

# SKYLINES OF ANTHROPOLOGY

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## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

It is our immense pleasure that the brainchild of Milonjyoti Borgohain, *Skylines of Anthropology* has been published today, being the first Anthropological Journal from Assam. The collective wisdom and the ideas will be shared in this platform in the form of the open access journal. Today, we are starting with a small step, and hoping to continue further.

This journal will go beyond any geographical territory and all areas of the world will be accepted, in relation to Anthropology. In the making of this journal, several scholars have helped us, officially (those who are here in the Editorial Board Members) and unofficially. We are thankful to them, notably Dr Deepanjana Dutta Das (Dibrugarh University), Prof DK Limbu (NEHU), Dr Debajit Baruah (North Lakhimpur College), Dr Promanita Borah (Dibru College), Dr Upala Baruah (Cotton University), Dr Bipul Chandra Bhuyan (Principal of HPB College, Golaghat), Dr Biswanath Malakar (Govt General degree College, West Bengal), and Dr Dilli Prasai, from Tribhuvan University, Nepal, who have helped us to form the Committee of the Editorial Board, and eventually helped to make this journal an international one. Moreover, we can't forget the help and valuable advice and time of Prof Mohan Gautam, former Chancellor of European University of West and East, who has helped us a lot despite having his busy schedule and the hard time of Covid in Europe.

The theme of this journal will be anthropological, covering all the aspects and branches of anthropology, and the development and progress in present time. Today, under the era of globalization, we are not stick to our age old traditions, but the concept of culture is changing from one way to another in the form of syncretism. The time has changed, when the concept of culture is no more static. Hence, this journal will cover wide areas of new topics ranging from Indigenous people and their culture in the Spanish and Portuguese speaking Latin America to the Gypsy people of Europe, along with the Diaspora of all communities throughout the world, influence of the majority community to the minority and vice versa, the problem of racism and the solution in USA against the Blacks and also the problem of racism against the White minorities in South Africa at present. We welcome all areas of anthropology here from

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arctic anthropology, Norse mythology and folklore to the Anthropology of the North East India to the anthropology of entire Asia.

Since, this is the time of Covid pandemic, which has paralyzed the world, once we are free from this problem, we will try to conduct more tours in relation to anthropology. Till then, we are thankful to the contributors and the Editorial Board members, and all our well wishers.

Sd/-  
**Dhritiman Sarma**  
*Chief Editor*



## **EDITORIAL**

### **Emergence of Anthropological Research in New Dimensions**

At present in 2021, the concept of culture, society and research, and everything has changed to a new perspective in anthropology. Today, we are not confined to the concept of tribe and culture alone, which was relevant 100 years ago. In this new century, as well as the new millennium, the concepts are moving into the diverse ways of research, moving from the concept of dominant majority in the past to the dominant minority at present, the people who were dominant in the past to their changing aspects of status at present, and from acculturation, diffusion, assimilation to syncretism despite religious conversion at present.

In fact, the first wave of change that occurred during the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war is no more relevant today, as after that, the Cold War is also over almost 30 years ago, and after that the concept of free trade and marketing and spread of internet in the former Eastern Bloc and socialist Republics like India and China has changed a new wave of culture everywhere now. Today, nothing is far from us due to the internet through the smartphone, but the problem is, how many of the people are as smart to book the slot of Covid vaccine through the smartphone is a matter of fact. So far, the Indian concept of Anthropology was limited to the world by interacting with the American and British Anthropology, but now time has come to share our ideas with Latin American Anthropology as well, along with European, especially from the Netherlands, where the concept of Levi Strauss and Sol Tax is also relevant. In earlier times, language was a barrier to share ideas with the anthropology of Latin America, but today, Google translator has made it easy for us too. Anthropology in the Netherlands developed in the wake of Oriental studies and in cooperation with Geography and Sociology. Relations with physical anthropology and prehistoric archeology have been weak and are even today virtually non-existent in these areas of Europe and Latin America. Similarly, sociology has also been independent, particularly since the institution in 1963 of the Faculty of Social Sciences at Dutch Universities. From the beginnings, anthropology has had a strong regional orientation towards the study of Indonesia. Eventually, the Mexican Anthropologist like Manuel Gamio, who

was a student of Franz Boas has not been known to the Indian Anthropology students. Manuel Gamio (1883–1960) was a Mexican anthropologist and a leader of the *indigenismo* movement. *Indigenismo* is a political ideology in several Latin American countries which emphasizes the relationship between the nation state and indigenous nations and indigenous minorities. In some contemporary uses, it refers to the pursuit of greater social and political inclusion for indigenous people in Latin America, whether through nationwide reforms or region-wide alliances. In either case, this type of indigenismo seeks to vindicate indigenous cultural and linguistic difference, assert indigenous rights, and seek recognition and in some cases compensation for past wrong doings of the colonial and republican states. Nevertheless, some historical figures like José Martí are classified as having been both Indigenistas (pre indigenous) and Hispanistas (pro Hispanic Indigenous).

Although Gamio rejected full sovereignty for indigenous communities in Mexico, he argued that their self-governing organizations, such as tribal governments, municipal organizations, and elected community leaders should be recognized and respected. He is often considered as the Father of modern anthropological studies in Mexico. He devised a well-known system for classifying the hunter-gatherers of Central America. He returned to Mexico in 1910 and the following year, he was among the founders of the Escuela Internacional de Arqueología y Etnología Americana (International School of Archaeology and Ethnology of the Americas) in Mexico City, with funds obtained from Germany and the United States. Other individuals associated with the school included Eduard Seler, Alfred M. Tozzer and Franz Boas. This was during the Mexican Revolution, and thus was a difficult time to establish new scientific institutions. Gamio was the director of the school from 1916 through 1920, when it was closed for lack of funds. In 1911, he established a ceramic sequence for the Valley of Mexico based on earlier stratigraphic excavations at Azcapotzalco, Mexico City. Between 1913 and 1916, he was Inspector General of Archeological monuments of the Mexican Ministry of Public Education. He performed fieldwork at various places in the Valley of Mexico, including Copilco, Cuicuilco and the Templo Mayor; Chalchihuites, Zacatecas; Yucatán; Ecuador and Miraflores, and Guatemala.

He was the first scientific investigator to explore Teotihuacan, an ancient Mesoamerican city. Teotihuacan is known today as the site of many of the most architecturally significant Mesoamerican pyramids built in the pre-Columbian Americas. At its zenith, perhaps in the first half of the first millennium (1 AD to 500 AD), Teotihuacan was the largest city in the pre-

Columbian Americas, with a population estimated at 125,000 or more, making it at least the sixth-largest city in the world during its epoch. After the collapse of Teotihuacan, central Mexico was dominated by the Toltecs of Tula until about 1150 AD. A result of these investigations was the book *La población del valle de Teotihuacan* (The Population of the Valley of Teotihuacan), published in 1922. A revision of his Columbia thesis, this work is still an important source for ethnographic information on the northern zone of the State of Mexico. He also produced some documentary films. He estimated the maximum population of Teotihuacan at 300,000. He criticized the Mexican census for classifying Spanish-speaking Indians as whites and those married by traditional rites as single.

Earlier, in 1916, he had published the important book *Forjando patria: pro nacionalismo* (Mexico City: Libreria de Porrúa Hermanos) (Forging a Fatherland), a treatise on cultural assimilation of indigenous Mexicans into the racially mixed society of the country. Other works in Spanish include *Hacia un México nuevo* (1935) and *Consideraciones sobre el problema del indigenismo* (1948).

In the 1920s, he investigated the highlands of Guatemala, near the cities of Quiche, Huehuetenango and Quetzaltenango, concentrating on pottery styles. Due to the similarity of pottery from Guatemala and central Mexico, Gamio believed the latter area to be the original source of Mayan civilization. He hypothesized that some of the early natives of central Mexico abandoned that area in search of a place free of earthquakes and volcanoes.

Gamio's publications on Mexico's indigenous were important for "reinstating Anahuac as the glorious foundation of Mexican history and culture." Gamio along with President Lázaro Cárdenas in the 1930s, was the person, who worked for the integration of the indigenous into national life.

Now, after referring to the concept of World issues and Mexican anthropologists, question may arise, why we need to know about that corner of Latin America, which doesn't have much bilateral ties with India except the time of World Cup Football. But the point is that, Latin America is also as diverse as India, from the country we belong and eventually, such concepts help us to understand the issue of cultural diversity and its application in our country. So the concept is known from then world perspectives at present, as during this time of globalization, we have to carry on the idea of think global act local today. Moreover, large parts of Southern USA were parts of Mexico (including Arizona, Texas, California) prior to the war of Mexican American war, and today, from Mexico, the Hispanic illegal migrants often settle in these Spanish speaking states. Due to such issues, the concept of Borderland

Anthropology has been emerged now, from the perspectives of the cultural history in Borderland states, which are sometimes leading to political problems in areas like North East India, Pakistan Punjab border during the 1947 Indian independence, and also, US Mexico border issues. So we need to know about the History and Anthropology of Mexico as well, though not much related to India from bilateral perspectives, but academics have no boundary at all.

Just like India, cultural diversity has been observed in various countries which were earlier thought as homogenous or shown as homogenous by the media prior to the 1990s. Soviets tried to influence the Russian culture and language under the domain of Soviet in the entire Eastern Bloc, America tried to dominate the world through its soft powers, and today, American English has been taught in Latin America and Japan, while former British Colonies are continuing their UK English in teaching. This concept was known as melting pot. However, today, the cultural term melting pot is outdated and it has been seen that no community can abandon their culture totally, and if someone is assimilating fully, then another form of culture is generally formed. So, now the cultural term of salad bowl has emerged. In the salad bowl model, different cultures are brought together, like salad ingredients, but do not form together into a single homogeneous culture; each culture keeps its own distinct qualities. This idea proposes a society of many individual cultures, since the latter suggests that ethnic groups may be unable to preserve their heritage.

So our search for cultural terms and unity will always continuing, where we will be termed as one race, known as Human Being, Humankind, Mankind, or as Homo Sapiens, despite having our various cultural differences.

**Milonjyoti Borgohain**  
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