BANC-133 : FUNDAMENTALS OF SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

Tutor Marked Assignments

Course Code: BANC-133
Assignment Code: BANC-133/ASST /TMA /July 2026 and January 2027
Total Marks: 100

There are three Assignments. All questions are compulsory.

Assignment – A

Answer the following in about 500 words each. 2X20= 40

a. Discuss the development of anthropology in India.
b. Explain fieldwork, survey and experimentation as methods of data collection.

Assignment – B

Answer the following in about 250 words each. (Write Short Notes) 3X10=30

a. Outline and discuss the different types of marriages prevalent in societies.
b. Write a note on conflict theories.
c. Examine consumption, production and exchange as components of economic institutions.

Assignment – C

Answer the following questions in about 150 words each. 6X5=30

a. Lineage societies
b. Literature review
c. Family
d. Historical particularism
e. Observation
f. Key symbols

---

a. Discuss the development of anthropology in India.

Answer

Anthropology in India developed through the study of the country's many communities, languages, customs and ways of life. Its growth was influenced by colonial administration, Indian scholars, university teaching and field research. Over time, it moved from collecting descriptions of communities to understanding social relationships, cultural change and contemporary problems. The history of Indian anthropology therefore shows both the influence of European ideas and the efforts of Indian anthropologists to develop their own approaches.

Early accounts and colonial surveys

Long before anthropology became a separate academic subject, Indian literary and historical sources described social groups and cultural practices. Works concerning caste, kinship, occupations, religious traditions and regional customs provide useful historical information, although they were not modern anthropological studies. During British rule, administrators, missionaries and travellers produced gazetteers, district reports, census records and ethnographic descriptions. They wanted to classify populations and understand local institutions for administration. H. H. Risley, E. T. Dalton, William Crooke and Edgar Thurston contributed to this record. These sources preserved details about communities, but their categories often reflected colonial assumptions. In particular, attempts to connect caste with fixed racial types are not accepted by contemporary anthropology.

Emergence of Indian scholarship

In the early twentieth century, Indian scholars increasingly undertook detailed studies of their own society. Sarat Chandra Roy is widely regarded as a pioneer of Indian ethnography. His work on the Munda and Oraon communities of Chotanagpur combined observation, customary law, language and social organisation. He also founded the journal Man in India in 1921, giving researchers a forum to discuss Indian social life. L. K. Ananthakrishna Iyer studied communities in southern India. Their work helped establish the importance of first-hand information rather than relying only on official reports. The discipline gradually came to recognise people's own understandings of their customs.