

Subject: Anthropology

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Paper No. : 02 Social Cultural Anthropology

Module : 03 Evolution, unilinear, Multilinear and Universal



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पाठशाला
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Learning Objectives:

- To know the concept of evolution
- To know the different schools of thoughts
- To know about the neo-evolutionist school of thought
- To critically examine the thoughts and beliefs of these schools



1. Introduction

Evolution can be defined as a process in which different forms are developed or produced in systematic way concerned with a gradual/slow change which always occurs intellectually. But the things become complex over a period through which a process goes on. It is like a transformation taking place suddenly in anything.

1. Theoretical perspective which is built around evolution is called evolution.
2. Evolution in general tendency that regards Charles Darwin is founder of Evolution.

In 1822 in a publication Auguste Comte included that we have to undertake 2 types of Study.

1. The study of Laws to evolution.
2. Carry out law of Functioning.

Later on these 2 aspects became the study of social dynamic and social statistics. Comte constituted 2 aspects of society.

Jacques Turgot: Gradually Human being they believe in anthropomorphic powers more and more scientific and rational in their outlook. This point of view taken by Auguste Comte the direction of evolution is toward rational scientific Society. Comte identified 3 Stages through which he believe human society has past. Everything in Universe has its past. 3 stages are:

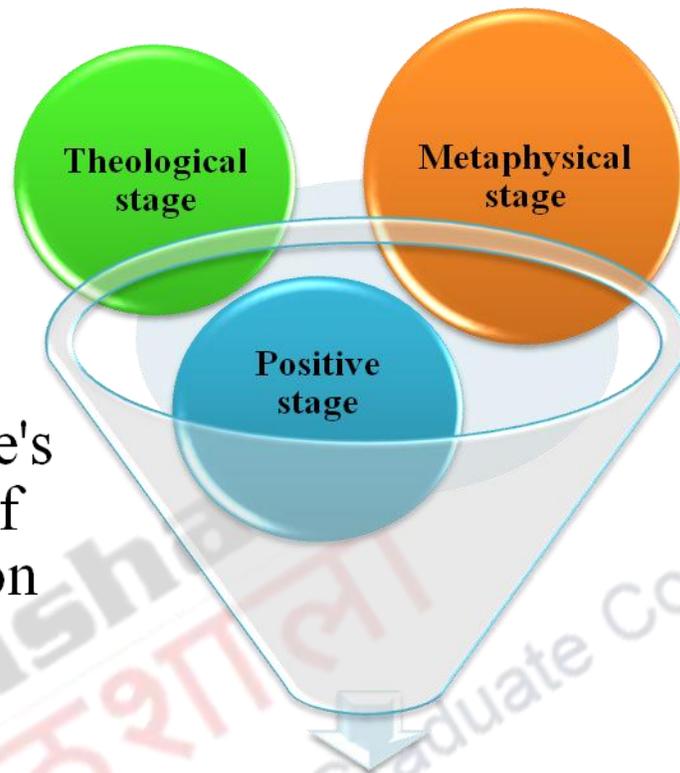
Theological Stage: Where it was belief that world was populated by God/Goddess determine everything. It believes that such should for final causes and final causes was world.

Metaphysical Idea: The explanation was in terms of divine and supernatural power. This state led to metaphysical or abstract stage. This idea began around 1300 A.D. Here the word divinity was an abstract idea which was regarded as pervading all over the universe. This stage was short lift giving rise to final stage which is called positive of scientific. The different between 2nd and 3rd the idea taken granted there was no question. Idea was believed to mortality, omnipresent in the positive the metaphysical shifted to causal relationship which should not in term of divine.

E.g.: It will rain when god will. It will rain when cloud form.

Where with the help of objectivity cause a relationship. Thus Comte Believe everything passes via these Stages. These 3 stages were not original given by Comte but Comte was able to show these stages are evolution.

Auguste Comte's trio scheme of social evolution



1.1 Sir Herbert Spencer (1820-1903)

A British Scholar he believe that process of evolution is not just confined to society rather he believe that every phenomenon in world has past visa stage of evolution one can discovered stage via which every stage has pass it may be rock etc. One can be find out phenomenon which has it passed biological, physical that is why Herbert Spencer is known's as philosopher of Universal person that everything evolve. Spencer was 1st to define evolution term. He spent lot of time in thinking of evolution. His definition is still applicable. In fact later scholar borrowed more from Spencer then from Darwin. This is conclusively conducted by many scholars.

He said evolution is a process whereby Changes come more or more specialized over time. It's a process toward differential of society. Simple definition of evolution is differentiation. Past are differentiated from other with specialization. Spencer said past is differentiation, specialization this part are integrated. Spencer believes this two process go hand to hand more differentiation and integration. Integration and differentiation are interrelated. If differentiation occurring so it is connected to integrated. But the idea of French thinker and Sir Herbert Spencer rooted into

philosophical course. This idea were not empirical this idea not have evidence behind them because of essential, this scholar are sociological.

1.2 Charles Darwin

Wrote in philosophical term didn't bother about empirical research that is why there idea didn't get popularity. The major break via in evolution is that Charles Darwin.

Charles Darwin was able to prove the process of evolution on the basis of paleontological evidence. The evidence which is collected during his natural history expedition called Voyage of Beagle. This idea of Darwin become extreme popular especially the idea of natural selection, struggle for existence and survival for fittest, nature has own mechanism to regulate population.

A School of thought came to knows as social Darwin. Darwin was least concerned about social aspects. Darwin idea of survival fittest came with

1. Walter Bagehot
2. Ludurg Gumplowicz.

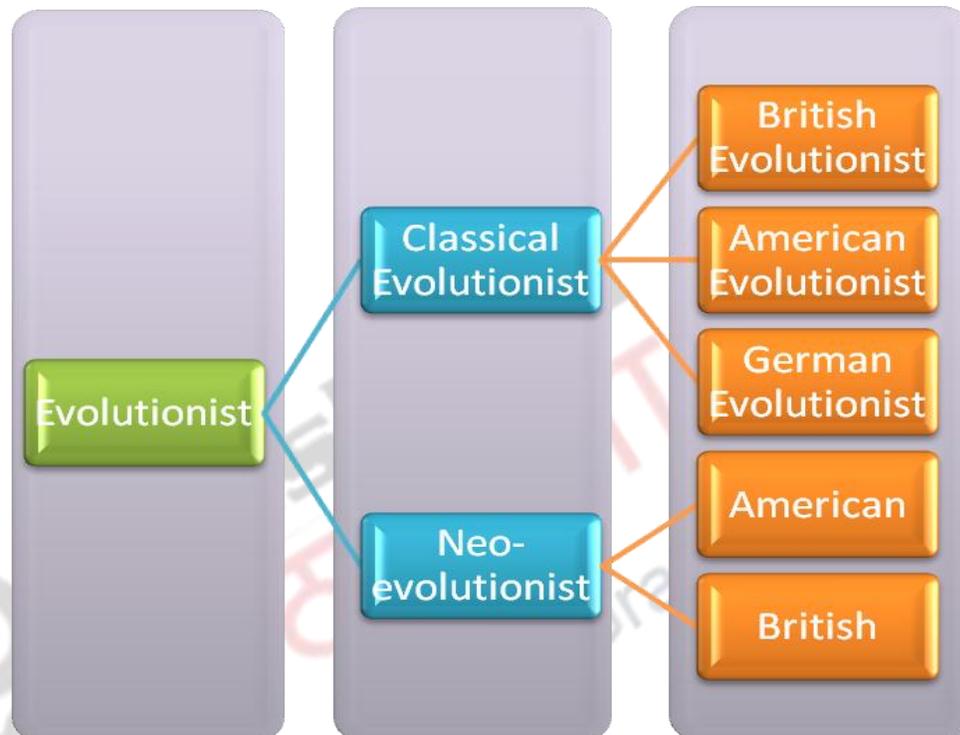
When we apply the idea of Darwin at society the strong point is the group life individual is complete for survival and group also complete in group. There is conflict between groups. There are conflict between group because each group has different biogenetic this is also called polygenetic theory. He also believes that there is insurmountable hatred between groups due to which groups came into conflict. In Darwin language superior group are able to survive then inferior. It was believe that human having interest in each group. If on one hand there were scholars who were paying a lot of attention to group conflict thus supporting social Darwinism. There was other who thought human social & cultural evolution. "Co-operation has played more important role then competition": Emile Durkheim Social Darwinism didn't last for long time. Its impact was that Anthropologist and sociologist came with the idea of started looking at cause about the evolution of society and culture.

The other who when not satisfied by Social Darwinian was come up with ideas like:

1. Causes of evolution
2. Stage via which institution passes

2. Different schools of thoughts

Evolution school has been classified into three categories:

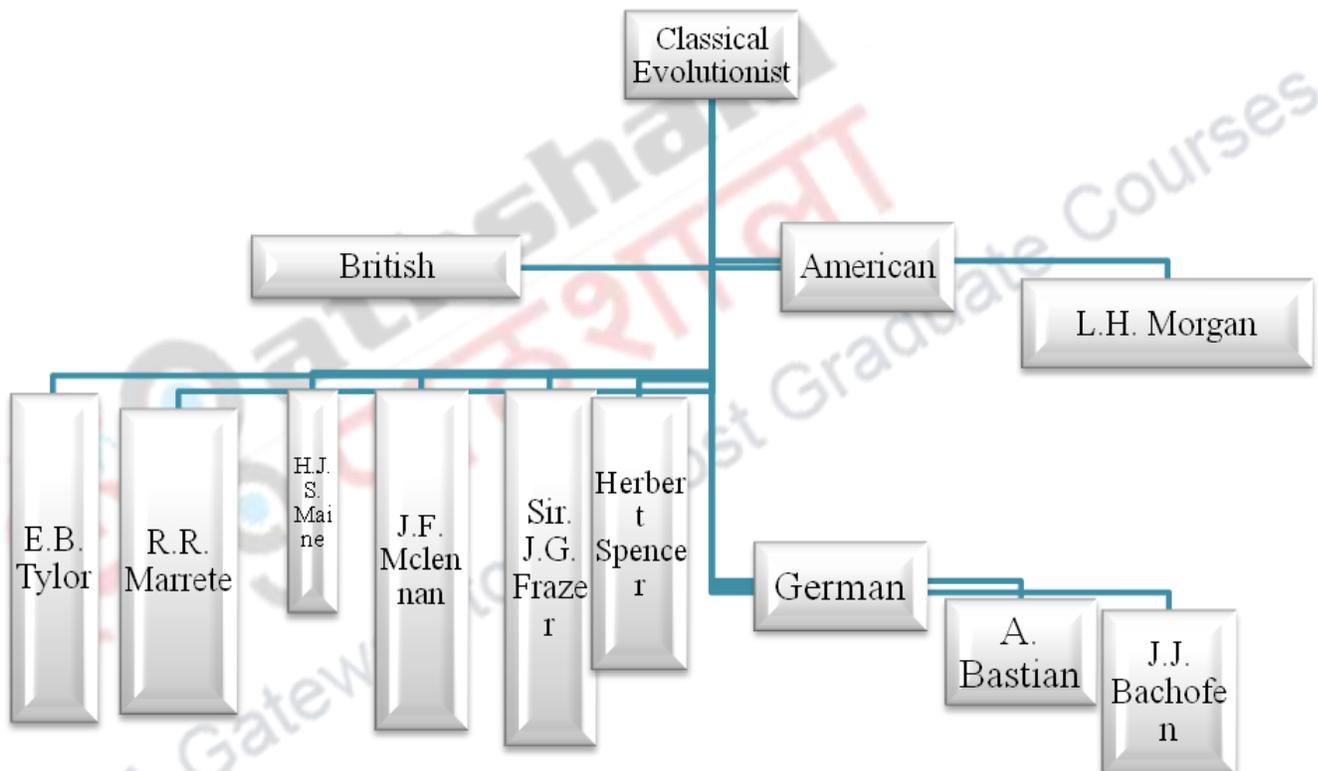


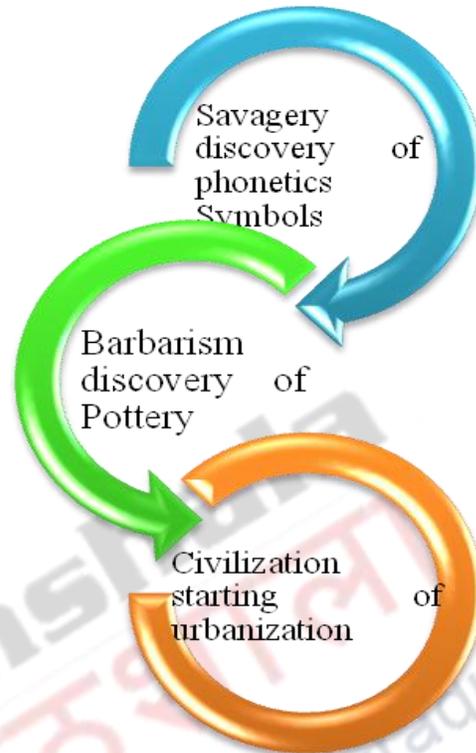
2.1. British Evolutionist:

2.1.1 E.B. Tylor (1832-1917): Tylor was simply under-graduate but not trained anthropologist. In 1856 he visited Mexico. His first book published entitled “Mexico and Mexican” in 1861. Another major work “Researches into the Early History of Mankind and Development of Civilization” in 1865. This book followed by the volume of “Primitive Culture”. In Primitive culture, first time classical definition of culture given. Tylor gave his opinion on culture. According to him culture develops in human kind over a time in history. He was the first time gave the scientific definition to culture in anthropology.

According to Tylor in ethnographical sense civilization or culture is that which include the complex knowledge and habit of the member of the society about their customs, values, belief, law, art, moral and other capabilities to gain for society. In the definition he wants to say that culture plays important role for product of social learning rather than biological product. Study of the culture for mankind is

the development for the society which passes through the stage of the “savagery” to “barbarism” and finally rises to the “Civilization”. This is stage which requires rising from primitive to advance stage for cultural development. He suggested that these three stages was a universal stage for cultural progress. The stage given by Tylor for cultural development this called “Unilinear approach” and called “Unilinear Evolutionist”. All human beings have similar thinking pattern have same responses. That is why there is similar between societies because of psychic unity of Mankind. That is why there will be single line evolution all evolve in same way this is called **Unilinear evolution**.





Tylor also viewed that society has passed through matriarchal to patriarchal society. According to him matriarchal society is the earliest form of the society. This idea was proved by him in his collected data from 282 society he go through the data analysis and came to the conclusion that matriarchal society is the earliest one he wrote in his essay entitled “A method of investigating the Development of Institute applied to the laws of marriage and descent” in 1889. Another book entitled “Anthropology” published in 1881 in this book he gave brief account of three stage description. Tylor was more concerned about human action and thought, “Culture is a historical processes’. He had also worked on religion field. His book “Primitive religion’ he defined that religion was in simple form it’s called “Spiritual Beings’. His great contribution lies in analysis of “Anima’ means soul. He said that every society in this world belief in spiritual. People use to worship to the dead person and offering dead or to the tree, stream of the river in which they believe that souls of the dead persons exist. This is called the deities to whom people worship and make sacrifices for them. He believed in totemism (it is considered that soul remains in tree plant or animal) so they sacred that particular tree, plant or animal and start offer praying, sacrifice and worship is called totem or nature worship. Fetishism (Human beings control their deity through material objects).

2.1.2 R.R. Marett (1866-1943): Marett was student of E.B. Tylor. He was interested in study of “Primitive Religion” he was very influence from his teacher and wrote a biography on Tylor in which he described systematically about concept of animism. From primitive religion he wrote a book entitled “The Threshold of Religion” in 1909.

2.1.3 James Frazer (1854-1941): He was a fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge University. He got the title of professor of Social Anthropology from University of Liverpool in 1907. He wrote a book entitled “Golden Bough” in 1890. In this book he explained that early men did not anything about science they pose the wrong idea of natural causes. He said all societies development pass through the three stages i.e. Magic, Religion and Science. Magic was based on the law of similarity and law of contact. According to the Frazer early man was believe in nature and developed imaginary thought which are not in real course. Frazer said that this was stage of religion they develop the illusionary thought and men enter in it and finally they developed into scientific stage.

Frazer wrote pamphlet “Totemism and Exogamy”, “Belief in Immortality and the worship of the dead”, “Aftermath”, “Folklore in the old testaments”, “Questions on the manners, Customs, religions, superstitions”, “Civilized and un-civilized peoples”, which later on knowns as “Notes and Querries” after revision.

2.1.4 Henry James Summer Maine (1822-1888): He was lawyer by the training. He visited India in 1862 with special reference to study primitive law. He became the vice –chancellor in 1869 of Calcutta University. He wrote a book entitled “Ancient Law” in 1861, “Early History of institution” and “Village Community in East & West” 1871. In 1875 again wrote a book “Early law and Customs”. He said Patriarchal family are universal form and original form of social life i.e. “patria potestas”, the absolute authority of the patriarch, on which it rests has produced everywhere at certain stage agnation, the tracing of descent through males exclusive “(Evans-Pritchard: 1951)” Patria Potestas mean father had absolute power even of life, death to his children, wife. In his documented it is also examined that father has no power after some time, but they must have existed earlier before. So it was concluded that patriarchal was the earliest form for family and political organization.

2.1.5 John Ferguson McLennan (1827-1881): He was lawyer by profession he was interested in anthropology and wrote many things on anthropological matters and worked in the field of “primitive marriage”. He debated that early societies were patrilineal in place of matrilineal, earlier societies were polyandry, system of descent, and form the present structure like first Tribe form in societies which is small in number then house form and finally family form. His famous book named “Primitive marriage” in 1865 in this book he coined the famous terms like “endogamy” & “exogamy” used in social organization. He also explains the concept of Bride Capture from the Tribal societies. McLennan thesis was explained and elaborated by William Robertson Smith (1846-1894) he personally studied

the Kinship and marriage in Early Arabs and Hebrew Society. Later John Lubbock put emphasis on the marriage and wrote a book “The origin of the Civilization” in 1870 in approach to human history.

2.2 American classical Evolutionist:

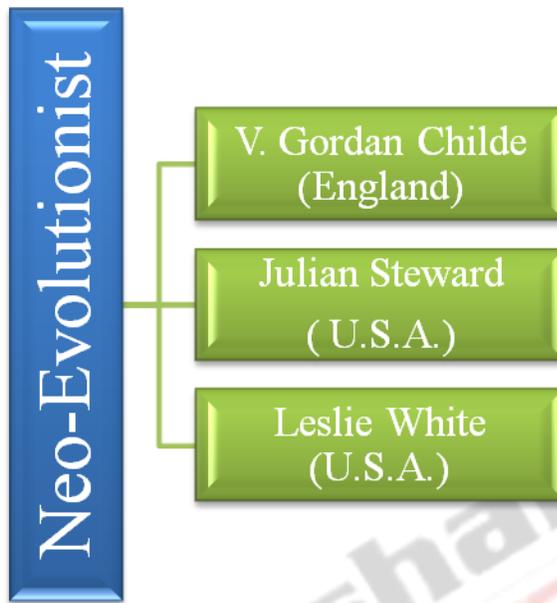
2.2.1 Lewis Henry Morgan (1818-1881): He was also Lawyer and did his work on Iroquois Indians. Because he felt that Iroquois culture was changing very rapidly so before it get diminish it should be recorded. Morgan collected large data on Iroquois Indians and published a book named “League of the Iroquois” in 1851. In this book he described each and every ethnographical detailed such as political organization, form of government, family, dances, religion, games, material culture, and language. Moreover, he also emphasized on marriage and system of matrilineal descent. Morgan gave the “Classificatory terms” & “Descriptive Terms” of “Kinship System”. Classificatory terms refer to address same terms to everyone in relations such as Uncles, aunty. While descriptive terms refer to single person like father, mother, daughter, Son. His books are “Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family” in 1870. Which on later describe by the Meyer Forte this book a golden vein of kinship and Social organization for scientific mining in 1969. Some of the important work of Morgan are “Ancient Society” in this book he divided the three stage; savagery , barbarism, and Civilization. “A conjectural solution to the origin of classificatory systems of relationship”. Morgan works influenced the Engels and Karl Marx. Engels published a work on “The origin of the family, private, property and the state, in the light researches of Lewis Henry Morgan” in 1884. Morgan’s last book was “Houses and House Life of the American Aborigines’ in 1881.

2.3. German Evolutionist:

2.3.1 Johann Jacob Bachofen (1815-1877): He was also lawyer. He believed in that matrilineal preceded the patrilineal this point was presented in book “Das Mutterrecht’ in 1861. Kinship lines were the necessity “gynaecocratic”. He used the historical methods to put the light on social institutions.

2.3.2 Adolf Bastian (1826-1925): German Scholar he was interested in idea to present the similarities between the different types of the people by the man’s psychic unity. He opined that there is restricted numbers of the idea to people basic idea is “elementargedand Ken”. Then he argues that these ideas were developed in different environment called “Geographical provinces”.

3. Neo- Evolutionist:



Neo-evolutionist is known because they threw a new light on different dimensions of culture evolution in twentieth century. It includes mainly three thinkers they are V. Gordon Childe from England, Julian Steward from U.S.A. and Leslie White from U.S.A.

3.1 V. Gordon Childe (1892-1957): He was from archaeology field interested in excavation of the site study the European archaeology. He was the first scholar to describe the transition from hunting and gathering to agriculture. Agriculture transition came during the neo-lithic period. He elaborated the concept of the Unilinear approach by analysis all his field data. He said that during the prehistoric migration has took place so cultural trait diffused from one place to another place. He also said that societies have passed through three stage of cultural development. Childe coined the term Urban revolution which means small village based community societies develop to city, town. He wrote many book some of them are “New Light on the Most Ancient East” in 1934, “Man makes Himself” in 1936, “Social evolution” in 1951 and “What happened in history” in 1946.

3.2 Julian H. Steward (1902-1972): He was American Anthropologist best known for “the concept and method” for cultural ecology. He gave the three ways for evolutionary data i.e.

Unilinear Cultural evolution

Universal Cultural evolution

Multilinear Cultural evolution

His books “Theory of Culture Change” published in 1955. Unilinear evolution deal with the particular culture rather than universal characteristics of culture. Universal evolution was represented by the V. Gordon. Childe and Leslie White by this concept they argue that mankind developed throughout the world same culture development stage. Julian steward pointed out that different cultural traditions and local varieties of cultural area. Its result was that special historical facts and cultural ecological adaptation to different environment are kept as irrelevant. Multilinear evolution it deals with the development of multiple culture evolution. Steward suggested that multilinear evolution represents the cultural traditions of different area wholly or partially. Multilinear evolution form parallel in the society for function and validation.

3.3 Leslie A. White (1900-1975): He was student of Franz boas but he also influenced by the work of Tylor and Morgan. Therefore he was more interested in progressive course of cultural evolution. He wrote ethnographies books on Pueblo people, “The science of culture” in 1949. He put emphasis that culture is most important components for the technology development. Culture represents the dynamic, integrated and symbolic systems for technology. Culture development rose to develop in technology. In his book “The Evolution of culture” in 1959 he argue that “energy” is the key point for culture evolution. This was explained by that energy exists in the human body and it’s harnessed by the men and women in the field. Infield for resources like plants, making fire, for domestication purpose, intensive work in agriculture field increase the efficiency in cultural evolution. White tends to attempt study in culture evolution in manner of technology and scientific development. According to him culture is divided in to four aspect i.e.

1. Ideological aspect which include the moral values, belief, customs.

2. Sociological aspects include the kinship, marriage, family for reproduction in economic activities.
3. Technology aspects like tools and implements used by them in field for agriculture and domestication purpose.
4. Sentimental aspects include taboo, totem.

These all aspects are based on the applicability of the technology and energy. White define the culture in integrated view of technology and energy. i.e. $T \times E = C$

Where, T stands to technology,

E stands for energy

C stands for Culture.

White wrote a paper entitle “Energy and the evolution of culture” in 1943. In this he explained that how evolution involves the economic organization of the primitive societies. Social organization includes network of relationship between the living material and function which maintain their status for living through the reproduction, nutrition and protection.

4. Criticisms

Why Did Doubted the Evolution? It was in 1880 that evolution is started coming under criticism. They foremost criticism was that the evolution has completely missed out the role of cultural borrowing. Though Tylor was quiet aware of this cultural context role but he wrote only about the significance of cultural context.

Critics argue that evolution believe people are stable they are unmoving. Contrary to that there is mammoth historical evidence people move from one part of the world to other. Critics say evolutionists imagine, critics say aspects of migration they would go on they also carry culture with them. Tylor construction of religion was unexplained in social dimension. Frazer was criticized by Malinowski who done his field work in Trobriand Islander and develop the functional theory of religion. Said that it does not mean that earlier people wholly ignorant of natural causations. Frazer stages for human development in reality cannot be found in ethnography. There is both coexistence of religion with science.

V. Ramachandran Reddy wrote article on women dress. Women are not wearing dhoti and saree. They wore only at occasion in 1995. This is remarkable change occurring in Andhra women wearing salwar kurta.

Buckland Said – Human Beings are uninventive. That is why they have to depend on other for other things. Evolutionary critics, the idea of social fossils was pejorative to call some people as social fossil.

It's wrong to imagine unbroken continuity between communities to say that contemporary people are the remains of prehistoric people. It's also implies negation the idea.

They criticize for the meaning of contemporary method knowing the past. It was myopic. It was wrong to call some arguments contemporary survival of the past. The evolution were critiqued for being conjectural, hypothetical for imagine in past. They were called arm chair Anthropologist. They were critiqued for not conducting any field study. They were conducting only relying upon traveler account were prepared by army, soldiers such data was partial and biased. It is not field work.

Critics for presumption e.g. Primitive people have promiscuity the group of marriage having external family. When actual field work study carried out it was found meaning of primitive people have much family they have monogamous from this it was concluded that pseudo history. It declined due to the doctrine of evolution not because of the process of evolution. Rejection of classical evolution gave rise to other school of thought. That is:

- Historical particularism by Franz Boas

- Diffusionism

5. Summary:

Evolution in anthropology has emerges parallel to the biological and archaeological field. Many scholars divided the evolutionary thought of school on the basis of their findings and field data. Evolutionary school divided into British school of thought includes E.B. Tylor, R.R.Marette, H.J.S. Maine, J.F.mc Lennan, Sir J.G. Frazer

American evolutionary School L.H. Morgan. German evolutionary School include scholars J.J. Bachofen, A.Bastin. The work which appeared in seemed half of 19th Century.

1. E.B. Tylor

2. L.H. Morgan

Tylor wrote a book name "Primitive Culture". Morgan was hostiles with both appeared in 1970s. Morgan was concerned with evolution of society of whole. He said Human society has passed 3 stages.

Morgan also divided both savagery and Barbarism in 3 stage respectively called lower, Middle and upper culture. Gradually evolution changes applied to institution and finally it was applied to specific culture traits.

- Whole society (Morgan)

- Specific institution (Tylor Religious etc.)
- Traits (Tylor wrote an article on evolution on Plough)

There was certain evolution Theme:

1. Macro Societal/Cultural: rather than to any specific culture. Evolution believes via which all society & Culture pass via Savagery, Barbarism, and civilization. Although the space of culture is different some may evolve faster than other.
2. The evolutionary believes via which all human being are one they have the same psychic material. They think in similar way and their response is also same. They believe in unity of Human kind. This idea was conveyed by German Scholar Adolf Bastian. In concept of psychic unity of mankind which mean called Parallelism evolution people are evolving in the same way.
3. Evolutionary believes that evolution has induced taken place. The remains of evolution could be found among the primitive Society. The Contemporary primitive society were regarded as the remains of past. Morgan Said that they are remnants of Past. Tylor said they are “Social Fossil”. Tylor was the 1st one who wrote introductory Book of Social Anthropology. He was the one who define the culture 1st line definition of culture.

Neo- Evolutionary School: Evolutionism came in Anthropology with Darwinism post-Darwinism after 1860. Evolution is a name of approach which is built around philosophical the process of evolution, theory, doctrine change is ceaselessly things which are undifferentiated this process occurring because this is much imperceptible. Evolution never stops. It is process which occurs over time. Evolution recognised overtime. These changes are macro societal. Evolutions are concerned about particular society, culture. They concerned about every human society this is “Universal Process”. But society will differ with space of change. Some will change fast and some will Slower. Morgan said society change from savagery, barbarism, civilization. It will happen to all society. They spoke about parallel evolution is meant evolution will occur in all society all society will have the same stage. They may be from different part of the world. These societies have some stage.

So, stone implement in Africa, Java look a live because all human beings think in a same way. Famous statement borrowed from Tylor“Psychic Unity of Mankind” All human beings have similar thinking pattern have same responses. That is why there is similar between societies because of psychic unity of Mankind. That is why there will be single line evolution all evolve in same way this is called Unilinear evolution. With each stage there is progress. Evolution and progress is almost equivalent and its is progressive in nature. So as change occurs we move toward higher level of development we are changing progressively.

Evolution believe that non-civilized people existing at that time. People living in South America, Africa, forest of Malaya peninsula, desert of Australia, Jungles of Asia. This people were “remnants” by L.H. Morgan.

Edward Tylor in his language this people were “Social fossils”. They carry many characteristics of past. He also gave Animism which recognized as religion for the 1st time. “Study of the contemporary people” would tell us about people remain in past. This way evolutionist called it comparative method is a study to leading to understanding of people in past. This idea has a strong grip. Evolution devoted themselves the study of whole society, institution, culture traits

