

Global Problems and Anthropology

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Abstract: *NOW we are facing the biggest threat from climate change, terrorism, Natural events such as floods, droughts, earthquakes, and insect infestations are becoming abnormal to normal in this days, (Kerala flood), new type of war like trade war, climate change and abnormal weather patterns are become the normal in now a days and we are facing biggest threat from a corona pandemic which is also emerged from the changing relationship with animals because of climate change, deforestation, and industrial breeding , for example corona also emerged by the eating the bats meat. Almost every day, the news makes us aware that terrible social problems threaten people around the world. War, crime, family violence, natural disasters, poverty, famine—all these and more are the lot of millions of people in many places. And now there is an increasing threat of terrorism. Can anthropological and other research help us solve these global social problems? Many anthropologists and other social scientists think so. Applied anthropology is the application of the methods and theory of anthropology to the analysis and solution of practical problem. In this paper in first section, discussion is on the introduction to the applied Anthropology and how corona virus is related to the climate change. In the second section, discussion is on the main part of the essay like natural events, terrorism, war and climate change, and how these main global social problems. Third section is conclusion*

Keywords: anthropology, global problem, pandemics, terrorism, war

1. Introduction

1.1 Applied Anthropology

Applied anthropology is the aspect of anthropology that serves practical community or organizational needs. In Europe this subfield started in the 19th and early 20th centuries, when ethnographic information was collected and used by colonial Belgian, French, British, Dutch, and Russian administrators. In North America the Mexican government in 1917 was the first to officially recognize its usefulness.

2. Natural Events, Disasters, Climate Change and Famine and Anthropology

2.1 Natural Events

Natural Events such as floods, droughts, earthquakes, and insect infestations (corona –covid -19) are usually but not always beyond human control, but their effects are not. Normally everyone think that natural disasters are not related to the anthropological concepts but if we look in deeper relations every natural disaster is related to its anthropological origin.

For example, between 1980 and 2002, the United States had slightly more earthquakes than India. Yet over 32,000 people died in those earthquakes compared to about 140 people in the United States, by this example we can say that richer countries have lower death tolls even though there is more exposure to natural disaster than the poor countries. The vast majority of the deaths occurred in the lower income countries, so social environment will impact on the natural events, even though recent corona virus outbreak in china also has its origin from climate change and natural food habits of the peoples.

Rich countries can build the better houses which can withstand with the earthquake and they can minimize the earthquake caused death, but poor countries cannot afford financially for the better house constructions, the poor are forced to live in hillsides (like those of Rio de Janeiro), the floods and landslides that follow severe hurricanes and rainstorms can kill thousands and even hundreds of thousands. Thus, because natural events can have effects on human life, depending on social conditions, they are also social problems, problems that have social causes and possible social solutions.

One might think that floods, of all disasters, are the least influenced by social factors, but if we look through the example of the **Hwang River Flood in china(1931)** , **Kerala floods in India in 2019** , both cost the millions of worth property and lives loss , The floods in the Hwang River basin have occurred mostly because the clearing of nearby forests for fuel and farmland has allowed enormous quantities of silt to wash into the river, raising the riverbed and increasing the risk of floods that burst the dams that normally would contain them. The risk of disastrous flooding would be greatly reduced if different social conditions prevailed—if people were not so

Dependent on firewood for fuel, if they did not have to farm close to the river, or if the dams were higher and more numerous.



Figure 1: Representational image of Kerala flood

2.2 Famine

Social conditions can prevent a famine or increase the likelihood of one, not only physical environment, Consider what is likely to happen in Samoa after a hurricane and The 1974 famine in the African Sahel occurred after eight years of bad weather; a combination of drought, floods, and a civil war in 1983 to 1984 contributed to the subsequent famine in the Sahel, Ethiopia, and Sudan. Famine almost always has some social causes.

Famine can occur in countries that have adequate food but that fail to distribute it to populations with severe food stress, for this best example is the Indian PDS system, the unequal distribution of the food is leading to the starvation of female than male Lower-class and lower-caste families still suffer the Most. By this we can say that famines caused not only the physical environment, lack of food production but famine will only result if social support networks, governments, or the international community provide inadequate help.

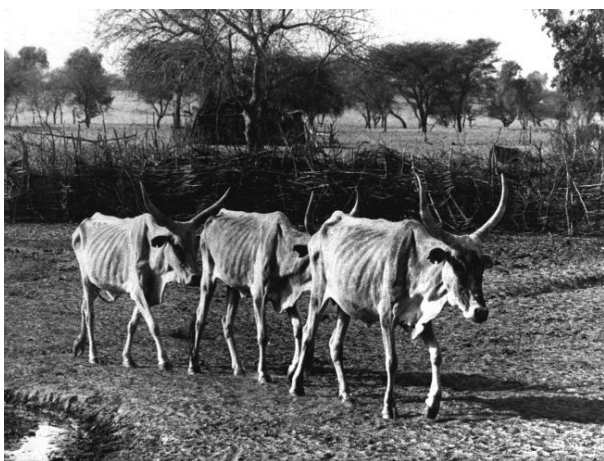


Figure 2: Representational image

3. Terrorism

Ever since September 11, 2001, when terrorists crashed airliners into the World Trade Center towers in New York City and into the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, people all over the world realize that terrorism has become a social problem globally.

Recent pulwama attack (India), Indonesia church bombing etc proved that it is painfully clear that organized groups of terrorists can train their people to kill themselves and

thousands of others half a world away; not only by hijacking airliners and flying those into skyscrapers but also by using easily transported explosives and biological weapons.

For anthropologist main questions to answer are **what is terrorism, and how shall it be defined? How long has terrorist activity been around? What are the causes of terrorism? What kinds of people are likely to become terrorists? And what are the consequences of terrorism?**

Most researchers agree that terrorism is define as the “The use or threat of violence to create terror in others, usually for political purposes”, crime can be socially organized too, as, for example, in what we call “organized crime.”, when governments support death squads and genocide against their own civilians, some scholars call this “state terror. We to call the activities of some governments that support secret operations against other countries it is referred to as “state-sponsored terrorism”

We still lack much systematic research that explains why terrorism occurs and why people are motivated to become terrorists. But there is a good deal of research about state terrorism. Political scientist R. J. Rummel estimates that governments have killed nearly 262 million people in the 20th century (the early and middle 20th century, the dictator Joseph Stalin ordered the execution of many millions of people who were considered enemies of the Soviet state. Six million Jews and millions of other innocents were exterminated by the German Third Reich in the 1930s and 1940s.) , the Khmer Rouge regime in Cambodia topped them all, killing over 30 percent of its population from 1975 to 1978.

Rummel call the all the states as totalitarian governments, and put is as “power kills; absolute power kills absolutely.” Democratic countries are less likely to practice state terrorism, but when they do, it occurs during or after a rebellion or a war. Terrorism is more likely to occur in totalitarian regimes, terrorists and terrorist groups may be more likely to occur in such societies. If so the spread of democracy may be our best hope of minimizing the risk of terrorism in the world, just as the spread of democracy seems to minimize the likelihood of war between countries.

As per anthropologist that terrorists often come from higher social statuses and generally have more education than the average person, and also found that the most deadly terrorist organizations, they do tend to occur in countries that are lower in measures of human development, that have poor records of political rights and civil liberties, and that have higher Concentrations of young people, from these countries more young people are becoming as the terrorists rather developed and high human development countries.



Figure 3: Representational images

4. War

War is armed combat between warriors or soldiers from two different political communities, use weapons are socialization for armed combat. The warfare that occurs over a period of time between two rival entities (political communities or alliances) constitutes a “warfare system.” most societies in the ethnographic record had frequent armed combat among communities or larger units that spoke the same language, Even some wars in modern times involved speakers of the same language. Warfare in the ethnographic record did not usually involve politically unified societies. The absolute numbers of people killed may have been small, but this does not mean that warfare in nonindustrial societies was a trivial matter. Indeed, it appears that nonindustrial warfare may have been even more danger than modern warfare, judging by the fact that wars killed **from 25 percent to 30 percent of the males** in some nonindustrial societies.

In nonindustrial society’s warfare is related to the climate change disasters, it is not purely direct related to natural disaster but it seems that people may be motivated to fight mostly by fear of future loss. If so, we would expect them to take resources when they win. And they do. The relationship between climate change and war has been analyzed over centuries in both China and Korea. Armed conflict appears to be greater in periods of worsening climate and more frequent disasters. Mistrust or fear of others seems to be partly caused by threat or fear of disasters.

As in nonindustrial societies, war is likely to occur in times of stress like disaster, lack of resources (lack of resources to maintain standing army), but in modern societies warfare Reasons are changed to different origins like oil, trade and boundaries (land and sea boundaries), in recent times we are witnessing the trade war between the china and USA. Recent

research suggests that civil wars are predicted by the per capita income of the country—all of the wars today are in poorer regions.

Threat of disasters and poverty both indicate that people face risks to their livelihoods. War is one way to try to obtain resources, but the costs are enormous. But we may be coming to realize (since the end of the Cold War) that war is not the only way to ensure access to resources. There May be a better way in the modern world, a way that is more cost-effective as well as more preserving of human life.



Figure 4: Representational images

4.1 Ethnic Conflicts

In the period after World War II, ethnic conflicts appeared to rise dramatically and reached a peak in the early 1990s. Violent conflicts erupted between ethnic groups in the former Yugoslavia, Russia, and Spain (in Europe), Rwanda, Sierra Leone, and the Sudan (in Africa), and in Sri Lanka and Indonesia (in Asia)—to name just a few of the many instances. Such conflicts are often thought to be intractable and inevitable because they are supposedly based on ancient hatreds. But is that true?

Social scientists are a long way from understanding the conditions that predict ethnic conflicts, but they do know that ethnic conflicts are not necessarily ancient or inevitable. For example, anthropologists who did fieldwork in the former Yugoslavia in the 1980s described villages where different ethnic groups had lived side by side for a long time without apparent difficulty.

Anthropologist suggest that authoritative governments are

more likely to involve in the war, than that people in more participatory—that is, more “democratic” political systems the democratic systems rarely go to war with each other, they are as likely to go to war as are other kinds of political systems, but not so much with each other. For example, the United States has gone to war with Grenada, Panama, and Iraq all authoritarian states but not with democratic Canada.

democracy around the world will in the long run minimize the risk of war. However, change in political systems is not easy or simple. In fact, societies transitioning to democracy are more prone to ethnic conflict and civil war. Encouraging nations to be more interdependent economically, and the spread of international nongovernmental organization to provide informal ways to resolve conflicts would also minimize the risk of war.

The latest cross-national evidence suggests that extending

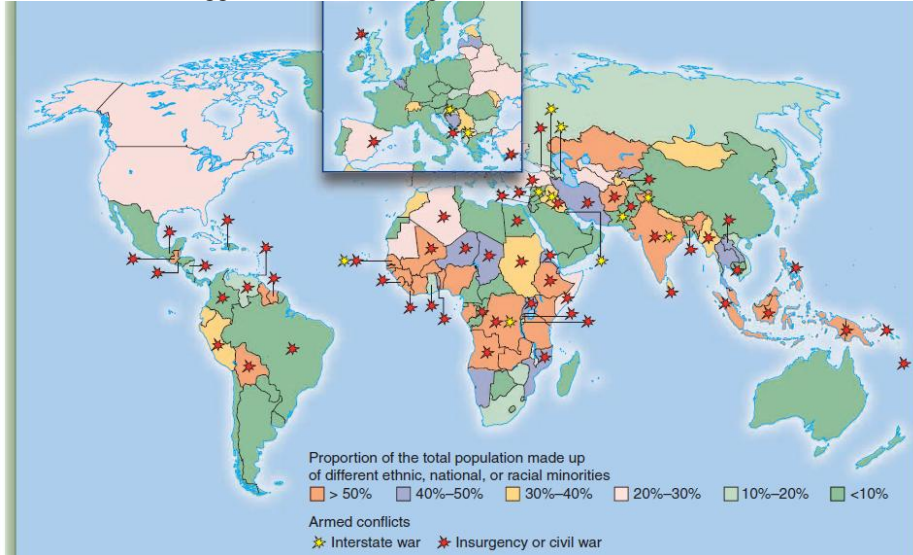


Figure 5: proportion of the total population made up of different ethnic, national, or racial minorities across globe

5. Climate Change

Climate change becoming the biggest problem in the recent times and recent witness of corona pandemic shows the importance of tackling the climate change. As anthropologist research shows that urban areas becoming the concrete forest and hotspot areas for the epidemics outbreak.

Our changing relationship with animals because of climate change, deforestation, and industrial breeding. For example, one concern about corona virus is that it is carried by bats. And bats are coming closer to human habitats because of deforestation. So, we also need to think not only about our relationships with China as an emerging power, but also with bats as reservoirs for viruses. Bats were imagined as medieval devils in the 19th century when many European nations saw massive migrations from rural areas to cities, but they are familiar neighbors in the countryside, and they are moving closer to urban areas because of deforestation. We now also realize we have much to learn about how bats manage to live with viruses, because bats have very good immune systems and they can share viruses in colonies much better than we do

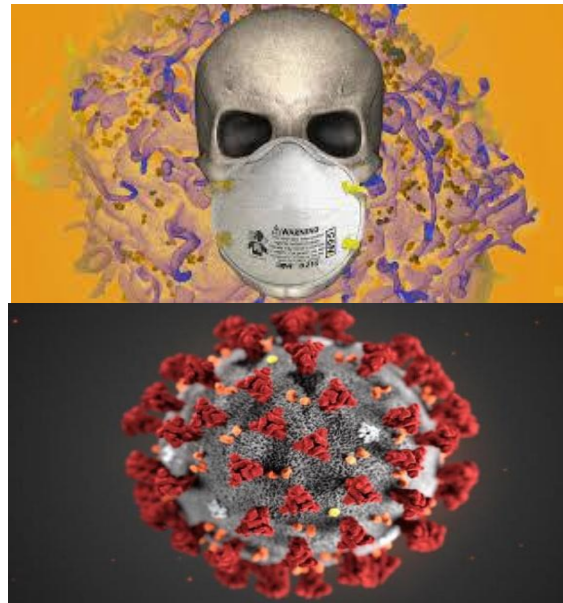


Figure 6: Representational images related to Corona virus

6. Conclusion

Now a day’s epidemics and abnormal weather patterns are becoming the normal because of the climate change, as normal people believe that anthropology is mostly related to the ethnography, and studying human evolution, but today we can apply the anthropology to the recent emerging global problems, like natural events, disasters, climate change, war, terrorism, Gender equality, discrimination etc.

As we discussed above we can say that natural disaster, war

and terrorism, all are interrelated and they impacted by the social environment and that social environment can study by the anthropologist and can minimize the risk of the global social problems

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Author Profile

Shankar Gugoloth received the B.Tech in Production Engineering from National Institute of Technology – Trichy in 2016, during 2016-2018; he worked in Bank of America, as the Senior Technical Associate, He now studying the Masters in Political Science from University of Hyderabad, 2019-2021.