people's problems.

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1.6 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1) See section 1.1
- 2) See section 1.1
- 3) See section 1.2
- 4) Refer to the 3rd paragraph in section 1.2
- 5) Refer to the 5th paragraph in section 1.2
- 6) Refer to the 6th paragraph in section 1.2
- 7) See section 1.3
- 8) Refer to point f of section 1.3
- 9) S.C. Dube
- 10) Indian applied anthropologists are variously involved as policy researchers, evaluators, impact assessors, need assessors, planners, research analysts, advocacy trainers, cultural brokers, administrators, change agents and therapists.

UNIT 2 APPROACHES IN APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY*

Contents

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Approaches to Applied Anthropological Knowledge
- 2.2 Diversity of Applied Anthropology
- 2.3 Approaches in Applied Anthropology
- 2.4 Sub-disciplinary Applied Specialisations
- 2.5 Action Approach/Action Anthropology
- 2.6 Practicing Anthropologists and Applied Anthropologists
- 2.7 Participatory Approach
- 2.8 Applied Anthropology as Public Policy Science
- 2.9 Applied Anthropology in Business and Corporate Anthropology
- 2.10 Summary
- 2.11 References
- 2.12 Answers to Check your Progress

Learning Outcomes

After reading this unit the students will learn to:

- Describe the approaches in applied anthropology;
- And apply the approaches in different arenas

2.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we are going to study the approaches in applied anthropology. The term approach refers to the context, framework or the perspective in which we carry out an act. Any disciplinary division of labour can broadly be seen as a quest for knowledge for its own sake and knowledge for an end. We refer to the former as basic or pure research and later as applied. Thus when we use the term applied anthropology it implies the use of anthropological knowledge to solve 'real world problems' (Nollan 2018). A pure research may or may not directly address a practical problem. It may concern itself with a theoretical issue or deal with creation of knowledge, which the applied part may put to use to address a specific issue. We may say a theory raises both questions and answers while the focus of applied aspects is primarily to provide answers.

* **Contributor:** Professor R.P. Mitra, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi

2.1 APPROACHES TO APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE

A distinction is often drawn between *anthropology of* and *anthropology for* in application of anthropological knowledge. When we use the term *anthropology of* it refers to a more critical anthropologically conceptual understanding of an issue while the term *anthropology for* refers to the usage or the application of anthropology perspective directed at a problem at hand. While applied anthropology is primarily concerned with the *anthropology for* aspects, the pure anthropology is more to do with *anthropology of* aspects of an issue. When we say *anthropology of health* it deals with issues relating to concept of health cross-culturally and how the non-physical components of health such as social, cultural, emotional and spiritual play an important role in determination of health. While the term *anthropology for health* relates to the use of anthropological knowledge to address a health related problem in a specific context, for example if there is high drop out from immunisation programme in a tribal area, the services of anthropologists may be called for greater compliance by people .

Check Your Progress

- 1) What are the two ways of applying anthropological knowledge ?

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2.2 DIVERSITY OF APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

The different approaches in applied anthropology are closely determined by what applied anthropologists do. We have to remember that when we use the term applied anthropology, along with social anthropology, it includes applied archaeology and applied biological anthropology also. Applied physical or biological anthropology has a long history of applied research in the area of forensic science, medical institutions, hospitals and ergonomics of clothing, footwear, car designing and other industries. Applied archaeology is much recent in origin and is concerned mostly with preservation of tribal cultural heritages and locally important monuments.

The term applied anthropology includes diverse activities and often the practitioner use different terms for referring to their specialisations. Along with applied other terms like action, practicing, engaged, advocacy and public are also used by professional practicing anthropologists as prefix to describe themselves. They can all be considered as types of applied

anthropology, which appeared during different stages in development of applied anthropology. With the sub-disciplinary specialisation there are fields like ecological anthropology, development anthropology, forensic anthropology, physiological anthropology, urban anthropology, medical anthropology, molecular anthropology within academic anthropology all with strong applied aspects.

In India also anthropologists are working in such diverse areas as indigenous knowledge, policy studies, agriculture, rural and tribal development, public health, program evaluation, planning, implementation, disaster, forensic, human-animal conflicts, mental health, urban problems among many other important contemporary issues. The list is fairly long and with every passing year anthropologists are expanding into new areas of applications. In all these areas knowledge methods and skills of anthropology is applied to solve the practical problems of everyday living.

Check Your Progress

2) Is applied anthropology a unified field of study? Explain

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3) What are the areas of application of applied anthropology in India?

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2.3 APPROACHES IN APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

Applied anthropology as the name suggests is anthropology put to use to solve a social problem or understand a social issue. Its primary goal is problem solving. As applied anthropology is used in various social settings the approaches in applied anthropology are closely determined by the domain of its applications. We may broadly classify them as:

- Sub-disciplinary specialisation
- Action approach /Activist Approach
- Participator Developmental Approach/ Practicing Anthropology
- Policy Research /Advisory/Consultation approach

- Business/Corporate / Market approach

Check Your Progress

- 4) What are the factors which determine the approaches in applied anthropology?

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2.4 SUB-DISCIPLINARY APPLIED SPECIALISATIONS

After the end of the second World War, in the 1950s there was rapid stride made in teaching of anthropology. New departments of anthropology were opened in different universities. During this time anthropology departments also expanded in India. After Calcutta University, anthropology was introduced in universities in Delhi, Lucknow, Guwahati and Madras. One of the important features of this expansion was the emergence of sub-discipline specialisations like development, medical, environmental, forensic, ergonomics, molecular, physiological, disaster studies which were primarily oriented towards the applied aspects. These new subjects were taught alongside other subjects like social and cultural theories, ethnic and cultural diversities. Many other specialisation continued to be added and all these new sub-disciplines have a strong applied component in their syllabus. Many of the academic anthropologists who worked on theoretical problems in the universities also started taking up projects on applied aspects like evaluation, illness, education and others, where they applied anthropological knowledge to solve problems.

2.5 ACTION APPROACH / ACTION ANTHROPOLOGY

The term action anthropology was coined by Sol Tax, an American anthropologist and refers to the applied anthropological research carried out by him and his students at Chicago University. It was marked by a radical break from traditional applied anthropology. Sol Tax felt that anthropologists working in government, non-government organisations or other institutions often worked with the agenda of their parental sponsored organisation and therefore lack the autonomy and the commitment to the people. He called for more involved approach wherein the anthropologist does not restrict herself to mere research agenda but also try to bring in transformation by helping people to achieve their goals. The most important project of action

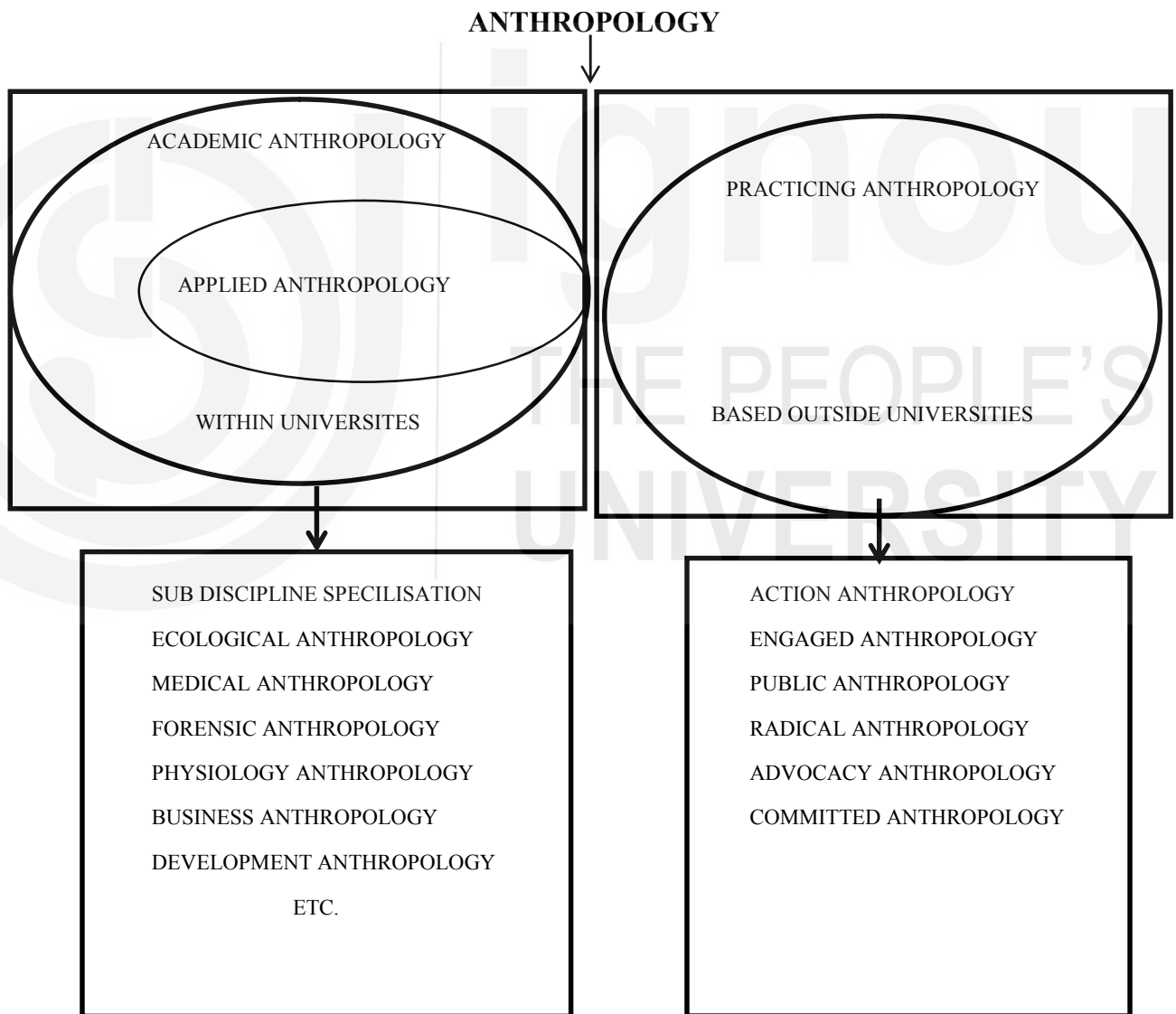
anthropologists were with the Meskwaki Indians of Iowa state, also known as the Fox Project (the totemic name for the tribe) (ibid 258). The project started in 1948 and continued till 1958 and was a critique of the American project of melting pot approach to cultural diversity. Action anthropologists made a distinction between *assigned intervention* and *desired intervention*. The latter was the objective of action anthropologists. They felt that other than their American identity, Fox have also their traditional ethnic identity and culture. They have their own priorities which at times may not be in sync with the external priorities of the state. Therefore it is for the anthropologist to help them articulate them and bring about the desired change. As an action anthropologist the role is to act as facilitator and not the director of the change (ibid. 261). The distinction between them is outlined in the table 1. The approach was reinvented again in the postcolonial critique of development by anthropologists like Arturo Escobar, Gustavo Esteva, Majid Rahnema, Wolfgang Sachs, James Ferguson, Serge Latouche, and Gilbert Rist.

Table 2.1: Action and applied anthropology

Action anthropology	Applied Anthropology
Based on active and engaged problem solving approach. Not only work as advisors but also actively intervene on behalf of the community with external agencies to achieve the goals.	A mix of positivistic, research oriented, humanistic and problem oriented approach. Restricted to field research only.
Action oriented	Employment oriented
Learning and helping are the central theme	Achieving the desired objectives of research are the primary goals
Anthropologists are free from the constrains of employment. Based upon spirit of voluntarism and relative autonomy of anthropologist	Less space for autonomy. Works on fixed agenda.
People Centric. People are not just subject but also object of anthropologist's study	People are subject of research. The research is topic centric.
Based upon emic interventions	Based upon assigned intervention
Work on behalf of the people helping them identify the problem, advise them on possible solution and help them choose the best alternative	Help introduce changes which have been decided earlier.
Based upon participatory ethnography	Greater emphasis upon value free and positivistic based ethnography.

2.6 PRACTICING ANTHROPOLOGISTS AND APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGISTS

Raill W. Nollan (2018), suggested that the term applied anthropologist should be restricted to only those anthropologists who work in the universities and academic institutions and at the same time undertake applied work. Based upon the nature of activity and work-place he suggested a distinction between applied and practicing anthropology. The term practicing anthropologist is used for those who are outside the academic departments and apply anthropological knowledge in the real world situation. This distinction is specially emphasised by the professional anthropologists in the contemporary times who like to describe themselves as practicing anthropologists to show their distinction from the sullied past of applied anthropologists. This distinction is represented in the table below



Academic, Applied and Practicing Anthropology

Table 2.2: Distinction Between Applied And Practicing Anthropologist

	Applied Anthropologist	Practicing Anthropology
Location	Academic institutions, research institutions.	Outside. In the private sectors, NGOs etc.
Attitude towards knowledge	Quest for knowledge can be both an end in itself as well as for application.	Knowledge only for application. Knowledge without applied value has no meaning.
Work Environment	Mostly work with fellow anthropologists	Collaborative. Work in a multi- disciplinary team
Nature of problem	Have the autonomy to define the problems themselves.	Mostly the problems are set by others.
Methodology	Methodology is based on anthropological technique and its disciplinary validity.	Methodology is closely scrutinised by others and therefore required to be validated by people from other disciplines also.
Involvement	Part time specialist. May combine with other activities like teachings and research.	Full time specialist
Challenges	Primarily with reference to the problem at hand and its solution	Not only they have to provide solution but also have to communicate and convince others about it. The acceptance of the solution by others sometimes become more important than the problem at hand

Check Your Progress

5) Define the term action anthropology? Differentiate between applied and action anthropology.

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6) Examine the distinction between the term applied, action and practicing anthropology.

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2.7 PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

We may refer to the participatory approach as development approach also because of its origin in the field of development studies. During 1970s the economic theory of development came under lot of criticism for its narrow focus on economic growth and emphasis on technology based industrialisation, modernisation and urbanisation. Benefits of development was restricted to only the elite and powerful, the urban centric middle class and landed influential rural families. Large sections of marginalised poor, peasant, tribal and rural population remain unaffected or found themselves as victims rather than beneficiaries of development. This called for a retrospection of both the goals as well as the process of development. The goals of development were widened to include human beings, societies, culture and environment under the purview of development. Along with economic development, human development, social development, cultural development and sustainable development also become important objectives of development. There was also a call to review the process of development which was seen as alien, distant, exogenous and opposed to tradition, local cultures and people. This gave rise to the participatory approach in development studies and applied anthropology came to play an important role.

Before this anthropologists were engaged in the development process but their role was more of providing information to facilitate the development process. This **facilitator approach** was based on finding mismatches between culture and development wherever development were rejected by people. Applied anthropology was supposed to study the situation and help the development agencies to overcome the opposition of people and ensure effective implementation of programs. Here applied anthropology was in aid of development agencies. However in participatory approach anthropologists were more inclined towards the interests of people and help ensure implementation through **acceptance by people**. It was this objective of acceptance which gave rise to the **principle of participation** as the central tenant of participatory approach.

Participation

The term participation implies involvement of community in the development process. Involvement marks an important shift in the position of the people from mere beneficiaries to important agent of change and development. From passive recipient they become engaged player in the development process. This happens when people are allowed to have a say i.e. when they can decide what they want and how they want it to happen. This is complete participation which often never happens. There are different degrees of participation of people and we can see them in continuum of five kinds of involvement of people.

- a) **Informing sharing:** In this form of participation information about a program is only shared with people with no scope of their participation. They have no say in any matter and are only passive acceptors as in part of non-participatory approaches.
- b) **Pseudo-participation:** In pseudo participation all that is done in participatory approach is followed but people are only consulted without their opinion and do not have any say in the planned program. It appears to be participatory but in actual working, this is like any non-participatory approach
- c) **Quasi-participation:** In quasi participatory approach there is only a limited, selective consultation with the people. As the frame work of consultation is pre-decided by the agency, there is only a limited scope of actual participation by the people. This is also called as controlled participation.
- d) **Collaborative participation:** In this process people have greater say and involvement in the development programs. Programme goals are shared, changed and revised in collaboration with the people. They also play a part in the implementation. They are active participants with a say in the management of the development program
- e) **Participation as Empowerment:** This is an ideal form of participation. The goal of development here is empowerment of people. In this approach they are not just active participants, they also become initiators of the programme. Here there is complete reversal of the role of the development agency. They become the facilitator of the goals which the community members set themselves.

In participatory approach the role of applied **anthropologists changes from an outside expert to that of friend, guide, teacher and philosopher of people.** They are unbiased in providing information to people that help them to decide and also explain to them the various alternatives with their pros and cons. The anthropologists are more like wise counselors guiding people to arrive at right decision to serve their best interest. This approach involves empowerment of people through influencing their cognitive and behavioural process so that they overcome their fear, misgivings, hesitations and other barriers which do not hold them back from expressing themselves.

Check Your Progress

- 7) What are the different types of participation we come across in the participatory approach in applied anthropology?

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2.8 APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY AS PUBLIC POLICY SCIENCE

Public Policy is defined as a guiding document which explicitly states the objectives and means to achieve them. They are documents of action in any sphere of public concern prepared by the government which clearly set the framework for public officials to act and achieve the stated objectives of the government for public welfare. With the changing paradigm of public making from top down to bottom up approach, the significance of applied anthropology in policy process has increased many folds. Anthropologists with their empirical, in-situ and grounded knowledge are best placed in providing information to policy makers. In the new set up they are also involved in making of public policy because of their ability to work effectively in multidisciplinary teams. Because of their practical knowledge they can easily visualise the gaps in the formulation and working of policy at the ground thus contributing to a successful policy process. The most important contribution which applied anthropology brings to policy sciences is in term of certain tools of inquiry which include.

- Needs Assessment
- Social Impact Assessment
- Evaluation Studies
- Social Desirability and Feasibility Analysis, Van Willigen (2002:167)

As such anthropologists have been actively involved in all those polices which concerned the tribal communities. They were in the forefront in formulation of mining policy, the tribal policy, the forest policy and important acts like the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006; Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013.

Check Your Progress

8) What are the four important techniques of applied anthropology used in policy research?

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2.9 APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY IN BUSINESS AND CORPORATE ANTHROPOLOGY

Globalisation has led to shrinking of the world and role of culture has become important in business and corporate world. Many of the applied anthropologists are now working for management consultancy and multinational organisations contributing to them through their anthropological insights and perspectives in the world of marketing and business.

Expertise of Applied Anthropologists:

There are certain skill sets which give an applied anthropologist a better vantage point compared to people from other disciplines. Sara Pink (2006) has identified the following as the expertise of applied anthropologists that set them apart from other specialists.

Primacy to Culture: Applied anthropologists are trained to identify and recognise culture as one of the important determinants of human actions. They can identify clearly the cultural factors behind any human action and behaviour.

Grounded, Empirical and Inductive Approach: Significance is attached to an empirical understanding through fieldwork, up-close and a personal approach has been a hallmark of applied research. Nolan (2003: 119) has referred to this as “an inductive approach from the ground up rather than by imposing of theories beforehand”.

Primacy of Process over Outcome: Applied anthropologists have always emphasised the processes rather than outcomes in understanding of any situation. According to Ray (2006:677) what distinguishes anthropologists from economists is that while the research in economy emphasises more on the outcomes or findings which help in precise predictions, the anthropological findings on the other hand emphasises predictions based on process. The anthropologists focus on relationships, values, and power dynamics involved in any situation for prediction.

Cross-cultural skills: Applied anthropologists are trained to look at things comparatively in a holistic manner and relatively with empathy. Subjective biases are consciously avoided and are a taboo in anthropological approach.

Ethnographic skills: Specialisation in doing an ethnographic form of research and an ability to communicate lucidly without leaving out the complexity of a context.

Tacit and implicit understanding: Uncovering and understanding both implicit and explicit meaning of things. Recognition of the significant role of the implicit factors behind what is explicit in a situation.

Atomistic and holistic understanding: A systematic way of approaching an issue by breaking it down into its constituent units, i.e. simplification of complex things and the opposite of it, i.e., looking at things in an integrated manner. This combination of atomising a phenomenon, then integrating to understand holistically is a unique feature of the discipline.

Expertise in discerning Pattern and Trend Analysis: Ability to observe patterns in actions and behaviour (which apparently look arbitrary) in social situations.

Dynamic and Accommodative Approach: Flexibility towards handling new ideas, complexities and the ability to work in a multi- disciplinary team.

Ability to work in difficult situation: Rigour of work and the capability of working in difficult, inhospitable conditions like war, disaster and natural calamities (Mitra 2002: 164).

Check Your Progress

- 9) What are the skill sets of applied anthropologists which set them apart from people from other disciplines?

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2.9 SUMMARY

This unit attempts to explain to the learner the approaches that are available in studying and doing applied anthropology. It not only clearly and categorically describes the various approaches, but also at the same time informs how each is important in different scenarios and is used accordingly. Herein the unit informs about the sub areas that applied anthropologists can deal with and how these areas broaden, with them working as practicing anthropologists. The differentiation between applied anthropologists and practicing anthropologists is illustrated though this distinction is more of a representation than practice. The lesson lucidly explains how applied anthropologists take part in action anthropology by providing practical solutions to people's lives and in this they have a big role to play in the formulation of policies and schemes. The unit ends with the significance of the inclusion of corporate and business anthropology due to the presence of globalisation in today's world. This unit will effectively open the learner to a better understanding of the units to follow in this course.

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2.11 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1) The two ways of applying anthropological knowledge is through the understanding of *Anthropology of* and *Anthropology for*.
- 2) See 1st and 2nd paragraph of section 2.2
- 3) See 3rd paragraph of section 2.2
- 4) See section 2.3
- 5) See section 2.5
- 6) See section 2.6
- 7) The different kinds of participation that we may come across in participatory approach in applied anthropology are: Informing sharing, Pseudo-participation, Quasi-participation, Collaborative participation, and Participation as empowerment.
- 8) They are: Needs Assessment, Social Impact Assessment, Evaluation Studies, and Social Desirability and Feasibility Analysis.
- 9) See section 2.9.

UNIT 3 ETHICS IN APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY*

Contents

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 The Emergence of Applied Anthropology and the Question of Ethics
- 3.2 The Idea of Functional Unity, Colonialism and Ethics in Applied Anthropology
- 3.3 Contact Anthropology, Culture Change and Ethics: Examining Malinowski as an Applied Anthropologist
- 3.4 Applied Anthropology, Second World War and Ethics
- 3.5 Project Camelot and Human Terrain System
- 3.6 Statement of Ethics and Professional Responsibilities in Applied Anthropology
- 3.7 Summary
- 3.8 References
- 3.9 Answers to Check your Progress

Learning Outcomes

After reading this unit the students will learn to:

- Define ethics in the context of anthropology's historical development;
- Describe how the phase of colonialism outlined ethical concerns of communities studied;
- Explain how ethics and practical anthropology came to be promoted by Malinowski;
- Express the impact of Second World War in restructuring what ethical concerns should be for an anthropologist; and
- Identify the ethical norms designed by the institutional body, SfAA.

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The idea of ethics is linked to the notion of 'doing no harm' to the people around us. For anthropologists these constitute the ones that are under 'study' or the area and people where anthropologists are conducting their fieldwork. It is the responsibility of the anthropologists to ensure that their work in no way harms the people and their socio-cultural fabric. It is rather a tricky issue as fieldwork brings new challenges in different contexts and it is for the anthropologists or the fieldworker conducting the fieldwork to face those challenges and resolve issues of ethics that might crop-up. It is for this reason

* **Contributor:** Dr. Prashant Khattri, Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Allahabad

that a universal ethical code applicable in all the situations is a utopia. Nonetheless, anthropologists must remember that their primary goal is to safeguard the interests of the people with whom they are working. They must also be aware of the fact that their research might be used by the administrators for implementing the policies for the people. Applied anthropology in this way can be seen as anthropology that bridges the gap between pure research and administration. In other words, anthropological knowledge and research findings can be used by policy makers and administrators. This brings us to a very important understanding regarding the beginnings of applied anthropology. It has been contended that application of the anthropological knowledge is as old as the subject of anthropology itself. This also suggests that ethical issues were an important part of the application of anthropological knowledge and theory (Podolefsky, et al. 2003).

Anthropological knowledge that originated to explain human cultural and biological variations was used by the colonial administrators to further their goals of colonialism. No knowledge is devoid of politics and the larger socio-political scenario in which it originates and put to use. In this sense the entire issue of ethics becomes a very relational subject. The question then arises that who is using the knowledge and for what purpose. The world seems to be divided into camps that are guided by certain ideologies. For example there are ideologies that further the cause for economic development that requires building dams and mining metals. On the contrary there are ideologies that further the cause of the people who are affected by big projects as it takes away their land and their ecosystem gets destroyed. Now the issue of ethics moves into a path that does not end anywhere and it gets complicated as one moves ahead. Anthropologists who speak for the people and oppose big projects on the pretext of large human cost that it may incur may be seen as anti-development by the administrators and policy makers. Similarly anthropologists see such policies that snatch away land and forests from the people as unethical.

It is therefore important to see ethics not as a list of do's and don'ts but as a discourse. In other words ethics is something that means different things for different stakeholders. This understanding is based on a heterogeneous perspective of a community. When it is said that the primary goal of an applied anthropologist is to ensure that the community is represented in the policy formulation and the change that is envisioned, then the question arises that who forms the community? Can the community be completely represented at all times and at all places? What are the various interest groups in the community that is impacted differently by any project? It is also contended that indigenous knowledge should guide the change agents and indigenous philosophies should be incorporated in order to make a policy more inclusive and people centric. However, again the question arises that whose indigenous knowledge should we take into consideration? There might be some conflict in this regard and a community or people getting affected by

a project might hold different views on the subject. It is in this context also that the ethical issues become a bit tricky (Nahm and Rinker, 2016).

In this unit we will learn the ethical issues that are associated with the application of anthropological knowledge right from the beginning of the discipline itself. Various shifts in anthropological paradigms led to different ethical issues related with the application of anthropological knowledge. We will also see that how some organisations of professional applied anthropologists have tried to bring-in some code of ethics for applied anthropology.

Check Your Progress

- 1) What should be the primary goal of applied anthropologists always?

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3.1 THE EMERGENCE OF APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE QUESTION OF ETHICS

Anthropology as a discipline emerged in the mid nineteenth century. It was possible only with the coming together of the data and theory. The data was present in the form of ‘ethnographies’ about the ‘other’, attempted by missionaries, soldiers, travelers and administrators. The question that this data generated was- why there exist different kinds of societies with variations in cultural values? The answer to this question was provided through the theory of evolutionism. It was argued that different cultures were at different stages of evolution and they will all pass through the same stages to reach the epitome of human civilisation that is exemplified by the West. This gave rise to a kind of moral and ethical duty of the West. It was considered as the white man’s burden to ‘civilise’ the ‘un-civilised.’ The issue of ethics can therefore be seen intertwined with the very emergence of the discipline of anthropology. It was considered as the duty of the whites to ensure that people everywhere enjoy the benefits of the civilisation and to help their ‘inferior’ cousins to reach the epitome of civilisation more quickly. The evolutionary perspective in anthropology dealt with the question of the process and stages of human social and cultural evolution. This knowledge was to be applied in the process of acculturation, to help those people who are considered to be in the stages of ‘barbarism’ and ‘savagery.’ It can therefore be said that with the emergence of anthropology, the applied dimension of the subject also emerged. It can also be said that with the

application of the anthropological knowledge to categorise people according to the stages of cultural development and progress and to help them reach the stage that is considered as superior to their own culture, the entire issue of ethics emerged (Bastide, 1974).

The theory of evolutionism also gave impetus to the idea of colonialism. Evolutionism made colonialism look more ethical as it was argued that the western dominance and administration was necessary for the progress and development of the colonised people. Evolutionary theory was applied to legitimise the colonial rule. Projecting the idea of social and cultural evolution was in itself considered as scientific as the theory was well established in physical sciences through the works of Charles Darwin and it was thought that natural laws could also be applied to study society. Moreover, categorising various cultures according to the stage in human civilisational progress was in itself considered as a scientific task. Therefore the twin ideas of evolution and science were applied to dominate certain groups of people the world over. Evolutionism generated an ethnocentric bias that can be considered as unethical (Bastide, 1974).

Check Your Progress

2) Discuss the ethical issues involved in the application of anthropological knowledge during the mid 19th century.

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3) How is the application of anthropological knowledge linked with promotion of colonial aims and objectives?

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The next phase that grew out of the criticism of the ethnocentrism was that of cultural relativism. This view point, propagated by Franz Boas, was based on the consideration that no culture is superior or inferior to the other. All cultures should be seen in their own context. This however was not followed in spirit. Anthropologists have argued that cultural relativism was another term for ethnocentrism. The ethnocentric ideas of the west and their domination followed in the garb of cultural relativism. It is argued that the west used the ideas of relativism to further capitalist goals. Although, the

‘other culture’ was treated more respectfully but the change, if any, must happen in the direction of the west (Bastide, 1974).

3.2 THE IDEA OF FUNCTIONAL UNITY, COLONIALISM AND ETHICS IN APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

When we look back at the anthropology of the colonial times, we see that colonial aims and goals were at the center of the anthropological knowledge generation. So called ‘progressive’ theories and ideas, when analysed from a critical and post-colonial perspective, bring out many ethical issues for which anthropological knowledge was put to use. It was not only the administrators who used such knowledge but anthropologists were also inclined to produce such knowledge and understanding of the ‘other’ that supports the goals and aims of colonialism. It was largely due to the fact that most of the anthropological research in the British colonies were conducted under the administrative control of the British and were funded by the administration. The entire theory of functionalism and the idea of functional unity that it propounded have been criticised for being influenced by the colonial system of thought and governance.

The British response to the theory of evolutionism came in the idea of functionalism during the early twentieth century. Social evolutionism was criticised for being conjectural. It was seen as a very grand and a universal theory of social and cultural evolution that was impossible to be proved based on the evidence at such a grand scale. Categorising all the cultures into stages of evolution was next to impossible. Moreover, it was criticised for promoting armchair anthropology and ethnocentrism. It was in this context that functionalism emerged. It talked about studying societies by conducting in-depth and lengthy fieldworks by learning the language of the natives. It promoted the idea of organic analogy to study society. Following Herbert Spencer, functionalists believed that societies should be studied just like human organism. As there are different parts in human organism that function to maintain the whole, similarly, there are different institutions in a society that work together in order to maintain the social system. This is the idea of functional unity. Societies were considered as static entities within this theoretical perspective. “Between 1930 and 1955 the overwhelming bulk of the contributions of the (functionalist) school was based upon fieldwork in African tribal societies located in European, especially British territories. Under such circumstances it is impossible not to draw a connection between the proposal to study social systems *as if* they were solitary and *as if* they were timeless, with sponsorship, employment, and indirect association of the members of this school by and with a now defunct colonial system (Harris, 1968: 516).” There were important contradictions and conflicts within and between societies but they were overlooked in order to further the idea of functional unity.

Societies and cultures in the British colonies were not only studied to formulate theories but were also studied so that British administrators could make policies. In his book- *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*, Radcliffe Brown wrote in the introduction that- “this book will be read not only by anthropologists, but by some of those who are responsible for formulating or carrying out policies of colonial government in the African continent.” It is clear that anthropological knowledge generation was guided and limited by the colonial systems and visions. We can take another example from the studies on political organisations in British colonies, especially in Africa. In 1940, Meyer Fortes and Evans-Pritchard edited a book on African Political Systems. This book largely dealt with a synchronic view of the political systems and was aimed at the professional audience of administrators in the West. Political systems among the tribal communities in Africa were studied as part of other institutions like the Kinship, Economic and Religion. The method of focusing on the ethnographic present totally overlooked the historical and relational dimensions of the political systems. Marvin Harris (1968) writes- “For something like three hundred and fifty years the "Dark Continent" was utilised as a breeding ground for cheap and docile labour. It is estimated that forty million Africans were caught up in the slave trade in one way or another, although possibly only as few as fourteen million were still alive when they got to their destinations overseas. Advancing before this scourge were shock waves of wars, migrations, political upheavals, and vast demographic changes. In such a context, restriction to an ethnographic present of the 1930's, in the name of empiricism, has little to commend it (pp-536).” Such anthropological works were limited to serving the purpose of the colonial masters and completely overlooked the hardships and oppressions that people faced in the context of colonialism.

Check Your Progress

- 4) Which famous book of Radcliffe Brown’s talks about formulating colonial policies in Africa?

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3.3 CONTACT ANTHROPOLOGY, CULTURE CHANGE AND ETHICS: EXAMINING MALINOWSKI AS AN APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGIST

Anthropology began with the study of change. Evolutionists were concerned with how societies changes from one stage to another. However, as

mentioned earlier, classical evolutionism fell into disrepute for being conjectural and promoting armchair anthropology. This shortcoming was rectified in later theoretical formulation and paradigm in anthropology that we know as functionalism. It promoted a synchronic study of society that means studying society here and now. Malinowski became the pioneer of the functional approach and synchronic study. Functionalists were more interested in knowing societies in their totality rather than focusing on change. However, it will be wrong to imagine that the concept of change was totally absent among the functionalists. Between 1929 and 1943 Malinowski wrote several articles on culture change. These articles were put together in a form of a book by one of his students and published as *The Dynamics of Culture Change* in 1945. In this book Malinowski talked about the role of 'contact anthropologists' that means those anthropologists that are involved in the study of culture contact. Due to the contact between the colonial and the colonised cultures, the change was bound to occur. According to Malinowski then it was the duty of the anthropologists to facilitate this kind of a change so that some kind of a compromise can be reached between both the cultures. Anthropologists were duty bound to make scientific contributions by presenting a complete picture of the cultural institutions to the colonisers, so that a 'mutually beneficial adjustment' could be reached between the colonisers and the colonised (Harris, 1968).

Malinowski also outlined ethical codes for 'practical anthropologists' that comprised of 'moderation, compromise and civil service decorum.' He categorically mentions that anthropologists who have studied culture contact, have a duty to present their findings in such a manner that will help the policy makers. He further says that anthropologists have a duty to speak as natives' advocate but he can do nothing more than this and the decisions will have to be taken by the policy makers and those in the government. He further outlines the tasks for contact ethnographers as- "the capacity of foreseeing and forecasting the future in the light of full knowledge of all the factors involved and competent advice on specific questions (Harris, 1968: 557)" as a practical expert. Harris has argued that work just as a practical expert and providing the administrators with the necessary knowledge to govern can in no way absolve the anthropologists from their ethical concerns. Moreover, the 'compromise' that is being talked about between two different cultures will always be in favour of the more powerful and will never be consensual. It is also unethical from the point of view that what kind of compromise is being talked about? It is as if anthropologists want to preach moderation to the exploited and underprivileged. Can we talk about compromise with people who have been oppressed for over decades and centuries together? For it was Malinowski who outlined the practical value of functionalism and anthropology when he says that- "The practical value of such a theory (functionalism) is that it teaches us the relative importance of various customs, how they dovetail into each other, how they have to be handled by missionaries, colonial authorities, and those who economically have to

exploit savage trade and savage labor (Malinowski 1927:40-41).” It is clear from this statement that the practical value of the theory of functionalism was to exploit savage trade and labor. Thus anthropology was to be applied in order to help the missionaries and the colonial authorities. In the hindsight, it can be said that Malinowski has to carry the burden of ethical issues vis-à-vis application of anthropological knowledge (Harris, 1968).

Check Your Progress

- 5) What are the ethical issues involved in Malinowskian idea of applied anthropology?

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3.4 APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY, SECOND WORLD WAR AND ETHICS

It was during the Second World War that anthropologists were called upon to contribute their special knowledge to the war effort. Owing to their proximity and in-depth knowledge about various areas around the globe made them a very important dimension during the war. They were basically called upon to assist in knowing the cultures and national characters of enemy nations so that the war can also be fought at the psychological level. Their knowledge was also used to carry out rehabilitation programs in the post war period. Anthropological contributions to war efforts raise serious ethical issues regarding the use to cultural knowledge and anthropological knowledge in waging and sustaining the war efforts. It is commonly said that the war was fought both through guns and books. Anthropological knowledge was used at the level of military policy making.

Scholars have tried to understand the link between anthropology and German war efforts under the Nazis’. According to Robert Proctor, who worked on this issue, there was a great linkage between Nazi Germany and Anthropology. There were only few anthropologists who were opposed to the idea of racial science as it was held by the Nazi regime. Proctor also found that only a handful of anthropologists resisted the expulsion of Jews for Germany. Some non-German anthropologists also held views on racial hierarchies that were in sync with the Nazis’. For example E.A. Hooton went on to say that in order to perpetuate good racial elements in future generations, we need national breeding bureau, that could suggest who should reproduce with whom. There were also some European

anthropologists who collaborated with the war efforts like Evans Pritchard and S.F. Nadel (Price, 2002).

The situation was a bit different in America as far as the perception of the Second World War was concerned. The war was seen as 'good' as it was directed against the Nazi Germany. Anthropological thoughts were also influenced by Boasian understanding of race that was not based on any hierarchical understanding. Nazis' were considered as the enemies of the core principles of anthropology. Anthropologists considered helping the American government in the war efforts as a heroic act. Anthropologists like Jack Harris, went to West Africa to gather intelligence for the Office of Strategic Services that is now the CIA. He went as an anthropological fieldworker, however his main task was to gather intelligence information. It is also a fact that some anthropologists in America were opposed to the idea of using anthropological knowledge for war efforts. Such voices however were easily overcome. The American Anthropological Association (AAA) passed the resolution that anthropologists and their knowledge will be at the service of the government for the war efforts. Fred Eggan was the secretary of the AAA at the time and he reported that by 1943 more than half of the anthropologists in America were supporting the war directly and the other half were in some way or the other, contributing towards the war efforts (Price, 2002).

One such study that is worth mentioning was done by Ruth Benedict. She was asked by the US Office of War Information to conduct a study on Japanese culture so that in case of American occupation of Japan, it would be easier to administer them. They wanted to know about the Japanese culture, their ways of thinking and overall personality. With these aims in mind Benedict studied Japanese prisoners of war in America. This was a kind of study that came to be known as studying 'culture at a distance.' Her study resulted into a book titled- *Chrysanthemum and the Sword*. This is till date one of the bestselling books on Japanese culture and personality (Price, 2002).

However, as mentioned earlier, some anthropologists were not comfortable with the idea of anthropologists assisting in the war. They were more concerned with the ethical issues linked to this kind of an association. They criticised the role of anthropologists in this context. It was M.J. Herskovits who raised the ethical issues regarding anthropologists using their knowledge against people where they conduct their fieldwork. He was of the view that as scientists and persons belonging to a particular nationality, they are bound by some duties towards their nation. Nonetheless, anthropologists also owe a great deal to the people from whom s/he collects data, writes thesis and becomes famous in her/his own discipline and nation (Price, 2002).

Franz Boas, one of the leading anthropologists in America, was opposed to the idea of anthropologists supporting the US war efforts. He was specifically against the idea of anthropologists engaged in spying under the garb of conducting anthropological research work. He went on to say that such

anthropologists should not call themselves as scientists (Ferraro and Andreatta, 2014).

Check Your Progress

6) Discuss the ethics in applied anthropology in the context of Second World War.

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3.5 PROJECT CAMELOT AND THE HUMAN TERRAIN SYSTEM

Project Camelot and the Human Terrain System are concerned very closely with the ethical issues involved in applied anthropology. During 1964-65, the US army funded a six million US dollars project known as the ‘Project Camelot.’ The aim of the project was to conduct fieldwork in strategic areas and collect data on the internal revolutions that may be taking place in those areas and regions where US army and the US government have strategic interests. These regions include Asia, Latin America, Africa and Europe. This project was to hire the services of many prominent anthropologists in the US. Some governments became furious to know about such a project under way in their countries as it directly affected their sovereignty. Chile for example saw this project as interfering in their internal matters. Due to these oppositions and issues of ethics involved in the project, the project was called off as soon as the director of the project was appointed. However, the project had some consequences for the discipline of anthropology. A debate was generated within the discipline of anthropology around issues of legitimacy of the project and misleading anthropologists into believing that the project was for the purpose of scientific study. It was argued that anthropologists were misled into believing that the project was for gathering important data on social issues and will in no way affect the internal sovereignty of the nations. Whatever may be the case, the project changed the perception of people regarding the discipline of anthropology and the nature of job of anthropologists. All anthropological works were now seen with suspicion. Anthropologists were seen as the agents of the CIA and the US military. Anthropologists doing fieldwork in different areas around the globe had difficulty in proving and convincing governments that their research in no way was connected to the US intelligence (Ferraro and Andreatta, 2014).

Another interesting case is that of the Human Terrain System. After the twin tower collapse at the World Trade Center in America on September 11, 2001,

the role and duties of anthropologists working in the Middle East changed. A new era began for field anthropologists working in the Middle East. They were now employed by the military intelligence of the US Army under a project named as the Human Terrain System (HTS). In order to support military missions of the US army in the Middle East, anthropologists were employed to assist and help military commanders in knowing the area, people and their language, where the military operations were underway. The budget of the HTS had been on a constant increase ever since its inception and by 2010, the HTS had an annual budget of 150 Million US dollars and 31 teams were deployed under the system. The HTS is not limited only to the Middle East but has now spread to almost every area where the US army needs them (Ferraro and Andreatta, 2014).

Such projects have been criticised by the professional bodies of anthropology. Both, the Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA) and the American Anthropological Association (AAA) have criticised anthropologists associating with war efforts. They are of the opinion that such involvements violate the code of ethics and professional codes for applied anthropology. There are also some groups of anthropologists who support such efforts as they are of the opinion that such efforts might also lead to some peaceful negotiations between the warring sides if they understand each other in a better way. These anthropologists see such exercises as forms of cultural dialogues. Whatever may be the argument, anthropologists have learned important lessons out of their involvement and debate on such issues. They have learnt to be more vigilant and alert regarding the motives of the funding agencies and hiring bodies that want to use their expertise in area studies. Discussions around the issues of ethics have led to a kind of milling processes within the discipline that has made anthropologists more committed to their craft and also more vigilant on the proper use of their work and skills. This brings us to discussing major areas of ethical responsibilities in applied anthropology (Ferraro and Andreatta, 2014).

Check Your Progress

- 7) What are Project Camelot and Human Terrain System? How are they linked with ethical issues in applied anthropology?

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3.6 STATEMENT OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES IN APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

The SfAA has outlined major areas of ethical responsibilities of applied anthropologists. These ethical codes also resonate with some other organisations working on the areas of ethical responsibilities, like the AAA. The areas of ethical responsibility include the following:

- 1) *Responsibility towards the people studied-* the most important responsibility of anthropologists is towards the people they study. People are at the center of any kind of anthropological research and application. It is their first and foremost duty to protect the interests of the people. The physical, psychological and social well-being of the people needs to be protected. This resonates with the idea of holism in anthropology. As the subject calls for a holistic understanding, ethics also are directed towards a holistic well-being of the people. In order to protect their well-being, it is the duty of anthropologists to clearly state the aims of her/his research and also talk with the people about the intended and unintended consequences of research and its application. It is only when they do that, people will be in a better position to take decisions regarding their participation or non-participation in the research. This implies that participation of people should always be voluntary and people should be in a position to make informed choices and give informed consent regarding their participation. It is the duty of the anthropologists to ensure that informants and participants in research should never be exploited and their rights must be protected at all costs. Most importantly, anthropologists should provide all means to the participants to maintain their confidentiality during the research process and during publication of research in the form of project reports, articles and books. “The people we study must be made aware of the likely limits of confidentiality and must not be promised a greater degree of confidentiality than can be realistically expected under current legal circumstances in our respective nations (SfAA website.)” It is also the duty of anthropologists to disclose the goals, methods and sponsorship of the projects to the people. Within limits of our knowledge we should also disclose significant risk of our activities in the area.
- 2) *Responsibilities to the public and communities affected by our action-* anthropologists must respect the dignity, integrity and worth of the communities that are directly affected by their activities. It is also recognised that human cultural and physical diversity is of utmost importance and therefore anthropological work in no way should undermine this dimension. The entire human existence is dependent upon human diversity and anthropologists should always strive towards its safeguard. Anthropologists should also avoid taking and

recommending actions on behalf of the funding agencies that may be harmful to the communities. Anthropologists also have the responsibility to disseminate and share their findings with the community. This increases transparency and builds trust between the anthropologists and the community members. It also helps the community members to play even greater roles in formulating policies for their areas and specific problems.

- 3) *Responsibility to the discipline and other colleagues in anthropology-* as professional anthropologists, we have responsibilities towards the discipline and our colleagues. We should not indulge in any activity that brings disgrace to the discipline at large and to other colleagues working in the area. This should be seen in the light of the role anthropologists played during the war and also during the post-second world war scenario. This also means that we should not act towards hampering the timely flow of information and results from our study as this may affect the future and ongoing researches. Anthropologists should understand this responsibility besides their commitment to the funding agency and the terms of reference and conditions with which they are bound to the sponsoring bodies. We should also be vocal about the professional practices that we adopted during the research as this helps in putting things into perspective. This means that methods and ways of data collection need to be shared and clearly spelled-out with others in the field. Anthropologists also have ethical responsibilities towards recognising and giving due credit to the works of other anthropologists working on the issue. Contributions of all should be duly acknowledged and given due credit. In the same vein we should not indulge in defaming our colleagues or spreading stereotypes and prejudices against colleagues for personal gains. This is especially true in the case of applied anthropology as stakes are high, as the impact of anthropological work could be monumental in changing policies or bringing about development.
- 4) *Responsibility to students, interns and trainees-* a very important dimension of applied anthropology is imparting training to the students and others interested in learning the craft of doing research and applying anthropological knowledge to solve immediate problems. This kind of training should be available to all without any kind of discrimination. The training should be informed, accurate and relevant to the needs of the society. Colleagues from our own profession may be in need of getting trained. This need to be realised and the dimension of continuing education should be given utmost importance. We all need to maintain our skill and knowledge and strive to gain more skill and increase the level of our knowledge continuously. This should be considered an important dimension in training. Training should also have important and adequate components regarding ethical issues. Following our earlier commitments towards the discipline and our colleagues, the

contributions made by students both at the level of research and publications should also be duly acknowledged. Anthropologists should also be non-exploitative while dealing with their students.

- 5) *Responsibilities towards employers, sponsors and funding agencies-* most of applied anthropology takes place under some kind of funding or sponsorship. Anthropologists are therefore responsible towards the funding agency in properly utilising the funds and being truthful in conducting the research and reporting its findings. Timely completion of the project is also very important as applied projects require timely intervention or introduction of some kind of directed change agents. Nature and scope of professional responsibilities should be clearly outlined and discussed with the employer or the sponsor. Suppression of facts and distortion of results to suit certain aims and objectives should never be done. Anthropologists should also be truthful about their qualifications, capabilities and purpose of research.
- 6) *Responsibility to the society-* it is the moral responsibility to communicate the findings of one's research to the society at large. They should be honest in their relationships with their own and host governments. They should never compromise their professional ethics to get research clearances.

Check Your Progress

- 8) What are the professional responsibilities of applied anthropologists as outlined by the Society for Applied Anthropology?
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3.7 SUMMARY

Anthropologists these days are also increasingly working in the private sectors. Applied anthropologists are being hired by private players. In such cases they are bound by rules and regulations of their employers. This creates an important ethical dilemma as anthropologists' professional ethics may say something but employers profit motives may have different aims and purposes. In this context anthropologists may also be prohibited from publishing important results that may hamper the profits of her/his employer. It thus becomes a case of conflict of interest between the professional ethics and employers profit motives. In no way however anthropologists should compromise with their professional ethics. Anthropologists in such situations may enter into an entirely different role of an activist anthropologist. Thus

with such an elaborate explanation of how ethics is viewed in applied anthropology, a student of anthropology hence has to be careful about what her/his role entails once s/he enters into the lives of any culture or community to study them and assist them with practical solutions.

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Web resource:

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3.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1) Refer to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd paragraphs of section 3.0
- 2) Refer to the 1st paragraph of section 3.1
- 3) Refer to the 2nd paragraph of section 3.1
- 4) *African Systems of Kinship and Marriage*
- 5) See section 3.3
- 6) See section 3.4
- 7) See section 3.5
- 8) See section 3.6