Formation of Anthropology as a science of human being: a theoretical exploration in historical perspective

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Abstract

Anthropology is experiencing impasses and thus exigencies are very much apparent to overcome this state. In the recent phase of its development (since 1960s) through post-structuralism and post-modernism in particular, this impasse has reached its climax. To be more precise, the discipline has taken a belligerent turn to philosophy, raised unprecedented doubt about ethnography, especially on writing culture, expressed incredulity towards 'grand' theories and the notion of progress by means of rationalization, Darwin has become almost irrelevant, as if nihilism has entered deep and the 'logos' of 'anthropos' has been reduced to 'fiction' writing. Given the context, it has become inevitable to discern reasons for such a unique fate of a discipline that was destined to study human beings.

A modest attempt has been made in this present article in order to explore the formation of anthropology. Further, an examination has been tried as to what theoretical constraints had contributed to inconsistent and arbitrary formation unlike any other discipline. Why anthropologists had been turning their blind eye to tangible lacunae? The article reveals the fact that anthropology has seriously failed to be developed as a science of human beings. The present author puts forward his own theoretical perspectives that may help formation of anthropology as a science of human being.

Introduction

In 2005, anthropology looks unprecedentedly different from what was in its formative stage and has undergone changes that are exclusive and fundamental. An exploration into the reasons for impasse is inevitable, since only theoretical insight of the formation of its contexts and epistemological grounding may help understand the present crisis and construct paradigm of the science of human being.

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In the contemporary stage of its development the crisis has reached its climax. In this phase, it has taken a belligerent turn to philosophy, which has significantly influenced both theory and ethnography. The very existence of the discipline has been put into serious question. Culture being the central concept, around which anthropology aspires to develop, has now been contested. In its place 'power' has emerged profoundly as the key notion.

An expression of the feelings that 'studying' human being is almost impossible as its complexity has created not an ordinary crisis rather it has led to an impasse for anthropology as a discipline. This has also produced profound tension among the anthropologists all over the world. Sahlins has observed that anthropology is undergoing through 'twilight'. For, Geertz, anthropology is 'ad hoc', and 'ex post' enterprise, and worldview, rather than a discipline. Nihilism is viewed as extensively embedded.

As a student of anthropology I earnestly feel that the reasons for disarray of the discipline need to be explored. Given the context and exigencies, I have examined reasons for such crisis, and have arrived at the conclusion that anthropology has failed largely to be a 'science of human being'. This article has addressed the 'nature' of the contemporary crisis in anthropology and explored reasons that had contributed to this crisis. I understand that these crises are the outcome of historical flaws that can be traced in the very root of the discipline. I further comprehend that the development of anthropology as a science of human being has not been possible due to its inconsistent and arbitrary pattern of growth.

It is needless to prove again that anthropology has been superficially attractive and as said it has failed to be a science of human beings, and thus remained as an arbitrary term of convenience. This article extends the view that anthropology is undergoing theoretical and methodological crises and often

nihilism is unanimous. However, I have tried my best position as to how could anthropology be the science of human beings.

It will be worth mentioning that while the turn of anthropology to philosophy was associated with post-structuralism, the linguistic bias of anthropology had been linked to structuralism. The shift from social to linguistic structures is what has come to be known as the linguistic turn which dramatically altered the nature of the social sciences (Lash, 1991: IX). This turn was obviously connected with the works of Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913). The turn of anthropology to philosophy is caused by the epistemological and ontological differences emerged around the notion of structure and the idea of progress embedded in modernism. A closer look at the contemporary phase, post-structuralism and post-modernism in particular, make it tangible that it has almost entirely encompassed the vision of anthropology. This phase might be considered as a radical turn of anthropology to philosophy.

First shift towards philosophy: post-structuralism

Rolland Barthes is often referred as a real founder of semiotics (Ritzer, 1996. p. 594) and a precursor of post-structuralism whose central premise was to deconstruct linguistics (Barthes, 2000). And his two particular essays 'Authors and Writers' and 'The Death of the Author' have laid the foundation of post-structuralism. The other most influential post-structuralist is J. Derrida. He has used two concepts, such as the concept of 'deference' and 'deconstruction' that helped him removing author from the centre, in one hand and see reader free of the ideas of all the intellectual authorities who have created the dominant discourse, on the other. Besides, Derrida with the help of the concept of 'decentering' removed author from the centre of the traditional theatre (Derrida 1976; 1977). He deconstructed logocentrism which search for a universal system of thought and reveals what is true, right, beautiful and so on (Ritzer 1996: 596-7).

The other thinker to be the most influential in post-structuralism is Michel Foucault who had a very different theoretical orientation from those of Rolland Barthes and Derrida. Michel Foucault being profoundly influenced by Nietzsche's notion of nexus between power and knowledge has developed a perspective as to how human beings are transformed to a subject and be ruled by the power gained through knowledge. Foucault has explained this process of 'subjectification' with a focus on madness, punishment and sexuality. Foucault's significant analysis hasn't left any scope for knowledge about medicine and psychiatry which could have certain use for human beings.

In addition to that, while Michel Foucault was not at all agreeing with the existence of human nature (innate), he was rather keener to pursue such issues as human nature that has appeared in the discourses under any circumstances (Foucault 1984).

Hence, "the idea of a discipline, in any of the senses on whose ironies and cross-actions Michael Foucault built so much of his rhetorical tower, fits anthropology none too well. At once broad and general, wildly aspiring ("The Study of Man"), and particular and miscellaneous, strangely obsessive (puberty rites, gift exchange, kin terminology), it has always had, both to itself and to outsiders, a blurry image" (Geertz, 1995, 97).

Since the article does not have a scope for a detailed discussion on post-structuralism and post-modernism, only some basic observations on these two perspectives are presented here. It should be noted that post-structuralism has not yet comprehensively crossed the "phase of structure" and assumed the title 'post' theoretically. If this is to be recognized than we have to put over all efforts to the revelation of the structure of all inorganic bodies composed of not only atom and particles but also its decaying qualities (uranium, carbon 14) including its transformation, in case of organic elements DNA is the life process as it contain gene that carry information about how the protein synthesis is to be carried out, being a mechanism of its

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growth, while the structure of neuron and neuroglia is the key to be 'human'. In case of language, sound is the exclusive means to attach meaning to be produced and generate a system of arbitrary sign that can be the principal means of communication, which presumably makes us human beings; in case of universe, even the 'emptiness' is the basic structure as within which all huge bodies not only situate themselves, but also find their way of being, transforming and emerging.

Therefore, post-structuralism as a perspective has limited focus on deconstruction of logocentrism, linguistics, decentering of author, freeing readers from intellectual authority and the constraints of the structure.

Second shift toward philosophy: post-modernism

Post-structuralism has prepared the ground for post-modernism to emerge (Ritzer, 1990). The first element of post-modernism is its historical location as a counter-reaction to modernism (Rabinow, 1990:248). Therefore, a brief discussion of modernism will be useful to comprehend the context of post-modernism. For Habermas (1979) the modern period begins with the West-European Enlightenment, continued for one hundred years, from the mid-seventeenth to the mid-eighteenth century when a new realization developed regarding the power of reason to improve human society. Such ideas are expressed or embodied in the philosophy of Kant in Germany, Voltaire and Diderot in France, and Locke and Hume in Britain (Barry, 1995: 85). The grand theories developed by the founders of modern social thought also embody such characteristics. Nietzsche, the German philologists and philosopher stood in diametrical opposition to these grand narrations. He criticized such notions of totality and the scientific pretensions that supported them. For Nietzsche, there was no value in the ideas of totality. He rather proposed to reject the universalistic pretensions of modern science, and thought that not only our knowledge about our reality, but reality itself may be much less certain than nineteenth century science

would have us believe (Appleby 1996). This theoretical position provoked many other thinkers who had developed post-modern perspective. How this perspective differs from modernism may be apparent in its basic understanding.

Going beyond the "classic" definition of Lyotard [1979](1984), 'the end of metanarratives', Jameson (1983) delimits the scope of the term 'post-modernism' by offering three key elements particularly, its historical location which is: 1) a counter-reaction to modernism; 2) its use of pastiche (a jumbled mixture); and 3) the importance of images (Rabinow 1986: 248-249).

The above elements of post-modernism are profoundly significant, yet without the concept of simulation, developed by Baudrillard (1983), the understanding of post-modernism remains to be incomplete. The conceptions of simulation is usually known as the loss of the real, which means that in contemporary life the pervasive influence of images from film, TV, and advertising has led to a loss of the distinction between real and imagined, reality and illusion, surface and depth .

Here the key question is, whether the modern era or, as of Habermas, modernism has already ended and the entire concept of rationalization (Weber) or reason has ceased, and the 'post' period of modernism has been fully established? Exploration of these questions with exclusiveness can reveal the fact post-modernism has fundamental constraints as a theoretical perspective.

The implication of philosophical shifts for ethnography

The major implication of this philosophical shift would be transparent in its position with regard to ethnography. The post-modernists have urged anthropologists to take on board the central propositions about cultural studies that culture serves power and that it is (and should be) contested. There is clearly something in this, even if culture is not quite the same thing as

ideology, there is surely a place for the critical account of the merchant of culture (Kuper, 1999: 231).

The central premise about ethnography is reflected in the work 'Writing Culture: Poetics and Politics of Ethnography' (Clifford and Marcus, 1986), which is an outcome of a seminar held in Santa-Fe, New Mexico.

The overriding concern, the very 'task' of the writing culture according to George Marcus, "was to introduce a literary consciousness to ethnographic practice by showing various ways in which ethnographies can be read and written."

The collective voice of the seminar highlighted and responded positively to a crisis in anthropology that was inseparably epistemological and political. Eschewing the holistic persuasions of traditional anthropologists and recognizing that these representations are fundamentally the products of asymmetrical power relations, 'Writing culture' has expressed 'incredulity' towards culture, culture is written and the writing involves major epistemological and political problems' (James et. al. 1997:1).

Clifford further observed that ethnographic writing is determined in at least six ways 1) contextually; 2) Rhetorically; 3) institutionally; 4) generically; 5) politically; and 6) historically. He conceives ethnography as a fiction but not in the conventional sense. For him, fiction is not something that merely opposes truth. He is prepared to consider ethnographic truth as inherently partial, committed and incomplete (Clifford 1986: 6). It may be noted here that James Clifford is attributed with the interdisciplinary program at University of California, Santa Claus, who is himself not an anthropologist but rather (in his own words) a "historian and critic of anthropology" (Kuper 1999: 210).

Clifford's recognition of ethnographic truths as 'partial' has provided space to the authors of 'After writing culture' for

developing their ideas and in order to overcome to eschew the antagonisms and pessimisms that the debate has aroused and respond constructively to the challenge for ethnography which constitutes the heart of the matter (James et. al. 1997: 2).

'Writing Culture' debate has also made anthropologists conscious about the need to pay closer attention to the epistemological basis of their representations. Moreover, this has made them aware to consider the practical implications of the process of reflection both for the anthropological enterprise and the subjects of any anthropological inquiry (ibid.:3).

The debate is continuing as the author of "After writing culture" proposes to deal with the questions raised by "Writing culture". The authors of 'After Writing Culture' have identified the major constraints of 'Writing Culture'. They found that the authors of 'Writing Culture' have concentrated only on four major issues: 1) subject-matter (other), 2) methodology (participant observation), 3) form (textuality), 4) intention (information). It suggests that four discrete epistemological and practical challenges can be identified. They are: 1) The humanism of representational practices; 2) the difficulty of uncovering representations which are being presented and by whom; 3) the problem of the form that the different representational process can make; and 4) the politics and ethics of making representations. This position of 'Writing Culture' is quite narrow, much broader essence is to be taken into consideration which could be traced in the very 'representation' itself. Representation incorporates at least six dimensions: Representation as interpretation, communication, visualization, information, translation, and advocacy.

However, there are few anthropologists who differ with the understanding of 'After writing culture'. Instead they propose to write against culture because they think that 'culture' is the essential tool for making other, and that 'culture' operates in anthropological discourse to enforce separations that inevitably

carry a sense of hierarchy. Therefore, anthropologists may use a variety of modes for writing against culture (Abu Lughod 1991).

What I can observe here that neither 'writing culture' nor 'After writing culture' shed light on the more fundamental question related to ethnography. For me, the fundamental question is: could epistemology be separated from politics in writing culture? Can an ethnographer be able to go beyond his own political bias and be consistent in following epistemology? Or it is expected that every ethnographer must have a political position and ideological orientation? Is this separation feasible? In my view, if such separation is unfeasible then the question of anthropology to be a science is certainly bleak, especially after two hundred years from Hegel (1807) when a shift from anthropology to philosophy has taken place to explain social process.

Answer to this question may be searched in the works of George Hegel (1770-1831). In 1806 Hegel looked into the events of French Revolution of 1789 in his writings, despite their philosophic pronouncement his works were extremely forward-looking in their focus on society and history, which led to the development of an autonomous social theory distinct from philosophy itself. The rapid decline of the French society prompted Hegel to observe that one form of social and political existence was replacing another i.e. history itself changes. Therefore it was Hegel, who was the first to understand that historical change took a social form. This development made clear that philosophy could only understand history by adopting social concepts and that history was, in fact, social in nature (Morrison, 1995: 2).

Although Hegel's view about separating 'social' from philosophy (1807) had been strengthened by Auguste comte (1798-1857) and other social scientists, Durkheim (1858-1917) has really founded a science of society (Sociology), declaring that 'it is independent of all philosophy (Durkheim, [1895] 1950, 159). Thus it might be again quite appropriately discerned the

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circumstances and epistemological necessity for which a shift from social to philosophy takes place in recent times.

In fact, the contemporary crisis is an outcome of the lapses, arbitrariness and inconceivable indifferences between founders of anthropology, extremely limited sources of origin and variety of subject matter, methodology and theoretical orientations. These could be traced in the very root of the discipline itself. So, a closer look at the formative phase will be extremely fruitful.

The historical root of the impasse

The impellent growth of anthropology has been rooted deeply into the history of its development. E. E. Evans- Pritchard has explored why anthropology had been so much disintegrated. He writes "It is a remarkable fact that none of the anthropologists who have been most influential had ever been near to primitive people" (Evans-Pritchard, 1951: 1-19), rather it was European explorers, missionaries, administrators and traders who gathered data for most influential anthropologists to lay theoretical foundation of the discipline. Given categories of people had been highly selective, particularly what travelers liked to put on a paper was what most struck them as curious, crude and sensational. Events of daily life were almost completely excluded (ibid.).

"Then the scholars got to work on the pieces of information provided for them haphazardly and from all over the world, and built them into books with such picturesque titles as The Golden Bough (Frazer) and The Mystic Rose" (Ibid., p. 8). Evans-Pritchard further observes, "I do not say that it was fabricated, though sometime it was; and even such famous travelers as Livingstone, Schweinfurth, and Palgrave were given to gross carelessness. But much of it was false, and almost all of it was unreliable and, by modern standard of professional research, casual, superficial, out of perspective, and out of context; and to

some extent this was true even of the earlier professional anthropologists" (Ibid: 6).

Based on these materials, scholars of diverse background other than anthropology were "locked up" with unilineal evolutionary schema that invariably means progress from lower to higher such as Morgan (savagery- Barbarism-Civilization), Mclennan (group marriage- pair marriage- monogamous marriage); Frazer (magic- religion- science); Tylor (animism- polytheism- monotheism); Marx (Tribal society- Slavery-feudalism- Capitalism) etc.

These unilineal progressive development theories were severely nullified because of the in feasibility of application of comparative method and use of materials that are relative in nature and incomparable.

Institutionalization of Anthropology

Anthropology was born in the nineteenth century. In France and Great Britain its original designation was 'ethnology', as mentioned in the society Ethnologique de Paris (Founded in 1839) and the Ethnological society of London (dating from 1843) respectively. Until 1870s Anthropology has been referred quite narrowly to what is today called physical anthropology, but with the establishment of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland in 1871, Ethnology was renamed as Anthropology. Consequently, the first formal teaching in anthropology began at the University of Oxford in 1884, along with the honorary British chair of anthropology being created at the University of Liverpool in 1908 to which Sir James George Frazer was appointed (Cheater, 1989: 17).

Charles Darwin's The Descent of Man (1871) has made an attempt to discern human beings as a species which, of course, has had developed within the conceptual framework of his theory of natural selection worked out in The Origin of Species (Darwin, 1859). For some peculiar reasons the theoretical premise of Darwin as developed in his The Descent of Man had

failed to draw adequate attention of academicians and scholars for which it faced discontinuity in time and space. During the following two decades a series of 'sociological' monographs appeared dealing with primitive society. These included classic studies by Bachofen, Maine, Fustel de Coulanges, Lubbock, Mclennan, Morgan and Tylor. All shared a common concern about the nature of 'primitive' society and religion. Virtually, all assumed a direct progression from primitive society through various intermediate stages to modern society. Nevertheless, all these writers would be taken together as 'evolutionist' by later generations, but Darwin's theory was not their common inspiration . There is a paradox here for Darwins triumph stimulated a very Un-Darwinian anthropology (Kuper, 1988: 2)

It was in this world of upheaval and transition that anthropology first emerged as an academic discipline. Many museums were founded.

Distinguished anthropologists either belonged to Great Britain (the longest colonial power, with plentiful access to 'others') or USA (where 'the others' were close at hand). Theoretical developments in these two traditions also differed remarkably. The evolutionism typical of nineteenth century anthropology built on the ideas of development from the eighteenth century, bolstered by the experience of colonialism (starting in the 1860s) and also by the influence of Darwin and his supporters among whom Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) was the outstanding figure who really founded social Darwinism. All the leading anthropologists of that time supported the principle of the 'psychic unity of mankind' it means that all human beings were born everywhere more or less with the same potentials and thus inherited differences were quite negligible.

There are four prominent founders of anthropology. They are Franz Boas (1858-1942), Bronislaw Malinowski (1884-1942), A. R. Radcliffe-Brown (1881-1955) and Marcel Mauss (1872-1950). All of them were responsible for a near-total renovation

of at least three of the four national traditions namely the American, the British and the French. In the fourth, Germanic tradition, diffusionism retained its hegemony. Terrible things were in store for it, as well as for the Russian diffusionist tradition. Long before Boas's book was burned in Berlin, a generation of Russian ethnographers would die in the Gulag, and after the Second World War, certain German ethnologists would be found guilty of Nazi collaboration. Due to these and other reasons, German and Russian anthropology developed very slowly during most of the period of twentieth century when they could hardly maintained contact with the mainstream traditions. However, Boas being German, and Malinowski Polish brought with them an intimate knowledge of the German tradition in anthropology when they emigrated to USA and Britain respectively. German anthropology lived on throughout the twentieth century, albeit in transplanted and 'hybrid' forms.

"All of the four players were to so some extent socially marginal in the environment they inhabited. Mauss was a Jew, Radcliffe-Brown came from a working-class background, Malinowski was a foreigner and Boas was both a foreigner and a Jew. Predictably, perhaps the four had no shared programme. There were significant methodological and theoretical differences between the schools they founded, which even today, may be traced in French, British and American anthropology. There were (and are) no clear-cut boundaries, as the influence of Durkheim on British anthropology most clearly shows. Finally, all four of our heroes had the intellectual legacy of the nineteenth century in common" (Eriksen et. al. 2001: 36-38).

In England it has developed and flourished to a large content independently under the name of social anthropology exclusively. However, "Social anthropology has a very limited technical vocabulary, so that it has to use everyday and these are all known, is not very precise, such words as 'society', 'culture', 'custom', 'religion', 'sanction', 'structure' 'function', 'political',

and democratic, do not always convey the meaning to words in common use" (Evans-Pritchard, 1951: 2).

The situation in France was almost similar as Levi-Strauss has observed: "France may be cited as an example of the abnormal situation arising in anthropology works from a rigid separation between the faculties of science and arts. The University of Paris introduced three diplomas in anthropology, a diploma in ethnology with arts optional awarded by the faculty of arts; the same diploma with sciences optional, awarded by the two faculties combined; and lastly, a diploma in physical anthropology, awarded by the faculty of science alone" (Levi-Strauss, 1967: 351)

After the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 in former Soviet Union, it was been necessary to know about the large number of ethnic groups who have inhabited the country. A primordial theory of 'Ethnos' and Marxism became dominant in Soviet Union. After the collapse of Soviet Union in 1989 Marxism was removed from its core position while anthropology has began to reshape itself.

In England, Radcliffe-Brown had explicit hopes of transforming anthropology into a 'real' science, which Durkheim probably did not share. In 'A Natural Science of Society, his last book (based on a lecture series held in Chicago in 1937 and posthumously published in 1957), Brown indicates the tenor of this hope. He says in his book that Social structure exists independently of the individual actors who reproduce it (Eriksen et. al. 2001: 45). He also thought that anthropology should be a 'comparative sociology' (Radcliffe-Brown, [1952] 1958)

In the United States of America, a four-field approach was adopted by Franz Boas. The fields were cultural anthropology, archaeology, linguistic anthropology and physical anthropology. Of four fields, three is based on a common concept 'culture'. Cultural Anthropology studies contemporary culture,

archaeology extinct culture, linguistic anthropology is the key to the study cultural anthropology, while physical anthropology study biological variation of human. Therefore, the fields significantly overlap.

While Leslie White has envisaged anthropology as a science of 'culture' (White, 1949: 397-415), his ambition was to turn anthropology into a real science of cultural evolution. According to him the effects of technology on culture was regarded as impertinent and irrelevant (Eriksen et. al. 2001: 80).

Thus in the context of multiplicity, diversity and appositional conceptual convergence in anthropology, two major observations are made and discussed below:

a) Anthropology is a science of non–Western population. Since its inception, anthropology has not yet incorporated all the people of the world. It has excluded the western population, which turned anthropology to be a 'science' of the one part of human, excluding westerners who have created it. This means that anthropology was not developed as universal science of human being.

b) Anthropology had turned to be a discipline to study 'others', such as 'exotic' people, 'ridiculous savages', or 'primitive', or 'tribal'.

Anthropology has not paid adequate attention to both male and female equally and it is often accused of being 'male bias'. But it is noteworthy that feminist scholars have significantly contributed to address the women issues through gender studies. Inclusively gender. Instead, it is often accused for studying 'powerful' section of human beings particularly the 'male'. So anthropology has developed as a 'male biased' subject.

Putting aside human beings, anthropology has almost exclusively focused on culture and society. Culture has overwhelmed the fundamental agenda of human beings. These are the ways

through which human beings have been marginalized, lost, and faded away in anthropology.

Could anthropology be a science?

Epistemology and ontology are the foundation of a science where fuller account of the source and process of knowledge are given with its outcome in one hand and an understanding about the basic elements that is theorized about, on the other. Can anthropology study human being without political bias and can produce ethnography exclusively based on scientific procedure? If it is unfeasible than anthropology may become irrelevant as a science of human being and the word 'science' may be completely removed from anthropology while ethnographers could only be considered as fiction writers or as of S. Tyler the ideology of 'observer-observed' should be completely refused and mutually production of dialogical discourse should be the only job to do (Tyler 1986).

In 1895, Durkheim, in his book, The Rules of Sociological Method addressed the relationship between epistemology and politics. He said, "instead of observing, describing and comparing things, we are content to reflect upon our ideas, analyzing them and combining them. Instead of a science, which deals with realities, we carry out no more than an ideological analysis" (Durkheim [1895] 1950: 60).

Two fundamental theoretical positions of Durkheim are directly relevant in this discussion. Emile Durkheim conceived "However... a science cannot be considered definitively constituted until it has succeeded in establishing its own independent status. For it lacks any justification for existing unless its subject matter is an order of facts which other sciences do not study, since it is impossible for the same notions to fit identically things of a different nature" (Durkheim [1895] 1995: 162). This understanding of Durkheim is reflected in his

anthropological work on 'primitive' religion (Durkheim, [1912] 1948).

The question is whether this conception of Durkehim is insightful, valid, rationale and applicable for the all fields of human knowledge? I would like to consider this conception for the sake of an argument and relate it to anthropology in the following manner.

a) Durkheim's first proposition is that any discipline to be considered as science, must have an independent status. Has anthropology as yet assumes an independent status to be regarded as science?

b) His second Proposition is that whether anthropology has been able to define its distinctive subject matter? And if it has defined then what is it?

These propositions of Durkheim's methodology will be better understood in the context of Comte's positivism. Comte had outlined his views on positivism in his famous classic called 'Course de philosophic positive' published in 1830. This was mostly developed in response to what he perceived as the anarchy of philosophic speculation that had prevailed since Hegel. Comte defined positivism as a scientific movement which sought to determine the scope of scientific investigation in the study of society. Comte aimed at putting all speculative disciplines such a history, philosophy, and political economy on the same footing as the natural sciences (Ibid. 123). Since 1830 Comte's expectation has not been fulfilled to make anthropology a science, rather its expectation may have already pushed the discipline to irreversibility and Comte's ideas has turned to be a myth in relation to anthropology as a discipline. Though anthropology with ease find itself attached to social 'science', but it feels pride to be an 'art'.

Of all the human sciences, anthropology is perhaps the most given to questioning itself as to what it is and coming up with answers that sound more like 'overall world views' or 'declarations of faith' than they do like descriptions of "a branch of knowledge" (Geertz, 1995).

Lacunae in Ethnography

Since it was mentioned earlier that anthropology had started its sojourn with the term 'ethnology', ethnography had been its foundation with a fieldwork tradition which is known to had begun by Malinowski in 1914 but in fact it had originated much earlier, on the one hand, and by another ethnographer, on the other. This lacuna is courageously confessed by Angela Cheater (Cheater 1989: 21) at a time when the academic communities of the world had turned their blind eye to this proven fact. She writes in this connection that, "the Russian naturalist, Nikolai Niklouho- Maclay (1982) spent some three years between 1871 and 1882, studying the people as well as the natural history of the 'Maclay Coast' of the Madang district of New Guinea. Despite his political representations to the British government on behalf of those he studied, and his fame in Australia for some peculiar reason, he is never regarded as the founder of the fieldwork tradition in anthropology" (Cheater 1989: 21).

This fact could be further found in the work A History of Anthropology by Thomas Eriksen and Finn Nielsen who wrote another less known exception was the Russian ethnographer Nicolai Nicolaievich Niklouho- Maclay (1846-88), who as early as in 1871, 40 years before Malinowski, carried out a 15-month long intensive field study on the New Guinea coast, and laid the foundation for a rich ethnographic tradition in Russia that is virtually unknown in the west (Eriksen et. al. 2001: 24)

Thus what the world know is that the founder of fieldwork in anthropology is Bronislaw Malinowski, "who was a Polish, born in Cracow in 1884, the son of a professor of Slavic Philology.

He was awarded a doctorate degree in physics and mathematics in 1908. He claims that he first become interested in anthropology through the writings of Frazer's Golden Bough. (Raison 1979: 242-243). Malinowski's first expedition was in 1914 when he visited Motu and Papua and the Mailu of New Guinea and spent some years from 1914-15 and 1915-18 in the Trobriand Island (Ibid. 243). However, I would like to propose here that the fieldwork tradition in anthropology had actually begun in1871 by Nikolai Miklouho-Maclay and his extraordinary 'field notes', a vivid ethnographic description of Maclay coast written in Russian being translated in English subsequently had entered into the academia in the USA and other countries. This historical gap needs to be bridged, as this would take ethnography to its true root.

Can anthropology be considered as the most humanistic science or is it a Fallacy?

At the formation stage or in its infancy, anthropology had destined to be 'unique' by being selective and choosey. The historical development of anthropology clearly the fact that it had been fascinated to study 'culture', say, 'birth rituals and related ceremonies'. This selection had automatically excluded 'birth trauma' – specially, female informant's experiences of miscarriage, abortion, still birth, poor antenatal care and its implication on mother 'to be' and fetus', poverty, shortage of food, malnourishment, diseases, psychological trauma of mother 'to be', conflict at the family, and many other complications. In such a background how a study on 'birth ritual looks like and how much is it 'enduring' for the informants and most importantly this 'inclusion' and 'exclusion' make anthropology humanistic discipline? Further, what theoretical implication anthropology had as a result of exclusion of such a universal aspect of human life as 'disease' and 'health'? A focus on 'culture' would be less humanistic than a focus on 'disease and sufferings. Therefore, instead of having a 'narrow focus', let us

put all our efforts to comprehend real life of human beings in a holistic way.

Conclusion

The present essay aims at developing certain writing extend assumption that anthropology has not yet become a science of human being. As such most of the contemporary crises are associated with how the said discipline can really grow up as the 'logos' of 'anthropos'. An attempt has been made an attempt to explore reasons for responsible for this failure. What constraints have made anthropology so fragile, tentative, often arbitrary and vulnerable? How has anthropology been historically exposed to so many changes, shifts, divergences and discontinuities? And finally, under what circumstances anthropology could not succeeded to be an universal science of human beings? Rather, it has divided human beings into different categories, such as, the exotic, native, savage, tribals, and those who are undergoing humanization process in particular as subject matter of anthropology, while the 'developed Westerners' had been excluded, from the purview of anthropology.

Moreover, the discipline has strictly confined its focus primarily into 'culture' and 'society', and to an insignificant extent the biological aspect of particular human beings. This 'narrow focus' has not only excluded many of the universal aspects of humans, but creates constraints upon the discipline to be parochial in character.

On the basis of my arguments put forward above, I have identified some aspects of human life that are universal and intrinsic for every human being which are to be indispensable subject matter of anthropology as noted below:

a) A particular anatomy (structure) and physiology (function) of the body with brain that made human 'sapien'.

b) The structure and function of the body are susceptible to pathology that may cause by pathogen, injury or aging process.

c) A mind, that is abstract, having 'unconscious' and conscious part, which are, according to, Sigmund Freud, Id, Ego and Super ego respectively. Mind is also susceptible to alternation. Psyche has an inextricable link with the mind.

d) A system of consanguinity, affinity, descent, kinship and other social relations constituted by assuming different roles by individual organisms creating a complex network of social structure for human to live in.

e) A system of values, attitudes, beliefs, customs, traditions, religion are learned, shared and transmitted that create an external environment to cope with for the continuation of life. But these are indeed certain individual exceptions.

f) Language is learned not only for communication but also for all cognitive activities that continue throughout life.

g) Brocas and Wirnick areas of brain provide capacities for symbolic activities that are the biological foundation for culture and language.

h) An organic or biotic environment (plants, animals, micro-organism including pathogen, predators, vectors, organic materials), and an inorganic system (climate, energy and materials) constitute ecosystem to cope with the transformation of and life.

i) Not passive, rather active pursuance of individual and social life is the basic trends.

These universal aspects of human life as mentioned above in 'A' to 'I', are not isolated from one another rather these are inextricably linked to each other. All these aspects have undergone synthesis in such a way that they are inseparable and

only this amazing outcome of synthesis constitutes human beings.

Therefore, anthropology has to be conceptually, theoretically, methodologically equipped in order to describe and analyse this highly complex subject of investigation.

For this purpose, anthropology has to share itself with biological, social, physical sciences as well as humanities. A narrow focus would only provide illusive 'shadow' of a complex built.

Is anthropology a social 'science' or an art? Or is it synonymous with sociology (which deals with society), culturology (whose focus is culture), economics (which deals with economic systems), political science (whose focus of interest is power and authority) biology (that deals with the structure and function of human body), medicine (that deals with pathology and normalizing process), psychology (whose main concern is psychic disorders of individuals) and feminism (that deals with gender issues). If the mentioned sciences deal with almost all aspects of human beings then what anthropology would do? Or have the subject matters of anthropology already been incorporated in those disciplines reducing it to be a mere term of convenience? And whether its survival would depend on its ability to cope with the need of the development agencies or on the pious wishes of academics to provide some scope for anthropology. In answering to these basic questions, a broad based approach may be necessary.

Therefore, anthropology is yet to be formed, two hundred years of its growth seems to show that it has not succeeded to comprehend all these aspects. What anthropologists have done so far is the reduction of this mammoth task into a single aspect of human studies, excluding those that are inseparable.

Thus it is my firm conviction that a science of human being could definitely be formed, the treasury of knowledge, theories

and paradigms that already had been gathered and formulated could be fully and profitably utilized, adding new ideas to it. Finally, I believe a rigorous process to reorganize anthropology, as a science of human being is a call of the time. And probably it is not too late to begin the great task.

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