

BANC-112

ANTHROPOLOGY IN PRACTICE



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ANTHROPOLOGY IN PRACTICE

**School of Social Sciences
Indira Gandhi National Open University
Maidan Garhi, New Dehi - 110 068**

EXPERT COMMITTEE

Professor S.M. Patnaik
Department of Anthropology
University of Delhi.
Former Vice Chancellor Utkal University
Odisha

Dr. Rukshana Zaman
Discipline of Anthropology
School of Social Sciences
IGNOU

Dr. Sunita Reddy
Associate Professor
Centre of Social Medicine and Community
Health
School of Social Sciences
Deputy Director (R&D)
Jawaharlal Nehru University,
Adjunct Faculty, Special Centre for Disaster
Research
New Delhi-110067

Dr. Mitoo Das
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

Professor Rashmi Sinha
Discipline of Anthropology
School of Social Sciences
IGNOU

PROGRAMME AND COURSE COORDINATOR

Dr. Rukshana Zaman
Discipline of Anthropology,
School of Social Sciences,
IGNOU, New Delhi

CONTENT EDITOR

Prof. Subhadra Mitra Channa
Former Professor
Department of Anthropology,
University of Delhi, New Delhi

Prof. Rashmi Sinha,
Discipline of Anthropology,
School of Social Sciences,
IGNOU, New Delhi

Dr. Palla Venkatramana
Discipline of Anthropology,
School of Social Sciences,
IGNOU, New Delhi

GENERAL EDITOR

Dr. Rukshana Zaman
Discipline of Anthropology,
School of Social Sciences,
IGNOU, New Delhi

COURSE PREPARATION TEAM

BLOCK		UNIT WRITER	CONTENT EDITOR
Block 1	Introducing Anthropology in Practice		
Unit 1	Academic Anthropology	Dr Kalyani Sahal Assistant Professor (Guest) Department of Sociology Delhi School of Economics University of Delhi, Delhi	Prof. Subhadra Mitra Channa, Former Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi. New Delhi.
Unit 2	History of Anthropology in Practice	Dr Rukshana Zaman, Discipline of Anthropology, School of Social Sciences, IGNOU, New Delhi.	Prof. Subhadra Mitra Channa, Former Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi.

Unit 3	Challenges and Dilemmas	Dr Prashant Khattri, Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Allahabad, Prayagraj. UP.	Prof. Subhadra Mitra Channa, Former Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi. New Delhi.
Block 2	Anthropologists in the Field		
Unit 4	Anthropology and Development	Dr Indrani Mukherjee, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi.	Prof. Subhadra Mitra Channa, Former Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi. New Delhi.
Unit 5	Business and Corporate Anthropology	Dr Gunjan Arora, Post- Doctoral Fellow, Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health, School of Social Sciences, Jawahar Lal Nehru University, New Delhi.	Prof. Subhadra Mitra Channa, Former Professor, Department of Anthropology, New Delhi.
Unit 6	Anthropology in Advocacy and Policy Research	Dr Indrani Mukherjee, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi.	Prof. Subhadra Mitra Channa, Former Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi.
Unit 7	Constitutional Perspective and Human Rights	Dr Avanish Kumar Public Policy and Governance, Management Development Institute, Gurgaon	Prof. Subhadra Mitra Channa, Former Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi.
Block 3	Biosocial Anthropology in Practice		
Unit 8	Contributions of Biosocial Anthropologists in India	Dr Indrani Mukherjee Post-Doctoral Fellow Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi.	Prof. Subhadra Mitra Channa, Former Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi.
Unit 9	Role of Practicing Anthropology in Epidemiology, Public Health and Community Health	Dr Shaik Abdul Latheef, Department of Genetics and Biotechnology, Osmania University, Hyderabad	Dr Palla Venkatramana, Discipline of Anthropology, School of Social Sciences, IGNOU, New Delhi.
Unit 10	Forensic Anthropology	Dr Kumud Sarin, Freelancer, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi.	Prof. Rashmi Sinha Discipline of Anthropology, School of Social Sciences, IGNOU, New Delhi.
Unit 11	Demographic Anthropology	Dr Gunjan Arora, Post-Doctoral Fellow, Centre of Social Medicine and Community Health, School of Social Sciences, Jawahar Lal Nehru University, New Delhi.	Prof. Subhadra Mitra Channa, Former Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi. Delhi.

Unit 12	Trends in Anthropology in Practice	Dr. Rukshana Zaman, Discipline of Anthropology, School of Social Sciences, IGNOU, New Delhi.	Prof. Rashmi Sinha and Dr. Palla Venkatramana Discipline of Anthropology, School of Social Sciences, IGNOU, New Delhi.
	Practical Manual	Dr. Rukshana Zaman, Discipline of Anthropology, School of Social Sciences, IGNOU, New Delhi and Mr. Ubaid Dar, Research Scholar, Discipline of Anthropology, IGNOU, New Delhi.	Prof. Subhadra Mitra Channa, Former Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Delhi, Delhi.

COVER DESIGN & CONCEPT

Dr. Mitoo Das
Assistant Professor,
Discipline of Anthropology,
School of Social Sciences,
IGNOU, New Delhi

CONSULTANTS

Dr. Pankaj Upadhyay and
Dr. Smarika Awasthi

PRODUCTION TEAM

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

Mr. Hemant Kumar
Section Officer,
MPDD, IGNOU, New Delhi

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COURSE INTRODUCTION

BANC 112: Anthropology in Practice

Practicing anthropology is the use of ideas, values, theories, skills etc. for practical purposes in real life. This course would take the learners through the anthropological perspectives in government, policy making, creation of new laws, corporate world, economic development, different forms of communication, cyber world, areas of health, environment, hazards, disasters, media, new media, sports and much more. It would also focus on the methods applicable in practicing anthropology. As part of the course the learners will be provided with a detailed, in depth and critical evaluation of the pragmatic applications of anthropology. It would also include discussions on how anthropology can be chosen as a career, keeping in mind these practical arenas where participation of anthropologists is viable.

Course Requirement: This course is one of the core courses for the learners of Bachelor of Science (Honours) in Anthropology programme in the fifth semester which comprises of four credit theory and two credits of practical. Evaluation process will include marking of assignment and term end examination based on the theory and practical component.

Learning Outcome

After reading this course, you should be able to:

- i) explain how the use of anthropological knowledge can help in the betterment of human lives;
- ii) translate anthropological knowledge into practice;
- iii) recognize arenas for anthropologists to work as professionals; and
- iv) discuss and define the methods used in practicing anthropology

Course Presentation

The course content comprises of three blocks and a practical manual. Each block has thematically arranged units. In total there are twelve units and a practical manual. Now let us see what we have discussed in each block.

BLOCK 1: INTRODUCING ANTHROPOLOGY IN PRACTICE

The first block is aimed at introducing the concept and history of anthropology in practice to the learners. We begin this block with the first unit **Academic Anthropology** which shall take the learners through the concept of anthropology in practice. The emphasis of this unit is to acquaint the learners with the works and activities of practicing anthropologists. This would help the learners to distinguish between academic and practicing anthropology. They would also learn about the different areas and avenues of anthropology in practice. The second unit on **History of Anthropology in Practice** describes the journey from applied to practicing anthropology. Giving you the historical background, the unit outlines how anthropology in practice came into being and explains the concepts of action and developmental anthropology. The third unit **Challenges and Dilemmas** would help the learners to understand specific challenges faced

by practicing anthropologists. The institutional practice and the challenges of practicing anthropology have been dealt with in detail herein. The unit discusses the ethical dilemmas in practicing anthropology, which would allow the learner to comprehend and analyse the best practice to overcome the challenges and dilemmas. The learner would be equipped with knowledge from field experiences, presented through examples, that would help to articulate and understand how practicing anthropologists are addressing issues in the contemporary world.

BLOCK 2: ANTHROPOLOGISTS IN THE FIELD

The second block consisting of four units would bring to the learner the experiences of anthropologists in the field. This block shall help you to comprehend how the practicing anthropologists are working in the field and applying their knowledge for the betterment of human societies. The first unit of this block (Unit 4) **Anthropology and Development** shall walk you through the different phases of development and the anthropological engagement with development. The anthropological critique of development in terms of the 'planetary bureaucratic culture' of development and development in practice has been discussed at length. The dilemmas and critiques faced by anthropologists when working in the area of development have also been dealt with in this unit. The next unit (Unit 5) titled **Business and Corporate Anthropology** presents an understanding of the rise of business anthropology as a sub-discipline. After reading this unit, you shall be able to comprehend what, why, and how anthropologists engage themselves in business study. This unit would also help you to analyse, debate, and discuss the relevance of business anthropology in contemporary society. The third unit of this block (Unit 6) **Anthropology in Advocacy and Policy Research** touches upon the crucial link between anthropology and advocacy. It explores the continuum between advocacy and policy. The unit also takes into account the dilemmas faced by anthropologists with reference to advocacy, which would help you to comprehend the relationship of anthropology with policy and policy research. The last unit in this block (Unit 7) **Constitutional Perspective and Human Rights** would appraise you about why and how human rights become a prerequisite condition to promote an inclusive society. Drawing on suitable examples the unit would help you to comprehend the process of enforcement of human rights.

BLOCK 3: BIOSOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGY IN PRACTICE

The third block in this course is dynamic as it touches upon various themes within the context of anthropology in practice. There are five units in this block. We begin this block by introducing you to the anthropologists in India who have contributed to the development of anthropology in practice. The main feature of these anthropological works is that they are holistic in nature touching upon the biological and social aspects of human lives. In the first unit of this block (Unit 8) **Contributions of Biosocial Anthropologists** in India, you would get a glimpse of the practice of anthropology in India during the initial stages as an academic discipline. The contribution of some key anthropologists, trained in various subfields would enrich you about the discipline within the Indian context. The second unit (Unit 9) **Role of Practicing Anthropology** in Epidemiology, Public Health, and Community Health dwells upon the relationship between culture and health. The scope of medical anthropology and the theories of health and illness

has been discussed in length for you to understand the methods used in health studies and how this anthropological knowledge is helpful when dealing with public health. In this unit we also bring to you the definitions of ethnomedicine, epidemiology, public health, and environment and community health in Indian populations. Unit 10 **Forensic Anthropology** would take you through the applied field of physical anthropology which focuses on the identification of skeletal remains for the purpose of legal or forensic issues. The unit would help you to decipher the role of skeletal remains in personal identification like age, sex, or stature; understand various techniques and concepts used for personal identification, e.g., biometrics, dermatoglyphics, etc., You would also gain the knowledge of body fluids or blood samples and their analysis as the forensic evidence for identification. The aim of this unit is to provide information on how forensic anthropology is being practiced by expert forensic anthropologists. The fourth unit in this block (Unit 11) **Demographic Anthropology** deals with the rise and development of demographic anthropology. The unit strives to explain the demographic processes-fertility, mortality, and migration; and highlight the inter-relation between population change and culture. The last unit of this block (Unit-12) is **Trends in Anthropology in Practice** would help you to comprehend the diverse arenas where the anthropological knowledge has been put into practice. Herein we bring to you some of the concepts that are much in vogue like physiological anthropology, kinanthropometry, and nutritional anthropology and how these are being applied for the betterment of human life. This unit also takes into account the aspects of genetic screening and counseling, moving on to describe designing, fashion, visual and media anthropology.

PRACTICAL MANUAL

At the end of the theory section, which comprises three blocks we present the practical manual. This manual will assist and guide the learner to build a research design and apply the theoretical knowledge in practice. The manual shall abreast the learners with the methods and techniques that help the practicing anthropologists to take their research forward. The learner will be able to check these techniques, practice them, and create small projects and later utilise these same methods and techniques in future research work. This manual shall help the learners to familiarise themselves with the exact way of doing research keeping the community needs in mind and learn how to analyse research results to create knowledge.

Let us now familiarize you with reading the units. If you understand how to approach the units and read the course material in a systematic manner you would benefit as a learner. As we have already stated the blocks are divided thematically, thus, a learner is advised to read the units in a sequence in terms of the themes so that they are able to connect and comprehend the link between two units. If you read randomly, you might find it difficult to comprehend concepts and definitions, and lose the thread of the unit. For an easy reading and better comprehension, the units have been divided into sections and sub-sections. Each section is indicated clearly by BOLD CAPITALS and each sub-section by bold and small letters. The significant divisions within a sub section are still in smaller bold letters so as to make it easier for you to see their place within the sub-sections. The items which need to be highlighted are numbered as a., b., c., etc. For the sake of uniformity, we have employed the same scheme

in every unit throughout the course. Each unit begins with the 'Objectives' which explains to a learner:

- a. what we will be presenting in the unit, and
- b. what we expect from the student once he/she completes working on the unit.

After every section we have given **Check Your Progress** that would help the learner to self check whether they have been able to comprehend the subject matter in the section. The purpose of the Check Your Progress is to enable the learner to compare their answers with the answers given at the end of each unit. Please do not look at the answers before you write your own answers in the given space. The learner may write the answers with pencil, so that it can be rubbed and rewritten again as a practice component. For the long answers the hints have been provided, the answers have not been given so that the learner develops the skill of writing in their own words, without directly copying word by word from the course material.

In the last section of each unit, under the heading 'Summary' we summarise the entire unit for purpose of revision and ready reference.

After summary the next section of the unit comprises of either 'References or Suggested Reading'. If the author has quoted directly from a text or texts, we have provided the references. If there are no text cited, we have provided a list of readings that the learner may want to read in order to enhance the understanding of the subject.

At the end let's see how the learner may use the wide margin provided in the units. The learner may write down important points after reading each section in the margins. This will help you in your study and also when you attempt the Check Your Progress.

All the best, happy reading. Wish you success. Hope the course material act as a guide for you to achieve your goals.

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BLOCK 1

**INTRODUCING
ANTHROPOLOGY IN PRACTICE**

BLOCK 1 INTRODUCING ANTHROPOLOGY IN PRACTICE

Unit 1 Academic Anthropology

Unit 2 History of Anthropology in Practice

Unit 3 Challenges and Dilemmas

UNIT 1 ACADEMIC ANTHROPOLOGY*

Contents

- 1.0 Introduction
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- 1.6 Summary
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- 1.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- define the concept of anthropology in practice;
- differentiate between academic and practicing anthropology; and
- describe the different areas of anthropology in practice.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Anthropology as a discipline is defined as ‘methods and theoretical perspectives enabling the practitioners to explore, compare and understand the varied expressions of the human condition’ (Eriksen 2004:7). Anthropologists are well-informed citizens and known to make a positive impact on society. They are trained to respect diversity, think critically, and engage with the local issues holistically and provide voices to the people at the ‘margins’ of the society. The anthropology discipline is classified into four sub-disciplines – physical/biological anthropology, social/cultural anthropology, linguistic anthropology, and archaeological anthropology. Applied anthropology is considered the fifth sub-discipline of anthropology that cross-cuts all the four traditional sub-disciplines of anthropology.

***Contributor:** Dr Kalyani Sahal, Assistant Professor (Guest), Department of Sociology, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi, Delhi.

Broadly, anthropology can be divided into academic anthropology and practicing anthropology considering the career choices pursued by the trained anthropologists. We will be discussing these two domains at length in this unit. The term ‘applied’ or ‘practicing’ anthropologists are used inter-changeably in this unit to keep it simple for the purpose of understanding. However, there are scholars (Baba 2009; Nolan 2003) who make a distinction between ‘applied’ and ‘practicing’ anthropologists too. Applied anthropologists generally oscillate between academic and non-academic settings. Both practicing and applied anthropology have their focal point of policy formulation rather than contributing to pure theoretical knowledge.

1.1 ACADEMIC ANTHROPOLOGY

Academic anthropologists are basically trained anthropologists working in the field of academia. They teach and train under-graduate and post-graduate students in anthropological knowledge and methodologies at degree colleges and universities. They serve as instructors and professors for anthropology at universities. They contribute to the overall development of anthropological knowledge.

The most important responsibility of academic anthropologists is to train the students in anthropological theories and methodologies so as to prepare them as future anthropologists. They may also raise funds to conduct research on topics of personal interest. They may also collaborate with other anthropologists outside academia on projects. Academic anthropologists are required to share the results of their research with the wider anthropological community through publication and participation in various conferences, seminars, and colloquia. Most of the academic anthropologists teach in anthropology departments at universities and colleges but some are also affiliated with related disciplines like sociology, social work, community health and medicine, tribal and indigenous studies, gender studies, business schools, etc.

Check Your Progress

1. Explain the main responsibility of academic anthropologists.

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1.2 PRACTICING ANTHROPOLOGY

The National Association for the Practice of Anthropology (NAPA) defines a practicing anthropologist as “professionally trained individual who applies specialised knowledge, skills, and experience to problem-solving in any of the human dimensions (past, present, and future)” (NAPA 1990). Anthropological practitioners are full-time professionals (with graduate or higher degrees in anthropology discipline) who earn their living by using anthropological knowledge in non-academic settings (Nolan 2003). Practicing anthropologists

can have their training in any of the four sub-fields of anthropology and apply their training for solving social problems. Today it is no longer an alternative to an academic career. Rather many talented graduates are engaged as practitioners to employ their anthropological knowledge to solve the multitude of problems faced by humanity in the twenty first century.

Anthropological practitioners do not hold a permanent or tenured university position like their peers in academia. They can be employed by the government, non-government, corporate organisations, or even work as freelancers. The application of anthropological knowledge is central to their work. However, they rarely hold the title of “anthropologist” in their work organisations.

Let us try to understand the role of practicing anthropologists in society. The first and foremost responsibility of practitioners is to apply anthropological knowledge to solve the various problems– for example, poverty, gender inequality, racial discrimination, illness, environmental degradation, climate change, etc. that affect contemporary human society. They also conduct fieldwork research much like academic anthropologists but the topic/problem to be researched and field sites are decided by the agencies or organisations that hire and pay them. Practitioners make recommendations for the policies and plans on the basis of the data collected through their fieldwork to ameliorate the problems faced by the people. Some of them are involved in implementing the plans and programs in the target area while some are engaged to assess the effectiveness of these plans and policies.

Practicing anthropologists are employed by government agencies and bodies like Anthropological Survey of India, the Archaeological Survey of India, the National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, non-government organisations, like the United Nations (UN), and the World Bank, non-profit organisations like the OXFAM, etc. Some of them have long-term careers within one organisation while others freelance with multiple organisations. Entry-level positions are open to anthropology students with graduate degrees while higher-level positions require a doctoral degree in anthropology.

Check Your Progress

2. Who employ practicing anthropologists?

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1.3 HISTORY OF ANTHROPOLOGY DISCIPLINE

We need to understand the foundation of anthropology discipline in order to better grasp the inter-relations between the two domains of the discipline – academic and practice anthropology. Van Willigen (2009) pointed out that practice anthropology can be credited to lay the foundation of anthropology as

an academic discipline. There are brilliant studies that discuss the relationship of academic and practice anthropology in the US (Brondo and Bennett 2012; Fiske and Chambers 1996; Eddy and Partridge 1987) and Britain (Grillo and Rew 1985). Anthropology started to emerge as a separate discipline by the late 1870s (Nolan 2003). The term, “applied anthropology” was probably used for the first time during a meeting at Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI) in London in 1881 (Rylko-Bauer et al. 2006:187). The term, “practical anthropology” was probably first used by James Hunt who was the founder of the Anthropological Society of London (Eddy and Partridge 1987: 4)

1.3.1 The Colonial Roots

“Within the history of anthropology, the application came first, serving as the conditions for some of the earliest academic departments, which were obviously shaped by colonial imperatives but also motivated by a desire for systemic reforms” (Rylko-Bauer et al. 2006: 179). Anthropologists were engaged to document the daily life of exotic communities under imperial rule and thus can be considered as part of the colonial superstructure. Some of the classic ethnographies like *The People of India* (Risley 1908), *Pagan tribes of the Nilotic Sudan* (Seligman and Seligman 1932) were commissioned by the government to inform the administrators during the colonial period. W.W. Crooke, Sir Herbert Risley, A.C. Haddon, Hutton, WHR Rivers, etc. were employed by colonial administrators to study the indigenous culture in India. Thus, we see that contemporary anthropological theories grew out of the application and this linkage to colonialism is often presented as a troubled legacy of applied anthropology.

1.3.2 Second World War and Afterwards

The term ‘applied’ anthropologists were commonly used in the 19 century to refer to the anthropologists who addressed contemporary social and economic problems. The term referred to not an occupation but a role that can be played by any anthropologist (Forster 1969). At that time full-time practitioners were rare and anthropologists oscillated between academic and applied roles as consultants or project directors for government agencies. However, they returned to academia on the completion of their projects. This trend was prevalent in the US around WW-II time. Right before Second World War, the engagement of applied anthropologists paved the way for the inception of the Society of Applied Anthropologists (SfAA) and its flagship journal titled “*Human Organization*” in 1941.

The involvement of applied anthropologists reached its zenith during the time of the Second World War. As per estimates of Mead, there were “95 per cent U.S. anthropologists involved in war efforts” at that time (cited in Rylko-Bauer et al, 2006: 180). Some of these engagements seemed problematic in retrospect and further complicated the boundaries between the two domains of anthropology. For example, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) which was a precursor of the CIA, employed anthropologists like Gregory Bateson. Later anthropologists were heavily criticised for their wartime engagements in fulfilling the military agenda that lead to the exploitation of the indigenous groups (Nolan 2003; Rylko-Bauer et al. 2006).

Post Second World War period witnessed increasing opportunities for anthropologists, both in academic and non-academic domains as the funding and grants were available to enhance the production of strategic knowledge. This was the time when the focus in anthropology discipline shifted from the US to faraway and non-western places. At the same time, applied anthropologists were engaged in some very interesting projects like Fox Project (Tax 1960) and Vicos project in Peru (Dobyns et al. 1971). By the mid-1960s anthropology, discipline was growing as a useful discipline and spokespersons like Mead were widely listened in public forums (Nolan 2003).

1.3.3 The Disjuncture between ‘Theory’ and ‘Practice’

Historically ‘application’ was always a significant aspect of the anthropology discipline, but post-Second World War academic anthropology emerged as the dominant voice of the discipline. By the end of the 1960s, tremendous academic opportunities lead to “retreat in the academic world” for many anthropologists (Spicer 1976:33). This was the time when the distance between “theory” and “practice” started growing up. The commitments and interests in the applied aspect that characterised the early stages of anthropology started disappearing fast as the discipline secured a safe place within academics (Partridge 1985). The academicians were regarded as true anthropologists and practitioners were marginalised and critiqued for engaging in service.

The split between “theory” and “application” in the anthropology discipline began widening. There developed a system in which the ‘top tier’ was devoted to the production of pure knowledge and other tiers in the application of that knowledge (Kozaitis 2000). There is a notion to consider applied anthropology as the ‘evil twin’ of academic anthropology (Ferguson 1997, cited in Baba 2009:383). However, this disjuncture between theory and practice is uniquely a western phenomenon as in other parts of the world including India, this is irrelevant as scholarly anthropological work is often derived from critical engagements with the community. Several scholars have pointed out the need for bridging the gap between anthropological theory and practice as it is not helpful to address the unique challenges faced by humankind in twenty first century (Nolan 2017; Strang 2009; Baba and Hill 2006; Pink 2006). Ginsberg (2019) discussed the relationship of anthropology between academia and practice by looking at the fact that much work in anthropology has a presence inside and outside academia.

1.4 DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ACADEMIC AND PRACTICING ANTHROPOLOGIST

Many of the anthropologists are now taking up practice as full-time employment. Nolan (2003:16) pointed out that academic anthropology is a discipline while anthropology in practice is a profession. Both of them operate in different spheres with different working styles. Table1.1 sums up the major differences between academic and practicing anthropologists

Table 1.1 Differences between Academic and Practicing Anthropologists

Type of Anthropologist	Employment	Core Activities	Who Judges the Results
Academic Anthropologists	Academically employed in Universities.	Research, grant writing, publication, and teaching.	Inside the academy, evaluations are done by peers, tenure committee, and review boards. Outside the academy, evaluations are done by peer reviewers and members of professional bodies.
Practicing Anthropologists	Self-employed in many cases; employee of agencies and corporations in others.	Activities are widely varied and change according to the assignment. They include research, management, evaluation, training, consultancy, advocacy, etc.	Employers and clients judge results. The results of evaluations have direct consequences for future jobs or assignments.

Source: (Adapted from Nolan 2003:6)

We will discuss at length both types of anthropologists - the academic and practicing anthropologists, in terms of structures of their workplaces, rewards, and constraints attached to their profiles and working activities in the following sections.

1.4.1 Structures

Academic anthropologists and practicing anthropologists work in different structures. Academic anthropologists enjoy considerable freedom and autonomy as they work in protected and safe environments of universities as tenured faculty. They tend to work in relative isolation from their fellow academics although they are required to maintain cordial relations with them. Academic structures remain almost the same across the universities and do not vary much. There are few ranks in university faculty positions and much of the lifetime of academics is spent rising through these ranks. The values and rules associated with these ranks are albeit complex but remain almost the same across the institutions.

Job security for academic anthropologists depends upon securing a tenured or permanent faculty position which is conferred largely on the basis of one's research publications evaluated by the academically well-established seniors

and peers. Job security is very high in tenured positions and it is not affected by the fluctuations of the market or the viewpoints of colleagues/peers about one's academic performance.

In contrast to academics, the practitioners inhabit a more changeable environment as their workplace is characterised by a complex set of hierarchies. The rules and procedures differ from one organisation to another. Markets govern and dictate the functioning of the multiple clients and stakeholders in the organisations, often with conflicting interests.

For practicing anthropologists, job security solely depends upon the achievement of targeted results in an assignment and not on the achievement of tenure or publication of research papers or evaluation by peers. Practitioners are paid by the hiring agencies or institutions on the basis of their performance and not on the basis of their knowledge. In other words, a practicing anthropologist's reputation is followed on the basis of one's last assignment/ project completed. Evaluation of practitioner's work is done by the hiring agencies depending upon the market demands. As the market fluctuates, so are the role expectations from the practitioner.

1.4.2 Rewards and Constraints

Academic anthropologists are both rewarded and constrained by the well-defined structure of universities which is almost the same. As discussed above, the reputation of professors is derived and assessed by academia. The status of the academic anthropologist will depend upon a number of things – for example, publications, tenure, and promotion. Securing a job position in an “elite” university definitely adds to one's status. An Academic's reputation or status is most likely based on one or two achievements made in the early phase of the career.

The scenario is different for practicing anthropologists. The important thing for consideration is the size of organisation or agency whether in the government or private sector where they are employed. Their ranks within the agency and proximity to the top-level ranks involved in decision-making matters the most.

There is very little pressure on academic anthropologists to achieve the set goals. The fixed university timetables are usually followed throughout the calendar year. They are more or less self-employed with the support of university structure and funding. Practicing anthropologists work to finish the deadlines in the stipulated time allotted to them by the hiring agency or the clients. There is a sense of urgency as practitioners work in situations where time is regarded as important as money. Their work is evaluated by the clients and agencies and on the basis of their performance, they are rewarded.

1.4.3 Activities and Work

The activities and working styles of both academic and practicing anthropologists differ significantly. Academic anthropologists focus on the problems or research questions defined by the academic setup while practicing anthropologists tend to focus upon the problems defined by their employing agencies and institutions. Practitioners are required to produce reliable results within the time-bound duration, mostly along with their collaborators.

While academic anthropologists work mostly independently of their colleagues, practicing anthropologists often find themselves working in a team or group as a part of the organisation. Practitioners are held responsible for their every decision and are accountable to their supervisors and employers for their every action.

Ethnography is the end result of fieldwork-based research for academic anthropologists. However, most of the ethnographies are not problem-oriented and fail to provide a roadmap or action plan for the future. Very few options are provided in these ethnographic accounts mostly in terms of “ideal” and not achievable terms. On the other hand, practitioners adopt a solution-based approach. They are required to provide clear and well-defined future options or solutions along with their possible outcomes in the future. Solutions proposed in their reports are not the speculative ones but the best feasible options in the prevailing conditions.

Check Your Progress

3. What is the difference between academic ethnography and practitioner’s report?

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1.5 AREAS OF ANTHROPOLOGY IN PRACTICE

Practicing anthropologists are engaged in many areas and industries to make decisions in order to improve the situation. According to NAPA, some of the sectors in which practicing anthropologists work are as follows:

- Agricultural development
- Business-Product Design, Project Management, Program Management, Research and Development
- Community Development
- Cultural Resource Management
- Education and Training
- Environment and Climate change-Policy formulation and management
- Government- Tribal, Local, state, regional, international issues
- Health and Medical care- Public health and human genetics
- Information technology- Human factors engineering, localisation and globalisation, network design and administration
- Law and legal practices- forensics
- Museums- Curation, project and program management

- Non-profit- Grant writing, management, policy
- Organisational management
- User Experience- Product design, client satisfaction

Reflection

Discuss the ways in which anthropological knowledge can be applied to study COVID-19.

Check out the blog article by Danilyn Rutherford to read about it.

Link: <http://blog.wennergren.org/2020/06/the-future-of-anthropological-research-ethics-questions-and-methods-in-the-age-of-covid-19-part-i/>

1.6 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have discussed mainly the two domains of anthropology discipline – academic and practice anthropology. Considering the problematic colonial history of anthropology as a discipline it is not correct to blame applied anthropology alone for the exploitation of indigenous communities by the colonial powers. As argued by many scholars there is an increasing need to bridge the gap between these two domains. Keeping in mind the diverse engagements of anthropologists in terms of consultancy, administration as well as academics, these two categories are overlapping in the current scenario wherein the transition from academics to corporate/ government organisations is highly possible.

With the diminishing opportunities for trained anthropologists in academia, there is heightened urgency to explore and look for avenues in practice. There is a growing need for anthropological knowledge, perspectives, and insights to manage the human differences outside the academic world. The opportunities for practitioners are varied and increasing in the twenty first century. Though the practice is based on traditional anthropological theories and knowledge, it employs that in most interesting ways to come up with the solutions to a range of problems threatening the very existence of humankind in the present times. Practitioners are redefining the scope and content of the anthropology discipline to be more suited to critically understand and come up with solutions to modern-day problems.

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1.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Refer to section 1.1

The main responsibility of academic anthropologists is to contribute to theory building in anthropological discipline and provide training to the future anthropologists.

2. Refer to section 1.2

Practicing anthropologists are employed by government, non-profit organisations, business corporations etc.

3. Refer to section 1.4.3

Academic ethnographies are not “solution” oriented and do not provide the roadmap for future course of action while report prepared by practitioners are policy oriented and provide possible solutions to ameliorate the situation.



UNIT 2 HISTORY OF ANTHROPOLOGY IN PRACTICE*

Contents

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 The Beginning of Anthropology
- 2.2 The Early Phases of Applied Anthropology
- 2.3 Action Anthropology
- 2.4 Development Anthropology
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 References
- 2.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, the learners would be able to:

- comprehend the difference between applied and practicing anthropology;
- describe how anthropology in practice came into being; and
- explain action and developmental anthropology.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The distinction between theory and practice was first brought forth by Rene Descartes in his work *Discourse on the Methods* in the early seventeenth century. He had stressed the application of theoretical knowledge into practice. The theoretical perspectives unless applied in practice become redundant. In the case of anthropology, as you have read in the first unit anthropologists engaged in academics are also working as applied anthropologists, who work with government agencies and also as consultants, advisors, and experts for non-governmental organisations. When it comes to anthropology, the distinction between theoretical (anthropology of) and practical application (anthropology for) is not much pronounced, as Margaret Mead had said in her work 'all anthropology is applied' (1975: 13). In this unit, we would try to trace the beginning of how anthropological knowledge and perspectives were being used for solving problems, the rise of applied anthropology, and the move towards anthropology in practice. The focus of this unit is to understand how anthropological knowledge is being 'put into practice'. We would begin with the growth of anthropology as a field science where the anthropologist lived with the people under study to perceive their way of life thereby making it possible for them to get to a level of understanding of complex social phenomenon, not comprehensible by other methods. This is one aspect that has made anthropology

*Contributor: Rukshana Zaman, Faculty of Anthropology, School of Social Sciences, Indira Gandhi National Open University, New Delhi.

the most sought-after subject when it comes to solving problems related to societies and cultures.

2.1 THE BEGINNING OF ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDIES

Before anthropology came up as an academic discipline, there were thinkers engaged in the study of society and its cultures. Herodotus (485-325 BC) a great philosopher had planted the seeds of thinking about human beings with a history and not part of divine creation. He had discussed 'cross-cultural description' through documentation. The beginning of documentation of societies can be traced back to around 1807 when the East India Company had appointed Francis Buchanan (Sachchidananda 1972) to study and document the way of life of the people in Bengal, India. It was during the colonial regime that studying the 'native' population came into practice. The knowledge gathered about the populations was used for administrative purposes. The Aborigines Protection Society which came up in 1838 in London was a step towards investigating and understanding the 'native' societies and their cultures so as to offer them social service (Keith 1917; Reining 1962). In terms of ethnological work, one of the examples is documentation of the lifeways of the Mohawks of New France in North America by Father Joseph Lafitau. With regards to policy research, Henry R. Schoolcraft's work (1852-57) as an administrator assigned to understand the history and the lives of the Indian Tribes in the United States was a move towards policymaking. Though not trained in anthropology, Henry R. Schoolcraft came to be known as an ethnologist, who also initiated the American Ethnological Society. A missionary, William Duncan also contributed significantly towards the social reforms of the Indian Tribes. With the gathered ethnological knowledge, the colonial officers were provided training for better administration (Barnet 1969 [1942]). However, one has to note here that these officials were administrators, not anthropologists trained in anthropological tools and techniques for data collection. It was much later that anthropologists had engaged with the government and non-government organisations, more so during the First and Second World Wars as a full-fledged discipline. Let us now discuss the early anthropological works.

Reflection

Ethnology deals with the study of cultures, more inclined towards theory and the comparative study of institutions, societies, and cultures.

During the initial stages, anthropology was understood as a 'White Man's' prerogative to study the so-called 'primitive men', the society, culture, and people who did not share the same culture as 'them'. Most of the work carried out during this time was inclined towards emphasising the supremacy of the 'White men', who believed themselves to be at the pinnacle of civilisation. The basis was that these societies mostly in Africa, Asia, Oceania, and South and North America, that they came across during their voyages, were not similar, 'not like their own' and were referred to as 'primitive'. Most of the earlier works at the beginning of the anthropological journey relate to the assumption, taking for granted that there are two types of human societies; a. civilised and b. 'primitive'. Kuper in his work has stated that the term 'primitive society' implied a historical point of reference. "*It presumably defines a type of society*

ancestral to more advanced forms, on the analogy of an evolutionary history of natural species” (Kuper 2010: 123). Much of these works in the nineteenth century were based on second-hand data when the evolutionary theory was being postulated. Thus, the term ‘armchair anthropologist’ was used for the anthropologists who did not directly visit the field and relied on the data gathered from travellers, missionaries, administrators, voyagers, traders, etc. for their analysis and deductions. During this time the anthropological studies were engaged in bringing out the differences that were vivid between their own societies and the so-called ‘primitive societies’.

Slowly with the Torres Strait expedition in 1898 led by A. C. Haddon, one of the first organised fieldwork was conducted by a group of scholars belonging to varied disciplines, followed by Franz Boas’ work on the Innuits that fieldwork came into vogue. Malinowski (1920s) further established fieldwork in the discipline of anthropology with his long stay in the field for about thirty-one months (in phases) when he worked among the Trobriand Islanders. For long anthropology has been the domain of study by the Western people. Till now, we had the data from the field but why was it not called practicing anthropology? The reason is that the application of anthropological knowledge gained through the collection of first-hand data was not used for the betterment of those societies that were being studied. That is the knowledge was not put into practice or practical use. The anthropological data was for the use of the colonisers for administrative purposes, for a better administration by knowing the culture and society of the colony. However, this does not mean that there was no substantial thinking in those lines. As early as in 1860s James Hunt, the founder of the Anthropological Society of London had used the phrase ‘practical anthropology’, which showed a move towards the pragmatic cause of solving problems using the anthropological knowledge gathered through data collection in the field.

Malinowski in his article ‘Practical Anthropology’ (1929) had tried to focus on the application of anthropological knowledge into practical use. In the introduction section, he had emphasised how anthropological knowledge can be used to bring about efficiency in the administration of the colonies. It has to be noted here that in the early stages when the application of anthropological knowledge, i.e., the data collected from the field was being discussed, it was not for the betterment of the society under study, but how the knowledge could benefit the colonial administration. Bennett (1966: S23) writes that “Applied anthropology in the United States emerged as a mixture of New Deal humanitarian liberalism and progressive industrial management ideology and in Britain as a humanitarian advisory function for the colonial administration in Africa”. Thus, this phase of anthropological studies was more helpful to the colonisers as they could bring about policies and regulations that would increase the efficiency of the administration. Anthropologists like Radcliffe-Brown and Malinowski were provided with government grants by the government of Great Britain to further their research around the 1920s and 1930s. In America, with the coming up of the Indian Reorganisation Act of the New Deal and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), anthropologists became involved in actual administrative works. This phase saw the beginning of applied anthropology. A phase that became more prominent during the two successive World Wars.

Check Your Progress

History of Anthropology in Practice

1. What do you understand by 'cross-cultural description' through documentation? Which philosopher came up with this idea?

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2. Name the society that came up in London in 1838 to understand the 'native' societies and their cultures. What were the objectives of this society?

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3. Who was Henry R. Schoolcraft? Briefly describe his contribution to anthropology.

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4. Name the places where the Europeans had their colonies.

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5. Which expedition did A. C. Haddon lead? What was the aim of this expedition?

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2.2 THE EARLY PHASES OF APPLIED ANTHROPOLOGY

Applied Ethnology Phase

Brinton, an American anthropologist had talked about applied anthropology way back in 1896 for the management of the indigenous communities (Foster 1969: 198). This phase is co-incident with the time of assimilation of the indigenous groups, commonly referred to as Indians, in America with the dominant white populations, whereby these groups were fast losing their traditions and cultures. The *Bureau of Ethnology* was established by the government of the United States of America in 1879, in which anthropologists were employed by the American government to gather information about the indigenous groups to manage their affairs (Bennett 1996: S25). These anthropologists were primarily involved in two tasks (a) in studying and documenting the lives and cultures of these societies that were fast disappearing, known as salvage anthropology and (b) in advising the government on the implementation of reforms and changes that would help in the assimilation of these groups to the American way of life. However, one has to note that the anthropologists during this time did not work towards safeguarding and saving the fast-depleting groups. The societies were being documented as people and their cultures on their way out, as primarily out of academic interest. The term salvage anthropology indicates clearly that the aim was to document and save the available data for posterity. The intervention aspect for the welfare of the society, working towards saving the cultures under study was missing. No efforts were made in this direction. Their role as governments' agents was only to document and present the data with suggestions. This indifference stems from the perceived notion of the indigenous people being understood as 'primitive' whose life ways were not valued and the aim was to assimilate them with the 'mainstream'. Educating the 'primitive' came up to bring them to the mainstream and became the prime focus in Western societies, more in the US which had many tribes on the verge of extinction.

Within the British Empire during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, we see a similar role and function being played by anthropologists. The anthropological knowledge aided the British administration to understand the traditions and cultures of their colonies in Asia and Africa. Radcliffe-Brown during this time found the 'School of African Studies' at the University of Cape Town, South Africa with the primary aim of creating a rapport- a bridge between the colonies and the colonisers.

Thus, we see that the beginning of applied anthropology was as an aid, a tool for facilitating the administration in handling the 'native' affairs and also controlling them. Drik (2001: 9) had used the term 'cultural technology of rule' where anthropological knowledge played a crucial role in subjugating the colonies and their people. Anthropologists were appointed to train the British administrators, on how to study the cultures and traditions, which was justified as a move towards 'civilising the savages'. As stated earlier the 'other' people and their societies were assumed as 'primitive' who were yet to be civilised'. This very aspect justified the colonial drive of bringing the 'primitives' under their fold', in spite of the metropolises professing liberty, equality, and brotherhood

of humankind. It was not only the military knowledge and superior warfare techniques that gave the colonisers an upper hand, but the understanding of customs and traditions of the colonies provided by the anthropological works was also an important resource that facilitated administration and to some extent colonisation itself; for this reason, anthropologists are disliked by some native populations. In the Indian context, Herbert Risley and J.H. Hutton played an important role in the generation of the Indian census and also the classification of the Indian population with regards to race, caste, and class, which is followed to date.

The World Wars and Applied Anthropology

After the First World War, there was a time in history between the years 1929-1930, when the world economy was collapsing and there was a severe economic recession. Many of you might be able to relate it to the situation that we are presently going through during the COVID 19 crisis in the economic sector. The situation however was much worse, which is known as The Great Depression or the great economic depression. With the change in economy and market, there was a need to reorganise industrial management to make up for the economic losses, which in turn affected human resources. Thus, the anthropologists who were engaged in studying societies and behaviours were roped in to study these patterns. Anthropologists like W. Lloyd, Warner, Fred Richardson, and Elliot Chapple joined hands with multidisciplinary teams and worked on human relations and industrial management. This engagement has been referred to as Engineering Anthropology by Elliot (Bennett 1996: S27). However, it was during the Second World War that the employment of applied anthropologists saw a steep escalation. It was a time when the focus of the anthropologists was not concentrated only on ethnographic studies but moved on to problematic areas like migration, culture contact owing to migration, nutrition; study of the causes and effects of malnutrition, lack of education, unemployment, etc., which arose out of the war situation.

During this time many applied research organisations came into being in the United States, like The Bureau of Indian Affairs as already discussed. These organisations were engaged in researching the American Indians Settlement patterns that looked into the education policy, economic development, and resource management. Well-known anthropologist, Walter Goldschmidt was engaged with the Department of Agricultural Rural Life Studies. As part of the Presidential Advisory Committee of the United States two research committees were also created by National Research Council (a) The Committee on Food Habits (1941-43) wherein Ruth Benedict and Rhoda Metrax contributed and (b) The Committee for National Morale (1940) which had engaged anthropologists like Gregory Bateson, Elliot Chapple, and Margaret Mead.

The major focus of the first committee was to increase the national nutritional status, as it was revealed that majority of the population suffered from malnutrition during the 1940s in the US. As a combat measure for better performance, the need was felt to understand the “major weaknesses and deficiencies in our national dietary habits, and who therefore need most to be reached in either a short-range or long-range campaign?” (nih.gov). The second committee was to analyse the nation’s overall morale during the Second World War. The focus of these committees was to look at the nutritional and psychological aspects of

people with an understanding of their cultural backgrounds, a niche area for anthropologists.

The contributions of the anthropologists were immense as they could work on a wide arena of issues, right from the impact of food rationing and food choices, nutritional and cultural values with regards to food, etc. Thus, these were some of the avenues that opened up for applied anthropology. The need for the service of the anthropologists was felt much after the Great Depression and during the Second World War, which made the American Anthropological Association commit to the country and pass a resolution that the 'specialised skills and knowledge of its members, was at the disposal of the country for the successful prosecution of the war' (American Anthropologist, 45(2), 256- 264).

One of the major contributions of the American anthropologist was that they worked as liaisons with the War Relocation Authority which looked after the confinement camps that were built for the Japanese Americans. The Far Eastern Civil Affairs Training School was created by the University of Chicago, during the Second World War that engaged anthropologists as trainers for officers who were assigned by the government of the United States of America to work in the areas that were recaptured from the Japanese troops. During this time Ruth Benedict, commissioned by the United States government, was engaged in studying the Japanese war prisoners. Benedict's contribution to anthropology was her monumental work *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture*, published in 1946, wherein she defined the national character of the Japanese Population.

This phase saw the rise of applied anthropologists in the academic arena too. The Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA) came up during this time, one of the initiatives of Margaret Mead. Its relevance is marked in one of the statements made by Spicer when he had stated that the creation of SfAA was 'one of the most important events in the development of anthropology in the twentieth century' (1976: 335). *Applied Anthropology* as a journal came up under the aces of SfAA, which later came to be known as *Human Organisation*. George M. Foster the pioneer of medical anthropology took the lead in establishing *The Institute of Social Anthropology*, in 1943 under the Smithsonian Institute, with research on health as one of its major concerns. The emphasis on health and welfare was more pronounced as the after effects of the wars were immense and had left a mark on every aspect of human lives.

While in Great Britain after the Second World War the crisis in the colonies was of concern. Criticisms were levied on them for not looking after the welfare of their colonies. The way forward for them was to engage in affirmative administrative planning. In this regard, The Rockefeller Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation played a major role in funding the anthropologists and their research work. The Colonial Development and Welfare Act (CWDA) came up in the 1940s which helped the government to allocate proper funds for social science research in the colonies. Colonial Social Science Research (CSSR) was also established during this time. Raymond Firth and Audrey Richards were among the anthropologists who under the aegis of CWDA worked towards scientific and progressive research. Association for Social Anthropology was also initiated in 1946.

Thus, we see that during post Second World War, applied anthropology was making progress. However, one still needs to note here that the activities of the anthropologists were towards policy making, they were not involved directly with the people, addressing their needs and resolving their problems as mentioned in the earlier sections. During this time period, anthropology as a discipline was engaged more in documenting the life ways of the communities for posterity. It looked at communities as an academic involvement where objectivity played a major role. One of the earliest attempts to break the norm was made by Laura Thompson who applied anthropological knowledge and methodologies to work with the Hopi administration to bring about changes. Action research that directly involved the community to bring about changes from within started with the works of Sol Tax. In the next section, we shall discuss Action Anthropology which was a move towards practicing anthropology.

Check Your Progress

6. When was the Bureau of Ethnology established in the United States of America?

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7. Name the two areas where the anthropologists were engaged as part of the Bureau of Ethnology.

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8. Who founded the School of African Studies and why?

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9. Who used the term ‘cultural technology of rule’?

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10. Name the areas applied anthropologists worked in.

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2.3 ACTION ANTHROPOLOGY

Action anthropology owes its origin to the Fox Project (1948-59). The term 'Fox' stems from the totemic name for the Meskwaki tribe. The Fox Project was done by Sol Tax and his students at the University of Chicago. Initially, Fox Project was engaged in studying the Meskwaki Indians outside of Tama, Iowa, which began as training for field methods for the doctoral students of the University of Chicago. Soon the growing concerns of assimilation and integration that the Meskwaki Indians were facing saw the students getting involved in assisting them in dealing with their troubled relationship with the white society (Gearing, Netting, and Peattie 1960).

The concept of action anthropology began with the involvement of the 'native' population in finding solutions for their problems. The emphasis is on what the community wants. The solutions might not always work favourably for the community, but Sol Tax was of the view that everyone has a 'right to make mistakes'. He further emphasised that 'Whether or not the community turns out to have chosen a wise course of action is quite beside the point. Every people, if it is free, is free to make decisions, hence must have the right to make mistakes' (1956: 175). Thus, the methodology is based on trial and error.

The role of an action anthropologist is to apply the research and analytical skills to explain the fundamental sources of the problems identified by the community, help them identify possibilities for responding to those problems, and, identify and share with the community the possible consequences of following each of the different possibilities. The action anthropologist thus helps to 'facilitate community change and development rather than directs such change' (Rubinstein 2018: 2). As the final decision is left with the community to make, many a time thus, the anthropologists are seen as working in the role of a consultant.

Action anthropology was one of the first steps moving towards anthropology in practice. Till now in the case of applied anthropology, we had seen that the anthropologists who had worked in the government, non-government organisations or other institutions had an assigned work given by the sponsoring agency. Such work did not take into consideration 'what the community wanted' or 'what was the need of the community' thus, applied anthropological work lacked the autonomy and the commitment to the people. Action anthropology took into account the community perspective 'what the community wanted' an approach wherein the anthropologist worked towards helping the community to achieve their goals, moving away from assigned intervention towards desired intervention.

11. What is action anthropology?

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2.4 DEVELOPMENT ANTHROPOLOGY

The notion of development anthropology began with the introduction of the participatory approach that originally began in the field of development studies. After the world wars and the setting in of the globalisation process, it was reflected that the major benefits were being reaped by the rich, elite, and urban population. The majority of the population living in the rural areas, tribal population, peasants, and the marginalised section of the society were left out of this economic growth without benefits; thus, bringing in criticism for the economic theory of development that was being pursued for the economic growth around the 1970s. The social growth and the humanitarian aspects in the industrial sector in terms of management were found lacking. Thus, within the purview of development human beings in terms of labour, societies, culture, and environment were included to widen the goal of development.

The participatory approach thus involves the interaction or participation of all the stakeholders primarily the community and the government. In order to facilitate the interactions, the anthropologists were called upon as facilitators with their wide knowledge in terms of communicating with different populations and understanding their needs. Thus, the initiation of the *facilitatory approach* helped to bridge the gap between the cultural differences and the development programmes.

The participatory approach allowed the anthropologists to work with the communities, devise ways and means to facilitate development without harming the local communities' social and cultural beliefs, practices, and customs. The major challenge was the grass-root level approach (working from below) that the anthropologists used, as against the bottoms down approach that the governments were used to working with. Instead of planning at the top level, the developmental phase saw the planning at the bottom level, keeping the community in the loop. Discussing, deliberating, and taking their opinions on matters that affected their life ways rather than presenting them with plans and ideas. In the Indian context, the first intervention of the anthropologists was seen in the policymaking and development process during the tenure of Jawaharlal Nehru as Prime Minister of India. He had invited anthropologists like Elwin Verrier to present the needs of the Tribes with special reference to North-East India while formulating the First Five Year Plans. With the inputs from anthropologists like Elwin, Nehru formulated the Panchsheel for the development of the tribes. The main emphasis in the plan was to let the tribes retain their own character and not be assimilated into the dominant population. In other areas, the anthropologist has voiced their opinions during the construction

of the dams, multi-purpose projects, and other industrial developments that had led to environmental threats or had led to the displacement of communities. Thus, the shift was made from working for the government towards working with the communities. This saw the rise of practicing anthropology, where the anthropologists took the anthropological *field interaction* for data collection a step further towards *field intervention* where the data was being utilised for their benefit.

Check Your Progress

12. What is development anthropology?

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2.5 SUMMARY

In this unit, we have discussed how anthropological knowledge was put into practice. It was seen that initially, the anthropologists had worked with the government organisations helping them to formulate plans and policies for administrative purposes, be it in the United States or in Great Britain. Though in each case, the requirement was much different. In the United States the focus was on salvaging the dying culture and traditions of some of the indigenous communities that were fast assimilating with the urban communities. On the other hand, in Great Britain, the anthropologist helped with their knowledge and understanding of the societies and cultures that paved the way for the colonisers to frame policies and take actions in their colonies. It was around the Great Depression and the Second World War that anthropologists ventured to work on aspects like medical, nutritional, psychological, and other diverse areas. This phase is reckoned with as the applied anthropological era. The academicians were providing their anthropological knowledge for practical problem-solving purposes to the government and administrators. However, what was missing was the direct contact with the communities in terms of understanding their issues and working with them for problem solving. This came up with the onset of action and development anthropology, wherein, the community was taken into confidence and the practicing anthropologists worked with the communities to find solutions to their problems. This is where we see the inception of anthropology in practice.

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2.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Refer to section 2.1
2. Refer to section 2.1
3. Refer to section 2.1
4. Refer to section 2.1
5. Refer to section 2.1
6. Refer to section 2.2, 'Applied Ethnology Phase', paragraph 1
7. Refer to section 2.2, 'Applied Ethnology Phase', paragraph 1
8. Refer to section 2.2, 'Applied Ethnology Phase', paragraph 2
9. Refer to section 2.2, 'Applied Ethnology Phase', paragraph 3
10. Refer to section 2.2, 'The World Wars and Applied Anthropology', paragraph 1
11. Refer to section 2.3
12. Refer to section 2.4

UNIT 3 CHALLENGES AND DILEMMAS*

Contents

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Practicing Anthropology and its Challenges
- 3.2 Institutionalising Practicing Anthropology: Challenges and Dilemmas
- 3.3 Doing Anthropology: Understanding the Practical Challenges
- 3.4 Ethical Guide to Practicing Anthropologists
- 3.5 Practicing Anthropology and the Challenges of the Contemporary World
- 3.6 Summary
- 3.7 References
- 3.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, the learner will be able to:

- understand specific challenges faced by practicing anthropologists;
- comprehend the institutional practice and the challenges of practicing anthropology;
- discuss the ethical dilemmas in practicing anthropology;
- analyse the best practice to overcome challenges and dilemmas; and
- articulate the challenges of practicing anthropology in addressing the contemporary world.

3.0 INTRODUCTION

At the outset, we need to understand the location of a practicing anthropologist. In a very specific sense, you will find such anthropologists outside the formal academic environment. They are located outside the university system and the university departments of anthropology. However, wherever they are, they claim themselves to be anthropologists, practicing the core learning of the discipline in whatever field they are. Practicing anthropology and anthropologists are distinguished from applied, action, and engaged anthropologists in a sense that the work of a practicing anthropologist is not part-time as may be in the case of an applied anthropologist but it is full-time work that is carried out at different locations, very different from the university environments.

It has been argued that practicing anthropology gained prominence after the Second World War. Limits of the discipline got redefined with community and

***Contributor:** Dr Prashant Khattri, Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, University of Allahabad, Prayagraj. Some of the examples are from the Unit 3 Ethics in Applied Anthropology written by the author for the course BANE 145 Applied Anthropology.

area development projects requiring the services of anthropologists. Academic anthropologists became powerful and opened up opportunities for anthropology graduates in different areas. More number of anthropology graduates opted for non-academic jobs. With practicing anthropology gaining prominence, applied anthropology declined and gathered disrepute for itself owing to its role in furthering the war efforts. It was during the Second World War that anthropologists were called upon to contribute their special knowledge to the war effort. Their proximity and in-depth knowledge about various areas around the globe made them a very important resource 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 as well as in military policymaking. Anthropological contributions to war efforts raised serious ethical issues regarding the use of 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. One of the best-known examples is that of Ruth Benedict. She was asked by the US Office of War Information to conduct a study on Japanese culture so that in case of the American occupation of Japan, it would be easier to administer them. They wanted to know about Japanese culture, 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 in a book titled- "Chrysanthemum and the Sword." This is to date one of the bestselling books on Japanese culture and personality (Price 2002).

It has been argued that anthropologists in the academies and university departments sometimes engage in academic discussions about challenges and dilemmas of the fellow anthropologists and practitioners without realising the different nature of their work and different kinds of challenges faced by the practicing anthropologists. It is therefore argued by Riall Nolan (2013) that in order to place things in perspective and to understand the challenges in a more nuanced way, a distinction needs to be made between academic and practicing anthropology.

3.1 PRACTICING ANTHROPOLOGY AND ITS CHALLENGES

One of the basic differences between the two emerges in the context of the source of problems that are dealt with by the anthropologists and the ways they employ to deal with such problems. Anthropologists in the universities are mostly self-driven and they chose the problems on which they work. This is largely done through research guidance and various projects they engage with in order to publish and remain relevant in the academic field. This is in contrast with the source of the problem of practicing anthropologists. For them, problems are largely defined by the needs of the client. Another issue of relevance is in terms of the solution that they provide. Academic anthropologists who also apply their knowledge in different fields tend to provide critical solutions. In other words, they can largely be critical of the present state of affairs and may suggest a complete revamp of the structure within which the population and the problem lies. Practicing anthropologists on the other hand cannot suggest

or be critical of the entire structure. They tend to provide solutions within the given structure in such a way that it brings about change in society. Practicing anthropologists cannot stand outside and critique the situation but they have to be in the situation and bring about the desired change. They work within the larger political environment as a part of it and help in improving the governance. Also, unlike anthropologists in academics, who are trained in providing a thick description, the practicing anthropologists have to simplify their description of the situation and the phenomenon under study and also make it concise for the use of the policymakers and people who want quick solutions to their problems (Nolan 2013).

The difference between academic and practicing anthropology and the specific nature of practicing anthropology brings specific challenges. One of the challenges faced largely by the practicing anthropologists is in terms of representing themselves. Where for an academic anthropologist it is easier to associate themselves with a university department and represent themselves as a member of the same whose job and nature of work are largely defined, it is difficult for a practicing anthropologist to define at every moment about the nature of their work as the prefix anthropology may not be necessarily attached to their work profiles. It becomes a challenge for them to decide every time they talk about themselves or their work that how they are going to explain their work and knowledge to the larger audience who may not all be able to relate or understand the works of anthropologists. This issue of representation is largely linked with the heterogeneous work environment in which the practicing anthropologists are engaged. Academies are largely homogeneous in nature with a specific pattern of work and professional opportunities. In contrast to this, the world outside academies is very diverse. This offers a wide range of opportunities to anthropologists. Anthropologists outside the academies occupy a wide range of positions with diverse roles. This includes anthropologists working with research organisations as researchers, with certain NGOs working as impact assessors and needs assessors for development projects and they may also work as change agents and advocates for planned development. For example, anthropologists have worked towards addressing the issue of domestic violence and how this may be tackled at the community level. While working in slums in Mumbai, Sreeparna Ghosh (2011) explored the role of the community in preventing domestic violence. As an anthropologist, she was skeptical of an extreme view that every act of domestic violence needs to be brought to the knowledge of the local administration and the police, who are then supposed to handle such issues very strictly. She was of the view that such an approach does not take into account the ground realities and needs of women in general. In contrast to this, she proposed a more grounded approach based upon her own research where the local community of women becomes an important intervening variable. She proposed that in order to address the issue of domestic violence we need to address the cause of the same. The major cause that emerged in her study was related to the gendered division of labour where women were doing the majority of the household and other jobs. This prompted her to form various local committees having both men and women in them who discussed such issues among each other. Such committees also discussed issues of wife-beating and identified who are worthy of protection. She also argued that women in semi-public spaces, like the ones that they create when

they casually meet at work in the afternoon, challenge the hegemony of men and become reflexive on issues of violence. She argues that such reflexivity needs to be channeled through community-based models for reducing domestic violence.

Practicing anthropologists are also working in the area of resolving disputes between the public and the state regarding the ownership of historical monuments. One such work can be taken as an example to understand this more clearly. It was a common practice in Hampi, India that people used to live in centuries-old stone Mandapas or pavilions. After Hampi was declared as the UNESCO world heritage site, the Karnataka High Court passed an order that stated that people can no longer live in such historic monuments as such places after getting status of world heritage site has been declared as the property not just of India but of the entire world. Suddenly a conflict between the rights of the people, which they exercised for centuries, and the claim of the state emerged. Following the High Court's order around 200 families were displaced from their place of habitation. Anthropological work on such issues has revealed that there is a complete lack of dialogue between different stakeholders involved in heritage management. Public consultation in heritage management is entirely superficial which gives rise to management strategies that are incomprehensible and unacceptable to different stakeholders. Such conflicts also emerge from different approaches and worldviews towards heritage. It has been argued that from people's perspective heritage is seen as a part of everyday life and from the perspective of the state and the managers of the heritage, it is seen as a 'visual resource' that may enhance tourism (LeDuc 2012).

Such diversity in work brings another challenge with it. Academic anthropologists tend to settle with a specific focus on research. They specialise in an area and tend to retain that specialisation throughout their academic careers. This, however, is not quite possible for practicing anthropologists. As mentioned earlier, owing to the diversity in opportunities and roles associated with them, it is difficult to specialise in one area. They tend to work on projects that are funded by different agencies. Projects in turn define the nature of their work. They tend to switch specialisation very often in accordance with the project on which they are working at present. Different projects require different kinds of skills and approaches. Moreover, such projects are not chosen by the anthropologists but are given to them by the agencies for which they work. In this context, they tend to shift their concerns. This however also gives them an opportunity to read works in diverse disciplines, thus supplementing their existing knowledge.

Not only do they work on diverse themes and projects but they also work with a diverse set of people from different academic and professional backgrounds. This makes their work even more challenging. Anthropologists are addressing issues of climate change and global warming. Dimensions related to people's vulnerability due to climate change and their resulting out-migration have captured the focus of practicing anthropologists. Anthropologists are also interested in documenting people's perceptions about climate change and its impact on their environment and their strategies to cope with such issues. Anthropologists are also practicing in the area of assessing the needs of the people during disasters which then are communicated to the technology experts who can make products specific to the needs of the people. Policy researches on

climate change are generally interdisciplinary. Anthropologists also face certain challenges in this regard. Their craft is considered to be a soft science and hence may not get as much funding for their research as desired. Moreover, there are around two thousand members in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) created by the United Nations and the World Meteorological Organisation but there are hardly any, except a few, anthropologists on the same (Roncoli and Magistro 2000).

Anthropologists in academics tend to work alone or at best with peers of similar interest on some research. This however is not the case with practicing anthropologists. Again, they do not decide with whom they will work. Teams are decided by the management of the organisations for which they work. These teams consist of people not necessarily academicians or anthropologists but different professionals coming from diverse backgrounds. This gives them the opportunity to work with different kinds of people but it also brings a very specific kind of challenge in terms of accommodating the views of diverse people on a given topic of discussion. Practitioners' work is more result-oriented which brings another challenge to them. In contrast to academics, practitioners work more for the solutions and not just for the sake of theoretical discussion. It is not to say that practitioners' work is devoid of theory or works of academics are devoid of application. This is only to say that practitioners are judged based on the results they produce and deliver. This also defines their future projects and career trajectories. Thus, outcome and result matter a lot for the practitioners not only in terms of a publishable report or a book but also in terms of kinds of changes that their suggestions and work with the community could bring (Nolan 2013).

Check Your Progress

1. What are the specific challenges faced by practicing anthropologists with reference to anthropologies in the universities and academics?

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3.2 INSTITUTIONALISING PRACTICING ANTHROPOLOGY: CHALLENGES AND DILEMMAS

Coming out of the binary of academic and non-academic practicing anthropology and the challenges that it presents to us; we may also be interested to look at the larger picture or a bigger challenge related to the discipline of anthropology at large and that is also connected directly with the practicing anthropology. This is the challenge of recognition of practicing anthropologists and their works by their mentors and peers in the academics. It has been realised that practicing anthropologists are working a lot outside the academics in diverse fields on diverse areas but their works are not being tracked or recorded by anthropologists in academics. By working outside the academics, these practicing

anthropologists are actually opening-up opportunities for more people trained in the discipline of anthropology and thus serving a great deal for the recognition of the subject outside the academies. This however is going unnoticed by their peers and fellow anthropologists working in the academies. This is further resulting into a missed opportunity to collaborate on different projects. Besides this, it has also resulted in a total lack of knowledge about how anthropology is being used outside the classrooms. Off-late, universities, and departments are realising this at least in the Indian context, and departments are engaged in making lists of students trained in anthropology and working outside the academies. This, however, needs to be done with more rigor. Another challenge that this disconnect has brought is related to a missed opportunity to project anthropology as a viable career option. This has impacted the marketability of the subject. One may find anthropologists in the academies cribbing over the declining students in their discipline. This challenge can effectively be met with a close association of academic and practicing anthropologists. This also will address another challenge faced by the students of the discipline. First, they will be attracted more to the subject owing to its increasing market share and second, more opportunities will be available in the market owing to a structured effort to push anthropology as a career option. This however will only happen if we better track the development of the subject outside the classrooms.

This also brings us to another challenge faced by the practicing dimension of the discipline. As a result of this disconnect between practicing and academic anthropologists, academies are training the students more for academic careers. This is largely reflected in the syllabus and curriculum of the universities where theoretical dimensions of the discipline are given more importance than the practical dimensions. It is realised that we are still not training the students for the job market and rather training them more for the university jobs. This also is a challenge for the practicing branch of anthropology (Nolan 2013).

Check Your Progress

2. How are the larger disciplinary challenges in the field of institutional anthropology related to the challenges of practicing anthropology?

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3.3 DOING ANTHROPOLOGY: UNDERSTANDING THE PRACTICAL CHALLENGES

There are also other kinds of challenges and dilemmas that are faced by practicing anthropologists. Since they deal directly with the community in the capacity of a change agent, they also sometimes face resistance from the community members. There are also ethical and moral dilemmas in the context of bringing about planned changes in the lives of the people. It is also a fact that communities are not homogeneous entities and there are many factions

and groups within it. This sometimes hampers the implementation of changes well-conceived. It is in this context that we need to understand the challenges and dilemmas of practicing anthropologists. Again we may say that there are different kinds of ethical issues, challenges, and dilemmas with respect to academic and practicing anthropologists because of the various differences discussed in the previous section of this unit.

By now it is well established that anthropologists form an important member of a team working on some project of public importance. Anthropologists are hired as consultants on such team projects. It is here that they bring their knowledge to practice and we label such anthropologists as practicing anthropologists. While practicing anthropology, they often face many ethical dilemmas and challenges. Such ethical issues are addressed by anthropologists at the individual level since such issues may be very specific to the problem under consideration. For example, anthropologists working in the field of disasters might face the ethical dilemma of choosing and selecting participants. Situations of disaster and disaster relief are politically very charged as many stakeholders get involved in assessing the damage and providing relief including the state which acts as a major stakeholder in the situation. In such situations, choosing participants for Focus Group Discussions might bring up challenges as people who are not included in the sample may feel that their claim to disaster relief might get affected due to this. Although it is the job of an anthropologist to clarify his/her stand to the participants nonetheless, such ethical issues do emerge in the field situation where time is of utmost importance and results are needed to intervene for disaster relief (Khattri 2012). Anthropologists and professional bodies of applied and practicing anthropologists have also tried to prepare some kind of a guide that may help other practicing anthropologists while dealing with projects and working on consultancies. One such guide is known as the RICE guide, the full-form being Reflect, Investigate, Contemplate and Evaluate prepared by Whiteford and Trotter in 2008.

In order to understand the ethical dilemmas and challenges in a better way, we might explore an example. In this example, we explore the issues, challenges, and dilemmas encountered by a practicing anthropologist while working as a consultant on a project. Before jumping on to the example, let us first know in brief, the background for the emergence of such a project. This all started with the global energy crisis that happened in the 1970s. With the energy crisis, there was a sudden realisation that the energy needs to be conserved. In order to conserve energy, there were many solutions that were floated by the scientific community. One such solution was to make public buildings in such a way as to conserve maximum energy. Since such buildings were fitted with cooling and heating systems, therefore in order to conserve maximum energy, airtight buildings were made so that heat and cold cannot escape easily. By doing this, architects also made buildings that were not well ventilated. Now, employees working in such buildings started suffering from some or the other kinds of illnesses like headache, nausea, irritation in the eyes, etc. This came to be known as the Sick Building Syndrome (SBS) or illness caused due to faulty building construction. Now, a project was planned in the USA in one such building of the Environment Protection Agency (EPA) to address this issue of the employees and suggest possible solutions. In one such project, an anthropologist named Bohren was employed in the position of a consultant to design a questionnaire

related to health issues and to administer that questionnaire to the respondents. This project was done by an area survey research company and Bohren was employed as a practicing anthropologist (Bohren and Whiteford 2013).

While talking about her experiences of working on the project, Bohren says that one of the first ethical dilemmas and a challenge that she faced was a conflict of interest between the Environment Protection Agency and the employees that were working in the EPA building. The employees, however, were happy with the fact that for the first time their grievances have been addressed and an agency was hired to look into the matter of illness related to the structure and organisation of the building. Bohren further says that the dilemma that she faced in the earlier part of her engagement with the project was however resolved later in such a way that when she focused on the tasks that have to be performed by her in the project then she felt that her work was restricted to the formulation of the questionnaire and administration of the same. She had nothing to do with the decision-making process. Many times it also happens that the practitioner does not know the outcome of their project and they work just as a part of a well-oiled machine in a corporate set-up handling the project. However, this kind of resolution of the dilemma does not happen in many other cases where anthropologists are involved (Nolan 2013).

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 the 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 underway 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 the 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 is connected to 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 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).

Check Your Progress

3. What are the ethical issues involved in practicing anthropology?

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3.4 ETHICAL GUIDE TO PRACTICING ANTHROPOLOGISTS

Practicing anthropologists are mostly part of a bigger project handled by a multinational corporation, big government organisations, and other such agencies. Such projects have project managers who are ultimately responsible for the final report of the project. Most of the decisions about the methodology used in the project and other technical aspects of the projects are his/her responsibility and anthropologists may not have a direct say in these matters. This kind of organisational structure presents a very unique situation with reference to the challenges, dilemmas, and ethics of doing anthropology. Discussing one such issue, Bohren contended that while working on a project in an academy, she had to undergo a review of the methodology used in her project done by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Bohren and Whiteford 2013). Since she was the project investigator and responsible for the project completely, she took great care while formulating the questionnaires and preparing the final report. Great care was taken to protect the identity of the respondents. Such ethical issues were also discussed as part of the research methodology in the report. However, when she worked as a practicing anthropologist as a consultant on a project, such responsibilities were that of the project manager and she was not directly involved in getting ethical clearance for the project. She also said that she could not find such ethical issues mentioned in the final report. She also had little say in the issues of the methodology used for collecting the data for the project. She further said that getting the consent of the respondents before filling the questionnaire is an important exercise and constitutes an important ethical practice in any research project. Such issues are handled well while doing research in academies however while working on a project, she could not find the mention of informed consent in the report. These are some issues that come up in the process of anthropologists working for a big company or an agency (Nolan 2013).

In order to resolve such dilemmas and practice anthropology in an ethical way, Whiteford and Trotter, 2008 have designed a guide named RICE. This guide will be helpful in knowing the dilemmas and challenges in the field of practicing anthropology. The guide begins with the idea to Reflect. This means that anthropologists should identify their own biases related with the issues under consideration. This will help in knowing the values held by the anthropologist and how these values align with or are antagonistic to the values of the people where the project is based or where the desired change has to be brought. Anthropologists should focus upon their own social-cultural background and how these are going to affect perceptions about the people and their problems. The next step is to Investigate. Anthropologists should investigate thoroughly the facts that are presented to them. This will give them an opportunity to know that whether any fact or any aspect has been neglected or not. While investigating, anthropologists should also try to see whether they have got answers to all the questions that are coming to their minds? After this is done, they should then Contemplate. While contemplating, one should identify the priorities in the issue. It is here that ethical issues take the center stage. One should indulge in a cost-benefit analysis. This is to say that one should analyse that whether the cost of a proposed change will be more than the benefit? One should also pay attention to the hidden agendas or underlying issues on a subject under investigation or review. In the end, one should Evaluate. While evaluating, one should focus on what good can be done to the people and community and what makes that practice good (Nolan 2013).

Check Your Progress

4. How do practicing anthropologists tackle the ethical issues and challenges related to their work?

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3.5 PRACTICING ANTHROPOLOGY AND THE CHALLENGES OF THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

Besides the ones discussed above, there are other sets of challenges in front of practicing anthropologists and these are related to the issue of orienting anthropology in such a way as to address the problems of the contemporary, ever-changing world around them. To begin with, we may take up the issue of the Corona Pandemic. This has caused devastation throughout the globe. In this context, a question arises that how anthropology and anthropological knowledge can be brought to the service of humankind. Globally, anthropologists contemplated and evaluated the role their discipline and their training in anthropology could play in reducing the suffering of the people. Again, the academics and academically-oriented anthropologists were critical of the larger politics and the role of the state in dealing with the situation. This, however,

is not going to bring change in the condition of the people and communities which are suffering. The practicing anthropologist would be more interested in doing something for the people in order to bring about a change in their present condition. In this context, anthropologists have worked on the issues of inequality, vulnerability, and stigma during the pandemic.

More than the virus, social inequalities, vulnerabilities, and stigma associated with the pandemic have caused havoc in the lives of the people. Anthropologists have also worked with community health specialists to bring about a change in the behaviours of the people. Issues of vaccine hesitancy also have social and religious dimensions to it which required anthropological knowledge of the community's beliefs and practices. The pandemic has also opened up the field of communication that requires immediate and concerted efforts by anthropologists. One of the major causes of fear among the public was misinformation about the virus and its symptoms on various social media platforms. Anthropologists also need to prepare plans to address such issues.

There are other grand challenges of the contemporary world like climate change, issues of sustainability, global health, and poverty. Practicing anthropologists need to address these areas and demonstrate the importance of anthropological knowledge in these fields. Anthropologists should also involve themselves more in public life. Practicing anthropology makes the discipline of anthropology more than just a scientific discipline. It makes the discipline a participatory one. This needs to be realised further and anthropologists should engage more with the issues of the larger public.

Check Your Progress

5. What are the contemporary world challenges that practicing anthropologists need to address?

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3.6 SUMMARY

Now, to sum-up the unit, we may say that in order to achieve all this and in order to address the challenges and dilemmas of practicing anthropology there should be a concerted effort from the academic institutions giving training in the discipline of anthropology to support the practicing dimension of the discipline. The unit has largely talked about the various challenges and dilemmas that are faced by practicing anthropologists applying their knowledge in the field. It has been argued that as there are diverse fields so there are diverse challenges and issues of ethics faced by anthropologists. These challenges are not only limited to the dimension of doing anthropology but extend to larger disciplinary practice, both in the field and in the academic institutions. There are also specific challenges and ethical dilemmas that are faced by practicing anthropologists as they are unique to the working conditions in which these anthropologists are engaged. This requires a focused understanding of challenges and dilemmas

which further has resulted in the making of a specific RICE guide for helping the practicing anthropologists.

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3.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Refer to section 3.1
2. Refer to section 3.2
3. Refer to section 3.3
4. Refer to section 3.4
5. Refer to section 3.5