

## 1.1 MEANING, SCOPE & DEVELOPMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY

Anthropology is the study of the origin, development, and nature of the human species. The word "Anthropology" is a combined form derived from the Greek terms "**anthropos**" (human being) and "**logos**" (study) and can be translated as "the study of humanity". Anthropology is not just the study of human beings. It is the study of human beings living in societies and following distinctive ways of life labeled "culture". The study of anthropology weaves together the findings of its various branches to provide an explanation of the development and nature of human cultures.

Anthropology is considered as the most comprehensive of all the sciences dealing with man. An inherent curiosity of man about himself was the prime factor influencing the emergence of a discipline that systematically studies mankind. For as long as humans have been on earth, they have wondered about who they are, where they came from and why they act the way they do. Much of the human history, according to anthropologist Haviland, has resulted from the efforts of people to answer these basic questions. Because of the limits of knowledge and technology, throughout most of their history, people were unable to accumulate an extensive and reliable body of data concerning their own behavior and background. Hence, they have relied on bodies of myth and folklore to answer these questions. Anthropology, over the last 200 years, is the naturalistic approach to answering these questions people ask about themselves.

Anthropology defines itself as a discipline of infinite curiosity about human beings. Anthropologists seek answers to an enormous variety of questions about humans. They are interested in discovering when, where and why humans appeared on the earth, how and why they have changed since then, how and why modern human populations vary in certain physical features. Anthropologists are also interested in how and why societies in the past and present have varied in their customary ideas and practices.

The definition and the meaning of Anthropology was not always the same since the time it was envisioned for the first time. Anthropology had a slow growth owing to factors like highly restricted geographical wanderings of the people and lack of understanding the non-European cultures by many earlier travelers. The definitions of various scholars given at different periods of time reveal the evolution of the meaning and scope of this discipline.

### ***Definition of Anthropology***

Aristotle is referred to as the father of anthropology. He is considered as the first anthropologist who coined, defined and explained the term "anthropology". He defines anthropology as the gossip that revolves around man and the anthropologist as the gossip who talks about himself.

Anthropology was beginning to be nourished in the philosophical faculties in the universities of Germany between the 14th and 17th centuries. During this period, anthropology was defined as the systematic study of man as a physical and moral being. The physical aspect of man includes the biological conditions of man while the moral aspects are the intangible characteristics of man like the beliefs, morals, ethics and ideals of mankind, which also includes the political, economic and social life.

The 18th century witnessed the publication of the book titled "Anthropology" by a well known German philosopher Emmanuel Kant. In this book Kant defines anthropology as a study which describes and explains the animal origins, social as well as cultural development and progress of man. According to this definition, anthropology is considered as a discipline concerned with the study of human origin and biological evolution and also the human cultural and social development. In fact, it was Kant who identified for the first time that man had an animal origin and his biological complexity is the result of evolution.

During the beginning of 19th century, Encyclopedia Britannica defined anthropology as a discipline devoted to a discourse on human nature. Since human nature is a complex phenomenon, it can be inferred from this definition that anthropology is equally inquisitive about human biology, human culture and human society. It is the biological evolution of man which contributed to the cultural evolution and