

Anthropology in Prehistoric Archaeology : The Indian Scene

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The analysis of evidences with a keen eye on adaptation to specific ecologies and allied social imperatives are still not undertaken by specialists in Prehistoric Archaeology working in India. At best one can see evidences wherein some contemporary tribal habits have been merely picked up in the name of Ethnoarchaeology. Anthropologists, both from India and abroad have repeatedly called upon the archaeologists to work out research designs for the interpretation of culture (Binford, 1962; Ray, 1966; Deetz, 1967; Bhattacharya, 1993), yet we have still not been able to make any headway. Consequently we are left with very few specialists in India who are working in the area of stone ages, because here beyond arranging the tools in certain morphological order we have no instrument of analysis of the culture that produced them. I shall try to seek the reasons for this colossal neglect in the fact that we have inherited the system of archaeological studies directly from 19th century Europe where a protracted debate on archaeologists' aims and methods took place during 1840 to 1870.

Experts on British history engaged themselves in the study of the Romans (55 B.C. - 410 A.D.), the Saxons (410 A.D. - 900 A.D.) and the Mediaeval periods. Several tools of analysis as also methods for cultural reconstruction were being constantly developed by the experts engaged in these studies. There was a tacit and unanimous understanding that man did not exist in the British Isles before this time. With the evidences from Cromer forest beds, Clacton-on-sea and Ipswich crags these specialists were initially at a loss to come to terms with the antiquity of man. The methodological tools used to deal with 3000 years old antiquities were no longer of any use to understand antiquities of 400,000 to 200,000 years old. Consequently, although these specialists did not or could not ignore the stone age tools they were unable to under-

stand how they could be put to any use other than to demonstrate the existence of the "tool maker". The presidential address to the British Archaeological Association delivered in 1865 demonstrated this quite succinctly. "The flint implements of Hoxne - the production of an age so distant, that, though satisfactorily demonstrated to our reason, it almost appals our imagination - are true objects of interest to antiquaries," (George Tomline as referred by Bowdin van Riper, 1993). The pre-celtic antiquity and the study of such material remained entirely marginalised for a large number of specialists in the field. More importance was being given to old churches and graves of antiquity. In India this period is paralleled by the rise of interest in studying ruins of Buddhist and Jain period.

At this time a new group emerged. Evans, the geologist, Lubbock, the zoologist and Boyd Dawkins, the palaeontologist combined their expertise to formulate a new archaeology (Lubbock, 1865). This group could conveniently include antiquities from the dawn of mankind till such time as civilizations arose. Their science attested methodologies could not be rejected by even the strict Baconian thinking. This new group had to create a chronological frame work into which the pre-historic antiquities could be slotted. Naturally the antiquities and hence the cultures that produced them were also viewed as geological era, periods and epochs. This in any case enabled them to organise enormous amount of data within a manageable frame. Even the antiquities received a similar kind of treatment albeit in an implicit manner. That is, if a core tool is comparable to an 'order', the chopper, handaxe and cleavers were taken as 'Genus' and each one of these had several 'Species'. Local variations within these antiquity forms could easily be taken to indicate regional facies in the same manner as a taxonomist may describe races. A palaeontologist deals with

hard evidence and then compares his finds with the living animal kingdom to complete or more correctly project the possible form and habit of the animal. The antiquities were likewise taken as the fragmentary evidence from the past and hence extinct cultures. The archaeologists saw no problem in using contemporary hunter-gatherers to reconstruct these cultures.

This method and approach was so popular that in almost all parts of the Old World, prehistoric archaeologists started following the same. India inherited it in totality and enshrined these steps in our national and regional archaeological surveys. Like the Baconian approach of Victorian science Wheelerian (named after Sir Mortimer Wheeler, Director General of Archaeological Survey of India) approach of Indian Archaeology could tolerate no deviation from these prescribed methods. This approach of looking at human culture could not be accepted by most of the culturalists. The viewing of universal cultural stages assumes that man, no matter where his origin is, must have had similar culture at a given time. That is, both time as also nature of changes are taken as more or less predestined. It is nearly as big a fallacy as Proppian or Straussian proposition for folklore. Physical anthropologists, on the other hand, joined the archaeologists in their search for early man. Species and sub-species formation in the line of human ancestry could be conveniently supported by demonstrating cultural changes.

In the absence of an in-depth understanding of the nature of culture we more often than not, propose over-simplistic explanations. Out of the numerous problems created by this lack of concern for understanding culture we find that the most serious one is our inability to explain origin and change. Most of the writings in Indian archaeology show the underlying assumption that man, no matter where he was living, must have gone through the identical process of evolving from one pre-defined stage to another. The traditionally offered causes for these changes have been shown as changes in the environment. An additional fallacy committed by them has been, that like

environmental changes create like results in a stimulus-response manner. This appears to show an uncanny resemblance to Darwin's logic for biological evolution. But, surely, it negates, in fact challenges even Darwin when we argue that a Palaeolithic culture evolves identically and automatically into Mesolithic at two entirely different epochs in an independent manner. This distortion of Darwin only shows our sloppy and unorganized approach in handling explanations in archaeology.

It may be worth our while to look into some of these 'crippled' zones in Indian Archaeology, which are being studiously avoided because of our adamant refusal to incorporate anthropological wisdom in trying to explain the past antiquities. Since a vast amount of antiquities are being discovered every year and are piling up in the various museums and research centers, it will be a pity if we still try to explain them with the age-old approach used during the formative stage described earlier. Maybe an example, at this stage, will demonstrate the point I wish to make.

Palaeolithic studies in India are still preoccupied with the question of inner evolution, as if to seek a parallel with the classical Oldowian evidence. We are so much taken up by evolution, assuming it to be a built-in magical power, that we forget that even in it one cannot order a specific pattern observed almost 1.4 million years ago to repeat itself identically at a later date in a different ecology. So, why seek a chopper-chopping stage preceding the bifaces in India where the earliest lower palaeolithic does not stretch beyond 160,000 B.P. (i.e., nearly 1.8 million years later than the Oldowian evidence). This becomes all the more striking when one can see the evidences of such primary sites as Adamgarh, Chirkhi and Hunsgi showing late Acheulian handaxes and cleavers along with nearly 20-45 per cent pebble choppers/chopping tools staring straight at us. It is evident that we have failed to develop any other alternative model of explanation and hence this embarrassing void continues to exist.

Transformation of any culture can be caused within a large variety of combination

of stresses. Singling out technology as the prime mover in this process may be over simplistic. Culture is like a plastic sheet covering infinite number of cross cutting factors. This tempts me to borrow the concepts of topology from higher mathematics. This plastic medium has the power to rearrange itself in the event of any kind of force operating at that time. Thus, within the same ecology one can find two different communities developing diverse cultures. Every community can have more than one choice in seeking adaptation and hence can create different imperatives in order to operationalize and institutionalize interpersonal behaviour to suit the chosen strategy. Let us briefly discuss some major areas which are cardinal to the understanding of culture change, in order to elucidate this point.

SUBSISTENCE

Food and water requirement are fundamental for all living beings. Man exploits these through the media of technology which when internalized form a part of the cultural skill. A stress in any of these sectors can arise when either climate changes drastically or when it is over exploited. Climate change can cause either migration or changing to broad spectrum adaptation. That is, one shifts from a few K-selected species (which are long maturing large mammals) to a large variety of r-selected species (short maturation smaller species). This change might be reflected in the archaeological record but can be quite puzzling for one who chooses to follow Darwinian gradualism for delineating culture progression. That is, the linear intensification model to explain change is not capable of explaining such a situation. The group organization and interpersonal relation of the members of the group will vastly vary in these two varieties of adaptation.

Over exploitation, in the same manner, has never been sought as an explanation for change. Human population grows in an exponential manner but the rate of biotic regeneration can never keep pace with it. Probably this problem has been taken care of by man by constantly migrating over to larger areas. This

enables man to come back to an already exploited patch after a considerable gap of time when the fresh flowering of the plants starts again. Over exploitation can also occur if migratory range gradually narrows down. This can be caused by an increase of population density within a community. It is near-impossible to demonstrate either of these two causes to explain change in archaeological material. Yet one need not brush them away from active consideration as non-issues. Finally, it will not be out of context to mention a third force operating in every primitive society. One of the most compelling factors in primitive societies has been to obtain mates for their adult members. Some authors (Binford, 1962) believe that this requirement has been more compelling than the requirement of food. The reason for this has been that young and capable hunters from one band can always be lured to join another band which can provide suitable mates. If young men are constantly lost from a natal group then such a group can be reduced to a state of helplessness which can be as dangerous as having a subsistence stress.

DEMOGRAPHY

Man has chosen a pattern of group survival from the beginning of his primate ancestry. Consequently he has to develop a strategy to maintain a balance between the group size and the normal resource retrieval potentiality. This is a tricky problem because he cannot survive if the group size is reduced beyond a limit and yet its increase beyond the cultural capacity can be equally disastrous. In a scarce ecology intensification of resource retrieval can be resorted to with more efficient technology for a while but beyond a limit even technology cannot be intensified without interfering with the social equilibrium. If we can look at some of the ethnographic accounts of living human populations we can count a number of different social behaviours, all probably aimed at ultimately manipulating demography. For example:

- (a) In Tibet a long period of celibacy is practised with adequate ideological dictates. This can avoid stress on subsistence in an

ecology where intensification of production is virtually impossible because of the unproductive ecology.

- (b) In rain-shadow areas of western Rajasthan and Peninsular India female infanticide is socially permitted within traditional and customary sanctions. Uterine destruction, as we know, can also substantially reduce the rate of growth of a population.
- (c) Finally, even polyandry can be used to tie more than one man with one woman. This can drastically reduce average birth rate.

These population management methods are indigenous to a culture and are not archaeologically reconstructable. Yet entertained as cultural realities which may have impact on archaeological change, we might have more realistic explanations for either the presence or absence of change within a given time frame.

SOCIAL COMPLEXITY

That subsistence economy does not maintain itself only on the basis of resource retrieval potentiality is amply demonstrated by such ethnographic accounts as Potlatch among the Kwakiute Indians as also numerous other varieties of ritual feasts known in several other simple societies. It would appear, therefore, that one tries to solve subsistence stress initially by social manipulation rather than at once going for technological intensification. One of the most important features of these social rearrangements involves the creation of obligatory contacts between bands in a variety of ways. Two of the usually practiced methods of developing such spatial network are (i) creating band exogamy and (ii) throwing ceremonial feasts to distant bands. These can create social corridors through which subsistence stress can be channelised. Deluxe stone tools like leaf points, harpoons, fish hooks and the like can also be viewed as objects that have travelled long distances through these social corridors. The latter type of objects, unlike animal flesh and hide had the additional advantage of being viewed as symbolic items which were exchanged to seal loyalties within a large

er social group. Each social group can be viewed as having numerous regional groups and every regional group can have a number of natal groups forming the basic economic unit. The natal groups are exogamous but the regional groups are endogamous. The social group occupies a much larger area which provides more of an ideological definition. The contradictions that can occur between regional groups are solved by establishing network of obligatory behaviour sealed by token material objects. A tangible and non perishable token or object sustains the loyalties beyond a generation and thereby maintains the group identity. Once we entertain this possibility of tools travelling across several bands, the conventional interpretation of tool cluster or site analysis can be entirely misleading. The problem tends to get further complicated if our chronological techniques are unable to differentiate between finer or shorter time differences.

We have briefly gone into issues of subsistence, demography and social complexity as agencies which can influence culture change. Yet we must not take them as mutually exclusive in their role. Any stress arising in one sector can affect the other sectors as well. Governing over all these, is that important factor, which has seldom been adequately considered in archaeological interpretations. This fourth factor is the ideology of a community which directs the choices it makes in deciding the type of changes it prefers within a given circumstance. The primitive mind and its choice for a specific quality of life may not be significantly different from the primates during the initial phases of early erectus stage but from the time he enters into sapien stage particularly during agriculture and bronze period we have numerous examples of cultures having made such diverse choices. The Egyptians with their preoccupation with life after death, the Sumerians with their military emphasis and the Harappans with their reasonably pacifist agrarian economy certainly must have had vastly different imperatives operative for change. Unless an archaeologist gives up the mono-causal explanations and develop multi-causal reasoning model, he can never suc-

cessfully explain the antiquities retrieved through excavations-particularly for post Neolithic sites. For instance, we have so far had no explanation for the rise of Neolithic in one area while in the adjoining regions hunter-gatherers are found to be continuing without any change. It is particularly painful to see the southern and eastern Indian evidence being still analysed with the conventional three fold nomenclature - Mesolithic, Neolithic and Chalcolithic; specially when we get microliths within iron slag or early historic context in these regions in more than one case.

A proper approach to the understanding of Neolithic period, consequently, will entail our understanding of the various constraints that a newly converted Neolithic culture has to face and the possible manner in which these constraints can be solved. If we subscribe to Carl O. Sauer's views (1952), it will appear that change over to agriculture occurred in south east Asia first as a result of incorporating root crops or asexually reproducing plants as a carbohydrate source. Fishing provided the protein source to these communities. This kind of productive economy involves horizontal manipulation of ecology as against seed agriculture which requires vertical manipulation. Obviously such an economy may not show those specific artifacts and actions which have been classically taken as diagnostic markers of settled communities. For instance:

- i) Clearing a plot by burning and/or axing for homogenous cultivation is a pre-requisite for agriculture. This not only requires adequate technology but also a labour contribution. Consequently, every early Neolithic community by this argument would require sturdy axes and also a reasonably close social organization. Polarization of authority and power, at least to a moderate degree, is essential for harnessing labour power. Production economy based on root crops would scarcely require any of these elaborate cultural arrangements. The dwelling units in this form of adaptation also need not be clustered like in the seed cultivation culture.
- ii) This form of agriculture will neither require a labour power nor will it have the need of storing harvest. Hence the social investment for labour management will not be as pressing a need as it would be in seed cultivation. Further, the ceramic need for such a group is reduced to the minimum.
- iii) Finally other forest produce like honey and animal hides can be produced simultaneously from the undisturbed forest. In contrast to this, a community taking up seed cultivation may have to go all the way to create symbiotic relationship with forest dwellers in order to obtain products by exchange.

If one can accept that the Mesolithic communities who flourished in Allahabad, Pratapgarh and other adjoining districts developed a root crop economy in the second millennium B.C. it becomes easier to accept the absence of classic Neolithic cultigen in these sites. Fishing, hunting and collection of honey must have been their expertise.

These communities naturally had no specific need to change for a long time. In fact Nagar and Misra (1989) have listed a great number of these hunter-gatherers surviving even today in this region. Horse-shoe lakes along the middle Ganga and the swamps further east is the homeland of several variety of wild rice which may have also been collected by these communities till very recent period. *Oryza perennes* is one of these rice varieties and at Chirand the husk of this variety has been identified in the ceramics of early Neolithic phase (Kumar, 1988). The settlement pattern, the social organization and even the ideology of this kind of adaptation develops its own features which can not be compared with those of the settlements of seed adaptation elsewhere. Cangam literature has talked about the male god Murugam in the Tamil uplands and the mother goddess in the Tinali or low swamp land. Based on this Sontheimer (1976) has argued that mother goddess is always found associated with rice cultivation while the seed cultivators develop hero gods in contrast. Since, ideology provides the basis of social organization, and further more

since social organization plays a role in maintaining subsistence economy, such investigations might lead one to understand why community A at a given time undertakes a transformation while community B in the neighbourhood may not prefer to do so. However, archaeologically no such reconstruction is yet possible because we can hardly reconstruct the ideology of the owners of a site.

Finally, if one admits at this juncture that management of labour and re-distribution of produce is crucial to the success of any settled economy - one would naturally like to scan the possible ways in which this can be operationalized. Probably one of the earliest method of organizing this was the creation of certain permanent loyalties. I would like to argue that these early settlers had to convert casual mating within bands into the institution of marriage. It could indirectly tie certain members of the group into a frame of social loyalty as also define the Domestic Mode of production. Marriage not only reduced competition for mating but could also have created social bonds loaded with obligatory kinship relations. Thus, one has to view the emergence of sedentism as a whole process of internal ordering of a large non-competitive labour force which could maximise production without any conflict. Probably in the continued process of perfecting this, in the course of time, clan identities and inheritance laws had to emerge. Professionals or craftsmen, under the same logic, must have merged only when the surplus was transferred to power. Such a power can maintain itself by obtaining elitist objects. Archaeologically, therefore, appearance of elitist objects or burials are expected to occur at a time when professionals appear. Homogeneity in ceramic forms and decorations, as such, can be taken as the earliest development of professionals, which in turn is likely to have developed during early chiefdoms. It is only when such homogeneity is witnessed over both time and space that one can surmise the possibility of a statehood. Internal stratification of the power holder, craftsmen, bureaucrats and the producers start getting slowly defined at this stage.

One would naturally like to ask if the indi-

cation of such a complex social order is visible in our archaeological evidences, while the east Indian evidences continue to show dispersed settlements till the Christian era, the southern evidences show another form of economy centered around casual millet cultivation with heavy emphasis on live stock keeping. This was again corroborated by Sontheimer in the case of the Dhangars of Maharashtra. These agro-pastoral communities had to have a social organization which could not afford craftsmen neither could it develop an internal ordering that is characteristic of a chiefdom. Consequently, the viewing of Neolithic of these two regions have to be done in an altogether different frame that has hitherto been done. Semantically also they do not fit the definition of Neolithic because they are not pre-metal either in content or in date of their occurrence. Culturally they do not compare with such Neolithic sites of west Asia as Catal Hüyük, Mehrgarh or Jericho and Jarmo, and hence the use of the term Neolithic for these sites is likely to convey an altogether wrong description of them.

Another disturbing phenomenon which is likely to have been reasonably active in India is the fact that the forest dwelling hunter-gatherers were slowly getting sucked into the labour force of groups with enough surplus at their command. They not only start acting as the servicing agent for forest produce but start quarrying rocks and metal ores for others in exchange of agricultural produce. Such sites when excavated might easily mislead the archaeologist. Thus, one needs to carefully examine all the finer details of the site in order to reconstruct its actual cultural features.

So much has been said about Ethnoarchaeology during this whole century that I think as an anthropologist we need to bring this also in to our discussion. It is more important today, because of the seminar on ethnoarchaeology of South Asia held recently in Cambridge. Allchin edited 19 selected papers of this symposium (Allchin, 1994) under the interesting title *"Living Traditions: Studies in the Ethnoarchaeology of South Asia"*. Continuous disinterest of Anthropologists in India in problems and issues of prehistory has now con-

vinced the archaeologists that they can, on their own, work out anthropology to suit their agenda. This book deals with works of art historians and ancient historians looking at the living traditions of South Asia. Obviously these living traditions are meant to be demonstrated as having an antiquity beyond the pale of history and hence forming a legitimate part of prehistory. Ethnoarchaeology is certainly not meant to describe exotic forms of customs and rituals. Although it may not be necessary, I would like to define this term once again. It means explaining the past society on the basis of a body of generalized knowledge constructed from the ethnography of contemporary living simple societies. May be here an example will illustrate the point. The ground plan of primitive huts from Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic sites in Ukraine have consistently yielded large stones or elephant skulls transported from elsewhere and arranged along the boundary of the hut. These objects, in themselves, can yield no cultural information. Hence traditional methods of archaeology do not even pretend to seek an explanation for this feature. The ethno-archaeology that is being done today can at best show whether such a practice is common over a wider area. Whereas if an ethnography of the area is undertaken we try to link the entire process of hut building with such important factors of social organisation as clan identity, inter clan relationship, family, household, hearth and even the internal organization of the family. Thus, 'ethno-archaeology' should not just aim at merely fixing a range of functions for archaeological structures but go deeper into the realms that govern such functions. There is another serious problem underlying ethno-archaeology as a method. This assumes that socio-cultural changes in mankind occur under the same operative rules irrespective of time and space. Probably these difficulties lead some to propose hypothetico-deductive or HD logic in what got popularly designated as 'New Archaeology'. (Binford and Binford 1966). It is a tool of analysis which should be restricted only to explain the contents within the limits of its context. Cross-cultural comparison on mono-causal ethno-

graphic logic can totally destroy the advantages of this tool.

The general wisdom derived from intensive studies conducted on hunter-gatherers adapted in diverse ecologies can certainly help in building a rich information base. These in turn can help one to direct the kind of questions one should ask from ethnography in order to use them for archaeological explanation. Richard Lee and Irven de Vore (1968) edited a number of such excellent studies, including their own. Such concepts as quick return economy and delayed return economy and the nature of their respective social organizations was initially developed in this work. The efficiency of cultural adaptation could be worked out in terms of the energy output for every unit of energy input. That is, it was found that every one hour of labour input could yield 1400 calories if fish is trapped, 1170 calories if yam is collected, 1000 calories if nuts are collected and 946 calories if palm fruits are collected. (Lee and de Vore, 1968). Naturally one can prepare a food ranking scale for the strategy to be chosen. The nature of environment and the biomass it can carry allows the community to slide up or down the scale. Seasonal peak and lean periods can be taken care of by a social investment of mandatory sharing being incorporated in the ideology. In fact in one of the Australian groups it has been recorded that subsistence efforts are intensified to accumulate a surplus unlike what is believed or projected by the evolutionary stereotypes. And this surplus is entirely used for strengthening of social solidarity during the lean periods.

Although we have no such ethnographic studies available in India, we seem to have not paid adequate attention to a variety of transformation process active till today in Tribal India. This phenomenon shows a possibility of being active from the time Neolithic economy was adopted. This involves the hunter-gatherers acting as suppliers for the settled groups. These formed a variety of palaeoethnic traffic of forest produce and raw material. We have at least two tribal examples with knowledge of iron smelting- The Asurs of Chotanagpur and the Agarias of South East Madhya Pradesh. These groups may have dis-

covered that when fire is kept alive for a long time in pits dug in laterites, the ash acting as reducing agent can create this metal. Yet this tribal knowledge could not enable them to develop a civilization. Their knowledge of the ore, and the manner of extraction of the metal was used by other settled groups who had the required cultural back up. The tribals could, at best, land up as black smiths within the larger culture. The same or similar processes must have been quite active all through the Neolithic period. The example of the celt manufacturing site of Sulabhdhi in Sundergarh district (Behera, 1991-92) should serve as another example of the existence of this kind of a palaeo-ethnic traffic. Most of our classical attributes of analysis like tool types, ceramic types, or metal objects are unable to explain the cultural process beyond a limit. Obviously context and cluster details are the only other alternatives left for us in which to seek the clues to actual activities. Horizontal excavation is a must for this. Above all we have to change our total attitude in the type of answers that we should seek from our excavations. The existence and nature of the finds from such sites as Ganeshwar and Jodhpura falling in the line from the ore mining regions of Jhunjhuna district to the metal using bronze age urban site of Kalibangan in Rajasthan, should tempt any body to demonstrate a palaeo-ethnic traffic. Yet elitist objects like ornaments or other objects of personal adornment found in these, otherwise simple and thatched settlements seem to attract our attention more. Maintaining professionals or importing exogenous raw material require a substantially large surplus as also an ability to manage a large labour force required to produce this surplus. The nature of the mounds and their archaeological character have to be in consonance with such large scale activity which could produce and maintain the surplus. In the absence of this one needs to view these sites in combination with centres of larger population and activity. This requires a total shift in our approach of looking for explanation.

All I am proposing is that without an input of anthropological wisdom, archaeology in India will continue to find what it had been

wanting to find. The status of Savalda, Ocher Coloured Pottery and Copper Hoard cultures are some of the many areas in Indian archaeology which have a crying need of the use of anthropological insights.

KEY WORDS Ecology. Adaptation. Archaeology. India.

ABSTRACT Acculturative and historical factors apart, many cultural and civilizational traits the world over have originated, evolved and taken definite shapes for adaptation of humans to specific environmental components and niches. In contemporary social-cultural situations this construct is more meaningfully evident in case of inhabitants of isolated, difficult and imposing natural conditions where human adaptation, at the level of culture, with environment sounds remarkable. Ladakh, a district of Jammu and Kashmir state of India, represents a valid instance of this kind. The Ladakhi society and its network of cultural patterns speaks of high degree of adaptation to specific environmental paradigm. Both culture and environment are taken in their broad meanings. As interpretive dimension, the theoretical baggage in respect of cultural ecology is critically reviewed in the light of substantivism originating from microsetting of Ladakhis. Prehistoric Archaeology in India has made tremendous success in terms of discovering a large number of very important sites. The excavations of these sites and the analysis of the antiquities retrieved are also meticulously executed. Yet we have still not been able to identify the exact cultural status of any region of a time or the manner of dispersal of one chosen economy through time and space. The paper argues that this colossal neglect is primarily because archaeology in India still follows the Geo-zoological methodology evolved during 1840-1870. The Universal approach of a three fold division of the past cultures adopted in Britain by Lubbock, Evans and Boyd and modified by Gabriel de Mortillet in France arrived in India and shaped the official charter of the survey of India. This Lubbockian approach was acceptable to the then existing environment of Baconian Science in Great Britain but in course of time cultureologists could bring out inner contradictions arising in this approach. However, in India no deviation from this Lubbockian straight-jacket could be tolerated. Unfortunately the nature of the archaeological evidences from India also does not help this kind of an over simplistic approach to arrange the prehistoric cultures. In the early thirties right through sixties and seventies we have been faithfully replicating the terms Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Chalcolithic to describe our finds. The present work argues that this approach will not be able to help us in understanding adaptation, population dispersal, culture change or even causes of change operative during our prehistoric past. Consequently Anthropologists should start getting involved in atleast the interpretation of these archaeologically described 'cultures'. In this regard the status of Hunter-Gatherer studies also need to be specially geared to understand resource retrieval potentiality, energy efficiency and above all the pattern of social investments used by Hunter-Gatherers to take care of stress periods. There are numerous awkward problems in prehistory of

India to which the archaeologists have stopped paying any attention. Anthropologists need to sharpen their tools of analysis and take up these issues for future studies.

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