BANE 144: Visual Anthropology
TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

Course Code: BANE 144
Assignment Code: BANE 144/ASST/TMA/July 2026 and January 2027
Total Marks: 100

There are three Sections in the Assignment. You have to answer all questions in all the Sections.

Assignment – I

Answer the following in about 500 words each. **20X2= 40**

a. Trace the history of visual anthropology.
b. Discuss the politics and aesthetics of representation in visual anthropology.

Assignment – II

Answer the following in about 250 words each (Write Short Notes). **10X2=20**

a. Anthropology and images
b. Attributes and uses of ethnographic film

Answer the following questions in about 75 words each. **2X5=10**

a. Internal and external narratives of images
b. Azande witchcraft and oracles
c. Films and tribal tourism
d. Images and objects of the "Other"
e. Text and Hyper text

Assignment – III

a. Prepare a visual research framework to study any one social setting (local market, religious place, family ceremony etc.). 20
b. Explain any two ways of doing visual research. **10**

a. Trace the history of visual anthropology.

Answer

Visual anthropology is the study of human life and culture through photographs, films, drawings, objects and other visual materials. It also studies how people produce, use and interpret images. Its history is closely connected with the growth of anthropology, changes in camera technology, and changing ideas about who should represent a community.

Early beginnings in the nineteenth century

Photography was invented during the nineteenth century and soon entered colonial expeditions, museums and scientific surveys. Travellers and administrators photographed people, dress, houses, ceremonies and tools. Some early anthropologists believed that a photograph could provide objective evidence of physical appearance and cultural difference. Images were sometimes arranged into racial 'types' and displayed without the names or views of the people photographed. Such practices reflected colonial power and many of their assumptions are now rejected.

However, early photographs also preserved records of clothing, settlements, occupations and customs that can be studied critically today. A photograph cannot be read independently of the photographer's purpose, the social setting and the circumstances in which it was taken. It shows a particular moment from a particular viewpoint.

Fieldwork cameras and the beginning of moving pictures

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, anthropology became increasingly connected with direct field observation. Alfred Cort Haddon used photography and moving pictures during the Cambridge Anthropological Expedition to the Torres Straits in 1898. His work showed that visual recording could assist the documentation of dancing, bodily movements and everyday activities that were difficult to explain fully in words.

Early films were short and cameras were heavy. Limited film stock, difficult lighting and expensive processing meant that only selected events could be