

**INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY GUWAHATI**

**NPTEL**

**NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE  
An initiative of MHRD**

**Ecology and Society**

**By**

**Dr. Ngamjahoo Kipgen  
Department of Humanities and Social Sciences  
Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati**

Well we have to discussed so far what are the kinds of the efforts which is normally being in the context of human ecology cultural anthropology and how they try to represent an actions of human interactions with their environment in this lecture we are going to see something slightly different from what we have been discussed in the previous lectures and we will try to locate and understand how nature and culture is being perceived in that the domain of academia.

And only more importantly why nature and culture is closely examined by many of the en topologies and we will be looking at the some of the works of Defense en topologies like Larry Stroud and also the critic which is given by threatened and for long this nature and culture these two concepts has been a contested concept.

And which is also closely examined by latitude but I would not be touching on that aspect of what Later has argued or looked at but one thing is very clear and evident that how modernity in essence also has post effect or if not it is not as we conceptualized the idea but nature is and in the modern development context nature in essence is seen to be something different from what it used to be in the earlier times.

So therefore it is important to look you know what nature and culture is and how is being perceived across different perspectives now before going on to the understandings or the debate which evolved around nature and culture let us familiarize ourselves with some of the best concept.

(Refer Slide Time: 03:02)

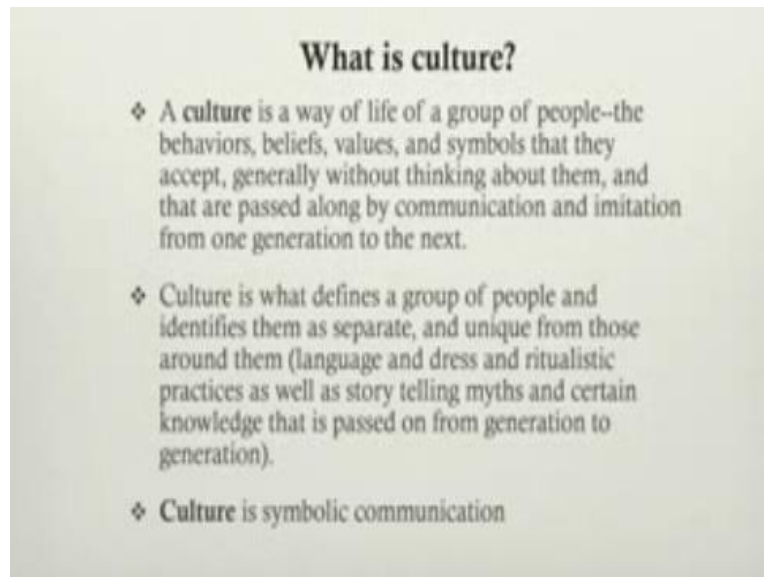
## Nature and culture

- ❖ The nature–culture divide refers to a theoretical foundation of contemporary anthropology. Early anthropologists sought theoretical insight from the perceived tensions between **nature** and **culture**.

Of why nature and culture is seen to simply four different things and most often times it is divided with exists between the two is also because of a charitable foundation which is formed in a context of the disciplines of anthropology because earlier many of the anthropologists in fact attempts to bring a theoretical insight from the perceived differences between these two that is between nature and culture now what then is nature in the very general Cambodians is the natural physical or material world or universe.

And also nature can believe for as refer to the phenomena of physical world and also the life in general now this study of nature is in fact large part of science the natural science normally tend to engage in studying or looking at nature in amore closed aspect, now what then is culture I have partly explained the conceptual definitions of culture in some of the lectures in the previous slide.

(Refer Slide Time: 04:50)



Now button two cameras are so and to engage in more in-depth understanding we will just quickly look at what culture is and what it means to a community a culture in essence is a way of life of a group of people now what is this way of life over for people it confuses the behavior beliefs values symbols that are accepted but other members of the community and this sort of practices that is the behavior belief values and symbols are passed on from one generation to another which is usually handed down orally it is communicated orally.

And it is more or less based on kind of imitation what is being sort of learned as a part of a socialization process and also culture can be defined as how a group of people to identify them as separate from other cultural groups and also how they tend to sort of group themselves or form some kind of an association rather or associate or that community and feelings of a people is being formed in this context.

Now what are the displayed of different things one group from the other they can be certain traits like language dress and also ritually ritualistic practice or maybe ceremonies depending on the kind of what one celebrate and also there are traditions of these story telling is usually being handed down from the peers of the ancestors.

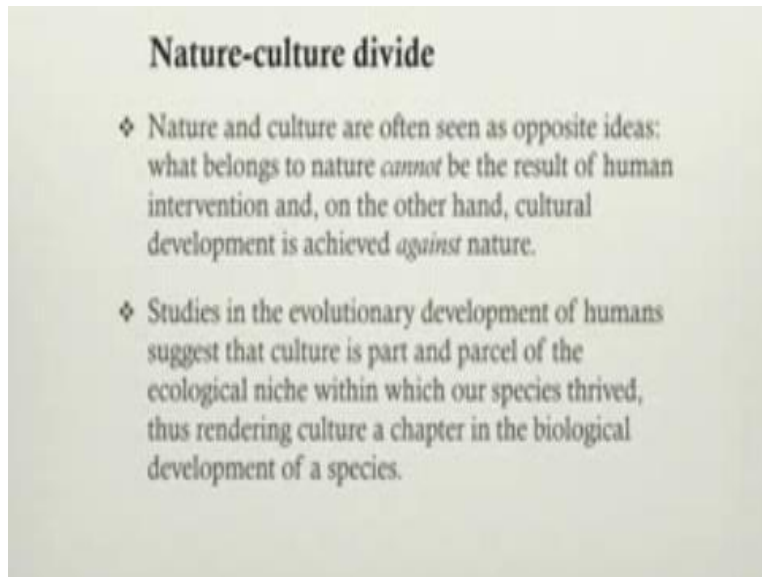
Now these are something which also the cultural trait which defines a group of people in trying to make sense of what they actually are and we can in essence use the term called cultural identity in experience and also culture is partly a symbolic communication because in symbolic communication they can be verbal and nonverbal they can be gestures and also there can be sort of objects which are being used in order to communicate.

Now let us browse talked about the use of this metaphor now how this metaphor is being decode or understood by the person to whom this message is being conveyed now this sort of metaphor which is being used in a particular community or society could only be understood if it has to be understood in that particular context the meaning has to be decoded in that particular context therefore this in order to have a symbolic effective symbolic communication or to have an effective understanding it is important to understand things in it is very context.

Now moving on what is this nature and culture divide or what is the difference between nature and culture now nature and culture for quite long or if not have been seen as an opposing opposite ideas and what actually belongs to nature cannot be the result of human intervention or in other words human cannot really afford to understand or inter them in the context of what nature what belongs to nature and on the other hand this sort of culture development is still to be achieved again nature.

Now constants the kind of development which we all normally talked about or may be let this civilization is seem to be something according to what nature is because some way or the other will engage in bringing destruction if not harmful effect to nature therefore any kind of move for example cultural development or will be any kind of economic development is seem to be achieved generally as against nature. Now if one tries to look at the kind of evolutionary development of human now in this aspect the emotional development of humans it suggests.

(Refer Slide Time: 10:58)



That culture is seen as part and parcel of the ecological niche within which our species prime that is the human or maybe other species thus rendering in a way culture as an important place in the biological development of species now why is this what is this ecological myth and why is ecological niche important for humans to thrive or if humans to sort of exist as part of this biological development of species.

(Refer Slide Time: 11:40)

### Culture as an ecological niche

- ❖ Culture is part and parcel of the *ecological niche* within which humans live. (E.g. Snails carry their shell; we bring along our culture).
- ❖ Cultural transmission is also *horizontal*, that is among individuals within the same generation or among individuals belonging to different populations.

Now as we had earlier discussed sort of the evolutionary perspective which were developed by trust or being Herbert Spencer so and so we have sort of witnessed the kind of development which is seen in the context of human societies from simple to more modernized if not a complex form now similarly why is this possible or if not what is the kind of impact which is usually seen in the context of culture in an ecological niche.

Now what is this ecological niche and why is culture seen as part of this because ecological niche is the environment of the habitat the geographical space where we humans in essence exist now to put or precisely or in a more apt manner we can say that in the environment to determine is not we had discussed how the environment in essence with a mind humans to a large extent or maybe the kind of culture economy aspect everything is in a sense being mined by the environment.

Now going by that to some extent we humans also pretty much in fluencies by the radical space or the ecological niche which where we belong to and as I give an example here as the skills carries their cell along we all human also bring a long our culture now in the place where we sort of recite now there will be a long sort of history of engagement of how this culture developed but

then the idea is to look at the continuity and chains of culture by saying so with not mean to say that culture is static but there is a continuity in Chains in every aspect of culture that is a be the behavior the kind of beliefs and then so on and so forth.

Therefore this cultural transmission is also known or seen to be horizontal that is among the individuals within the same generations or also it can be among the individuals belonging to different populations so this transmission of culture is taking place in a more horizontal manner now what is this cultural environment social environment again is a set of beliefs and practices custom behaviors that are found to be common to every individual that is living within a certain population within a certain ecological meet again.

Now the culture environment in essence sets the way how an individual's developed also it also influenced the ideologies and personalities of those members of the society now again what is this meaning and neither of culture it is not nature and culture but the nature of what culture is culture is an aggregate of the land beliefs attitudes values norms and customs of a society or group of people here to buy them.

(Refer Slide Time: 16:00)

### Meaning and Nature of Culture

- ❖ Culture is an aggregate of the learned beliefs, attitudes, values, norms and customs of a society, or group of people, shared by them and transmitted from generation to generation within that society.
- ❖ Culture too changes with time.

And transmitted from generation to generation within their society and also as I said culture is not static and it changes with time.

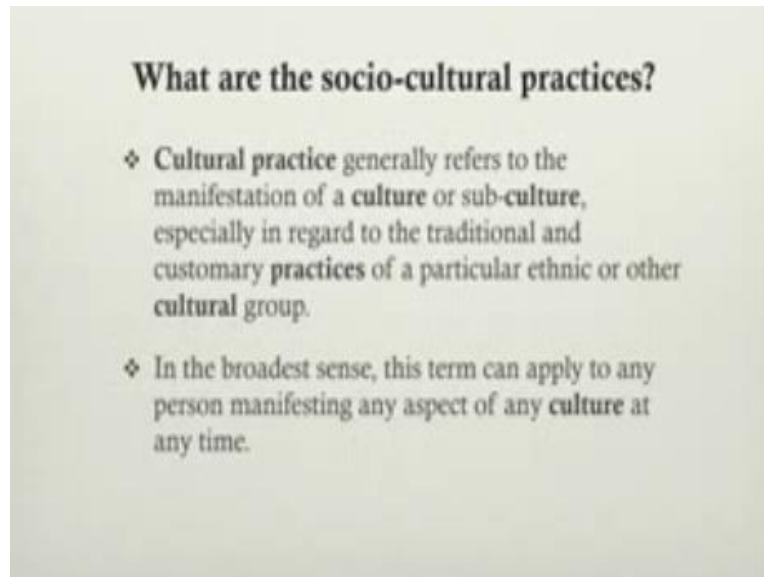
(Refer Slide Time: 16:15)



Then what is the meaning of our social culture similarly it is again the kind of beliefs and customs or practices and behavior there exist within a population and it also includes an examination of the socio-cultural environment prior to entering their target markets.



(Refer Slide Time: 16:42)



Now we generally talked about the kind of socio-cultural practices which is normally being in the context of different human communities and what is the socio-cultural practices and what does it in could in general problems it is also seen to be in regard to the traditional and customary practices of a particular ethnic or other cultural group now in a broader sense this term can apply to any persons manifesting any aspect of any culture at any time.

Now as I said culture is also symbolic communication and what is the meaning of symbols in culture human cultures use symbols in the sort of the beginning of human society as they move on and develop and even in the simplest society they use these symbols why because to express certain specific ideologies and the kind of social structures and also to represent aspects of their specific culture.

Now symbols in essence carries different meanings that dependent of their depend upon once cultural background and in other words the meaning of symbol is not inherent in the symbol itself but is culturally learned now therefore a symbol cannot be something which is observed and understood by an outsider without really knowing the cultural background of those communities.

(Refer Slide Time: 18:42)

## What are the agricultural practices in agriculture?

- ❖ Cultural methods are agriculture practices used to enhance crop and livestock health and prevent weed, pest or disease problems without the use of chemical substances.

Now four examples are if I may give a sort of an explanation father of agriculture practices which usually happened in agriculture there are also cultural methods which involves in this is called the practices to enhance the crop and livestock health and prevent with baseball and without the use of chemical substances now these cultural methods can be different and I would not go in details at this point of time.

(Refer Slide Time: 19:17)


### What is the relationship between 'nature' and 'culture'?

- ❖ How have anthropologists theorized the relationship between "nature" and "culture? Why has nature/culture been such a central and contested conceptual pair in the discipline?
- ❖ The relationship between nature and culture has been a common and contested theme in the discipline due to the argument of **whether the nature-culture dichotomy is a given universal or a constructed reality relative to one's own culture.**

Now we are coming to the main point that is how this dialectics if not the contested ideas which exists between this nature and the culture is to be understood or what is the relationship between nature and culture and then why is there so much increasing attention ignored in academia to try to sort of understand and for this particular course how has innocence the end so police theorize this relationship between nature and culture and why has nature or culture being such essential and fantastic conceptual pair in the discipline.

Why is it given so much importance and the relationship between nature and culture has been a common and contested theme in the discipline give to the argument of whereas to whether the nature is called the dichotomy is given universal or a constructed reality relative to once own culture now this is perhaps one of the starting point of.

(Refer Slide Time: 20:38)



❖ According to Susan Ortner, "much of the creativity of anthropology derives from the tension between the demands for explanation of human universals on the one hand and cultural particulars on the other." (1972, p. 5)

Why this nature culture is given so much importance or a dichotomy is given so much importance now looking at the works of our Susan's Ortner now what the children Ortner observed is that much of the creativity of this and properly derived from the tension between the demands of the demands for explanations of human universal's on the one hand and cultures particular on the other now this sort of the universal and the particulars is sort of being responsible for this kind of the tension which arises and normally and this sort of attempts to explain in essence Susan's tries to put it in order to make sense or the starting point of what nature and culture debate is.

(Refer Slide Time: 21:43)

## How do anthropologists perceive a difference between nature and culture?

- ❖ French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss was firm in the argument of a divide, writing that there existed "only two true models of concrete diversity: one on the plane of nature, namely that of the diversity of species, and the other on the cultural plane provided by the diversity of functions." (1962, p. 124)

Now how does the anthropologist perceive the difference between nature and culture and will try to as I said will try to look at some of the work of Lévi-Strauss and properties and he actually published his work on the savage mind where he tries to look at the sort of dichotomy between in concrete science and the science of primitive people the primitive Society and it is a very interesting work and then he follows the structural functionalist perspective or more of a structured list Lévi-Strauss they seem to be following more of a structure list in his structuralism in his explanation of defend societies and communities.

Now he Lévi-Strauss was quite firm when he argued the sort of divide which exists between nature and culture only two models where I quote only through two models of concrete diversity one on the plane of nature namely death of the diversity of species that is the diversity of species and on the other hand that is the cultural plinth which provided by the diversity of function.

Now this sort of things which he looked at one is the function and on the other hand is the species now which he tries to look at that is the he try to begin with the argument of dividing between what nature and culture is now according to Lévi-Strauss again the sort of symmetry

postulated between this nature and culture involves the assimilation of natural species on the cultural plane.

(Refer Slide Time: 24:11)

- ❖ According to Levi-Strauss, "the symmetry postulated between nature and culture involves the assimilation of natural species on the cultural plane." (1962, p. 124-125)
- ❖ So who is the 'natural species' he refers to? It seems that his writing, coming from *The Savage Mind*, reflects the discipline's expansion of the nature—culture debate in the 1960s and 1970s to include the idea that **women could be symbolized as nature and men as culture.**

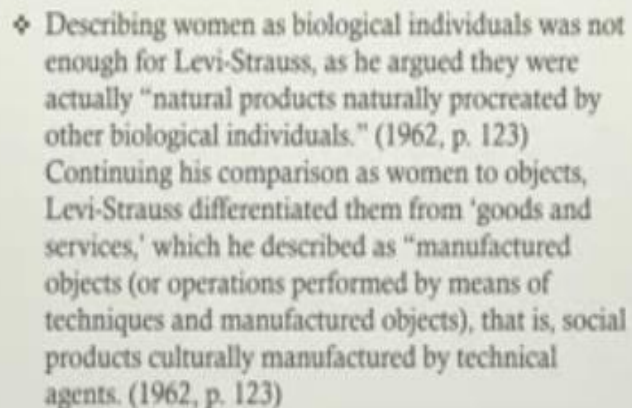
Now how is this to be look at them how it is natural species to be assimilated on the cultural plane and then he is and what is this natural species he is referring to in his work as I said in the savage mind reflect that the discipline expansion of nature called the debate where they can in the 60's and 70's include the idea that women could be sort of symbolized as nature and men as culture now in essence we can see this as more of essentialist approach to understanding of needs and culture or if not the gender divide between men and women.

Now what the essentially school of thought talks about in trying to understand this gendered division is because of the biological structure and biological responses human tends to you know like sort of whole opposition if not the data sees being accorded accordingly now essentialism strongly talks about women as the weaker sex because of here sort of pre conceived notion or ideas of what women should be and then sort of seem to be more of not engaged in nurturing and caring.

And therefore there are seen to be something which is inferior to men now I am just partly trying to throwback reflect the ideas of what the school of this essentially if not essentially looked at this sort of division because as which is rightly pointed out by Levi Strauss when he talks about this the expansion of this nature any calls away beckoned 60's and 70's and when he tries to include the idea that women could be symbolized nature and men as culture why because in essence the women is equated with nature.

And they are seen to be something which is being inferior or weak when man is seems to be much more it has an overriding power of nature that is women, so this sort of essentialist idea is being reflected here.

(Refer Slide Time: 27:11)



❖ Describing women as biological individuals was not enough for Levi-Strauss, as he argued they were actually "natural products naturally procreated by other biological individuals." (1962, p. 123)  
Continuing his comparison as women to objects, Levi-Strauss differentiated them from 'goods and services,' which he described as "manufactured objects (or operations performed by means of techniques and manufactured objects), that is, social products culturally manufactured by technical agents. (1962, p. 123)

Now by describing these women as sort of our biological individuals was not adequate for Levi Strauss as he argued they were actually sort of a byproduct of the nature or natural products which are naturally procreated by sort of other biological individuals now let me Strauss does not stop here he continued with his company as women through object and also his entrance to sort of differentiate them from goods and services which he described as manufactured objects or

operations performed by means of techniques and manufactured objects that is social products culturally manufactured by technical agents.

Now in a way it is pretty clear that how women is sort of being compared to objects object is something which is being team molded and then created if not manufacture according to the kind of the requirement and who is this technical agent and it is in some way it is the man who innocents mastermind in trying to sort of engage in this operations now this natural product with our natural appropriated by other biological individuals these other biological individuals again is the man.

Now before going here I would like to sort of talk about the kind of since we talk about objects and roots I will try to inject some ideas which we of course will deal with it in a later part of the discussion when we talk about this environmental ethics there is a sort of a school of thought again which belongs to the eco-feminist and within this eco families there is a division which are pretty much more inclined to the Marxist eco-feminist and this the eco-feminist be subscribed to the noxious understanding of the economic production again tends to come up with an idea if not an argument.

That women is easily being doubly exploited by men or is not in general how because when they give an example about the agricultural community usually apart from the agricultural activity women also and get in some additional household is not the domestic course like cooking caring nurturing but with innocence remained unaccounted and similarly see in a way sort of do the kind of work in it same with her counterparts that is demand.

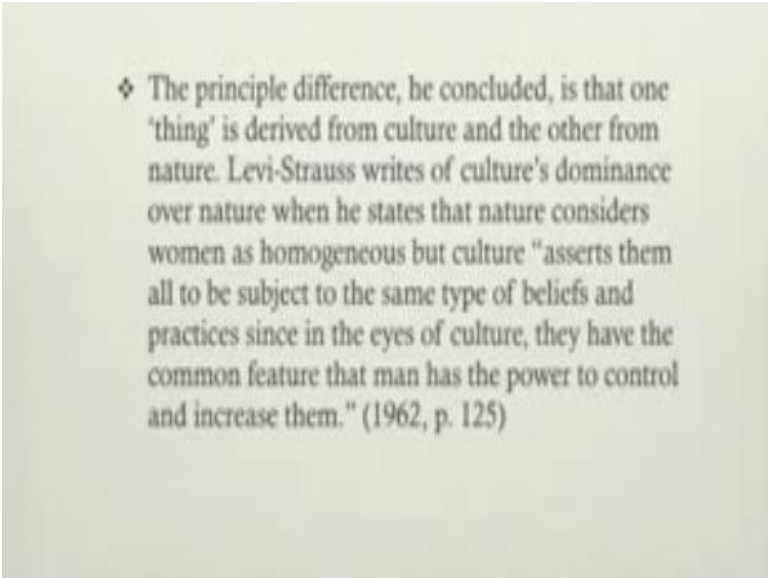
Now therefore but that sort of when the ethical the productivity is being sort of looked at the kind of ownership is being attributed now the women does not really have sort of a C and that sense of ownership is not being given now over here the sort of alienation with mass talks about in the context of the industrial society when the workers has given their sort of heart and soul is not much the best part of their life but and at the end of the day that sort of the final product when it is being produced is owned by the capitalist.



And this factory workers innocents are being sort of distant or eliminated from the product which they have project now similarly the Eco families if not the Marxist feminist tends to see how women are being doubly exploited by men and therefore the sort of objectification or measuring women as something as good need to also be looked at this sort of different lengths or in a different perspective not just by what we have discussed in a context of what the Levi Strauss tries to maximum or how because it seems to me.

That the sort of objectification or differentiation which is being measured between men and women is not nature and culture seems to be still pretty much soft but in a very ridiculous way if you put it the kind of economic production of it is being Percy by the families who are inclined to Marx and also Marx himself in France to understand the kind of exploitation and elimination which exist in the industry or the English industrial society or capitalist society perhaps seems to be a sort of old world for us to have a provoking thought in terms of yeast.

(Refer Slide Time: 33:29)



❖ The principle difference, he concluded, is that one 'thing' is derived from culture and the other from nature. Levi-Strauss writes of culture's dominance over nature when he states that nature considers women as homogeneous but culture "asserts them all to be subject to the same type of beliefs and practices since in the eyes of culture, they have the common feature that man has the power to control and increase them." (1962, p. 125)

Now continuing what Strauss is what he tries to look at is the principal differences which he has concluded is that one thing is derived from culture and the other from nature and what lady Strauss writes of cultures sort of dominant over meter that is how innocent man dominates over

women and how this cultural dominance over native when he tilt that nature in essence consider women as homogeneous but culture asserts them will to be subject to the same type of beliefs and practices because since in the eyes of course they have this common creature that man has the power to control and increase them.

Now this sort of the protect the turtle mentality or mindset which in essence is also to be challenged now by saying so we are not generalizing that this sort of I here or the intention of common feature that man has the border control and increased and that sort of perspective which is finding the context of nature cannot be generalized between again there has to be a division in terms of what the northern countries Percy Smith and the southern countries looked at init how they tries to relieve themselves with nature is different again.

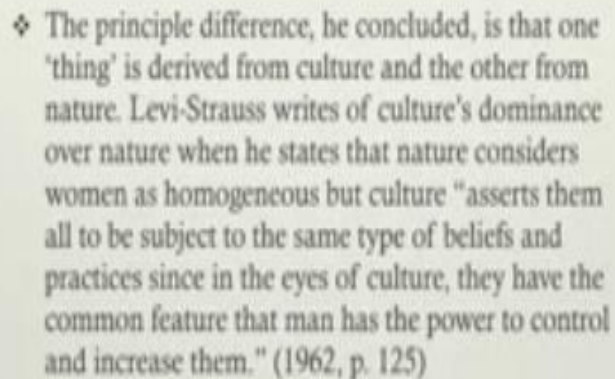
Now this nation culture debate which I field as also to be contextualized in the different culture that is the western culture and the non-western culture now many sort of scholars or works has been so far witness in trying to look at the differences between the northern south divide and how the sort of the wisdom oriented now capitalist ideas are different from the sort of the Oriental that is the East the Occidental and oriental division or perception of not this nature but how this belief.

And when we talk about belief it is also about this religion the kind of practices which is being witnessed and through these practices or belief human tends to perceive nature in a different way now mostly the Western culture is being sort of dominated by this Christian belief in ideas and if you look at the work of like Lin white which I have Taman again mentioned in his work with the worrying he says this Christian religion is solely responsible for the ecological crisis because of the anthropocentric ideas that is looking at the sort of the dominance of man over nature which is also pretty much applicable when this where Strauss innocence has argue about the cultures dominance over nature.

Now when we talk about culture it is not just the sort of practices but also the kind of perceptions the belief the set of things which we normally use it in terms of perceiving things now these sort of anthropocentric ideas which is pretty much embedded in the minds of those Western people

in a way is to be sort of thin as how they sort of looked at or perceive that nature because they tend to sort of look at nature as something which has to be tame and Exploited and then we are in this something with this profitable has to be squeezed out to sort of satisfy.

(Refer Slide Time: 38:07)



❖ The principle difference, he concluded, is that one 'thing' is derived from culture and the other from nature. Levi-Strauss writes of culture's dominance over nature when he states that nature considers women as homogeneous but culture "asserts them all to be subject to the same type of beliefs and practices since in the eyes of culture, they have the common feature that man has the power to control and increase them." (1962, p. 125)

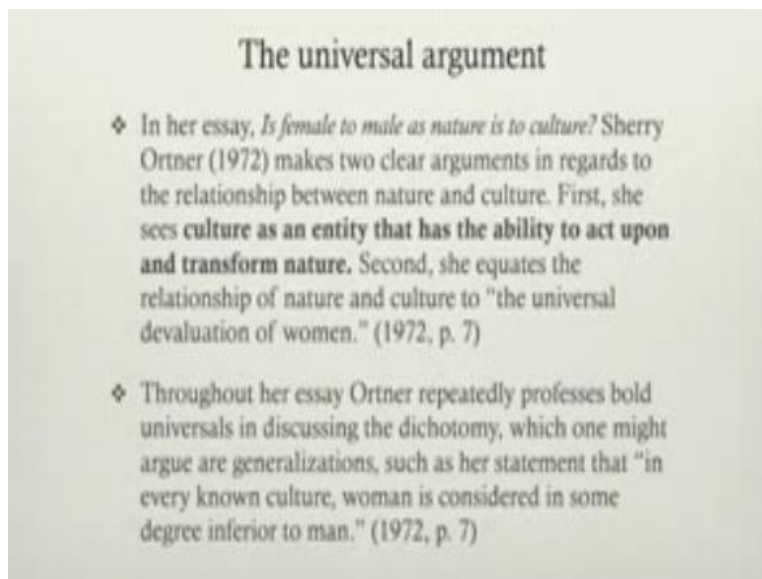
The needs of humans now this sort of dominance over nature is persistent in the minds of the Western culture now by saying so if you look at some of the religions in the south or is like Buddhism Hinduism and then also even say anything or maybe if you take the context of Japan they have this values I am belief this into idle now if you look at all this relevant they in a way sort of give a lot of respect or reverence to nature and then they believe in the harmonious relationship between human and nature or other cultural nature.

Now and the innocence establish sort of a bye-bye sense with ideas by contextualizing them in this so the physical world now this sort of dichotomy between anthropocentrism and biocentrism can also be brought in when we discuss about the nature culture dichotomy and which is not just to be sort of general line or universalized rather but it has to be skimmed in the context of that particular cultural context.

How this human community perceives nature therefore this sort of homogeneity in terms of sort of branding the relation definition culture needs to be relooked and free oriented or rather we need to really you know like we assert the kind of relations between this nature and the culture now some of the sort of universal argument which is being available in the Ortner.

In academia in essence can be in the work of theory opener wherein she wrote and she is female to male as nature is to culture now this sort of a very apt you know like jetty tom innocence is mostly used by the feminists in trying to tell in if not or may be trying to look at how women as is seen as a subordinate or seem to be inferior to man and then and similarly this applies to what Nita is through culture now interestingly say author makes two observations here that is in regard to relationship between nature and culture firstly.

(Refer Slide Time: 41:14)



She sees culture as an entirety that has the ability to act upon and transform nature that is culture is pretty much instrumental in trying to set and reset nature now this culture again is something with a human or a community sort of set of beliefs and ideas which they have over a period of time now how do we see these changes or the sort of continuous continuity of the set of ideas it is something which is important again and second he also tries to equate the relationship of

nature and culture to the universal devaluation of women when we talk about devolution of women we are also trying to look at not just the nature culture relationship but the political economy which at risk across the globe.

Now the so-called feminist movement which sort of begins in the West if I may reflect for us to have a deeper understanding the first feminist movement began in the West in the US and the more demand was sort of a numeral sub-trades that is the equal right to vote because women were not counted as a full-fledged citizens and they were denied this the wooden variety and therefore there are different trends of this service movement again and each time they come up with certain kind of sort of fighting for the rights of women and in many of the sort of the sort of Olympic on the certain games in sports women were being denied a place.

But today like more or less the sort of equality in terms of the representation but in most cases if you look at the political aspect the head of the state or normally of a country is mostly land and II looked at least very few individuals women which is taking part in politics today now if you look at some of this data and the kind of understanding or the sort of issues which were being raised in terms of this idea of universalization of right most oftentimes women tend to raise that to raise this or object this idea of this evaluation wise women being developed or why should they be given sort of an equal treatment like what men usually experience.

Now this sort of understanding I feel that the series ordinal theory ordinals argument is sort of slightly family in that aspect and to out our essay not to repeatedly processes both universals in try discussing the sort of dichotomy which are which one might argue are generalizations such as the statement which he gave in every known culture women is considered in some degree inferior to men this sort of a Patel potential sort of mental it mentality which exists in every society is to be seen as perhaps the being responsible also in terms of the static or form dichotomy which exists between nature and culture.

Now in every known because the woman is considered in some degree inferior to man now what is this particular sort of line then how do we make sense to it and if women is considered in some degree inferior command now whether women stand and if we manage to be equated with nature

we will sort of feel that nature is inferior to culture and as long as the sort of inferiority or inequality existed there can be no harmonious relationship innocence or sort of there would not be any universalization of understanding.

Now therefore this sort of argument which is being posited by Ortnier in Ha our EC is also to be conducted eyes and understand the manner in which things that is nature is being perceived across generations and are we really allowing this sort of ideas or the ideologies which is spearheaded by mainly the milk should be sort of carried forward this is something which we need to ponder upon and looked at now also as I said let me Strauss in essence follows the structuralize perspective.

And when he theorized the structuralism author innocence believes that nature and culture are both categories of human thought why because there is no place out in the real world where one could find some actual boundary between the two state organs of beings why is this because the sort of boundaries the differences between the real world and the some of the understanding between these two things cannot be sort of categorized and this human thought innocence has also to be contact light in this frame of reference that is the structuralism.

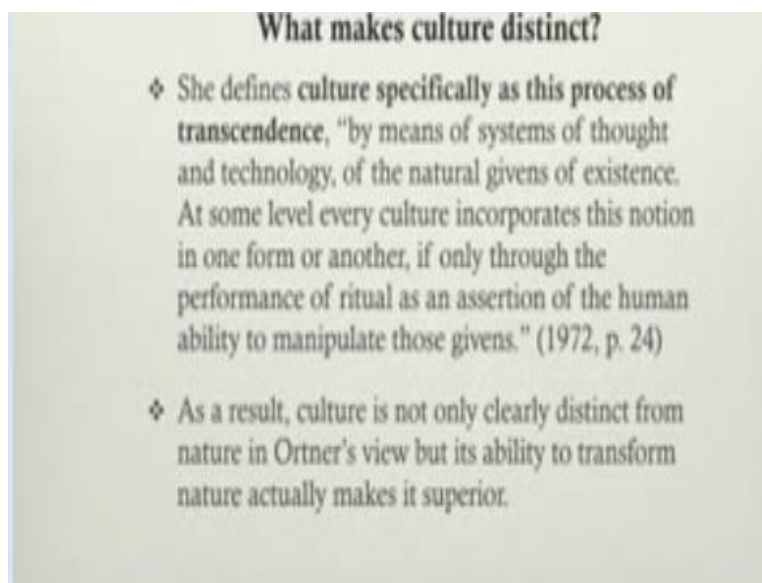
(Refer Slide Time: 47:44)

- ❖ Echoing a Levi-Straussian theory of structuralism, Ortnier believes nature and culture are both categories of human thought as "there is no place out in the real world where one could find some actual boundary between the two states or realms of being." (1972, p. 10)
- ❖ Ortnier focuses on the universality of rituals as "an assertion in all human cultures of the specifically human ability to act upon and regulate, rather than passively move with and be moved by, the givens of natural existence." (1972, p. 10-11)

Now Ortner in essence primarily focuses on the universality of rituals because an assertion in all human cultures of the sort of special specifically human ability to act upon and move by the Givens of this natural existence that is the human ability human has this capability to act and regulate rather than passively move with and be moved by the givens of natural existence.

There is sort of a kind of challenges which is being spell out by author because a single step or a simple move can make a huge differences so this is something which she tries to look at by asserting sort of the human culture in terms of the capability of human to sort of act and regulate. And it has to be sinned in that particular specific condition.

(Refer Slide Time: 49:55)



Now what does Mac this culture distinct why is because to designer something with distinct and different now odor again she defines culture specifically as this process of transcendence because transcendence innocence because by means of systems of thought and technology of the sort of natural regions of existence now at some level every culture incorporates this motion in the form or another and if only through the performance of research as an assertion of the human ability to manipulate is those hidden.

Now this human has that capability to sort of manipulate all these what is being given to them now therefore the sort of the system of thought on technology which has evolved over a period of time in essence has to be understood in these processes and therefore culture is something as we Said with sort of evil and then and then max culture so much missiles and then distinct from what nature gives nature in essence cannot evolve itself but rather culture can be therefore as a result of this culture is not only clearly distinct from in oddness will but its ability transform needs to actually make it superior.

That is by spelling out the real crux is not the boundary which exists between nature and culture and then maybe the superior positions of culture in essence makes it more interesting because that culture has the potential to save or eat more transform nature and therefore in culture acts well and them have this sort of positive component it has the ability to sort of carry alongside nature and then that sort of a kind of continuity with exist that harmonized relationship which exists can sort of continue.

(Refer Slide Time: 52:49)

- ❖ Culture dominates over nature, according to Ortner, because it is identified nearly everywhere with men, who occupying the higher positions to perform the tasks and rituals to create and sustain culture.
- ❖ Ortner argues that "the universal devaluation of women could be explained by postulating that woman is seen as 'closer to nature' than men, men being seen as more unequivocally occupying the high ground of 'culture.'" (1972, p. 12) In examining women in nearly every society, as Ortner asserts, they are generally viewed as more symbolic of nature than men.

Now but then often time this culture dominates over nature and according to ordinal because it is identified nearly everywhere with man who oftentimes occupy the higher positions to perform



the tasks and rituals to create and sustain culture now further Ortner tries to understand and argues that is the sort of a universal the relational woman could be sort of explained by postulating the women which is seen as closer to nature or perhaps the sort of closer to nature is sort of an imposition or maybe rather because luminous are seen as inferior it again as I when I explained how the sort of families tries to you know attack the essentialist idea of this fatality when we are being seen to be smalls caring and they are usually seem to be engaged in nature.

And therefore since this particular feminine traits are being given to women are seems to be more close to me to demand and men in a sentence can be seen as more unequivocally occupying the high ground of culture that is they are more superior and then the healthy capability of controlling is most capturing nature now this sort of ideas the universal evaluations women could be explained in this column.

Now this sort of understanding is pretty much being argued by Ortner and also Ortner asserts that they are generally view as more symbolic of nature than men that is women are generally view as more symbolic of nature than man now if you look at the apart from this causal nature maybe if you hit contact alighted by giving the examples of the southern countries like many of the tackle countries how women are closely associated or dependent on nature.

Now some of the works which is if you look at the works of some families there are friends which is normally sort of how women are mostly affected when there is some kind of environmental destruction or changes occur because mostly they are dependent on their natural surroundings like let your water for is so on and so forth.

Because why water because the sort of responsibilities of bringing the drinking water in a family again is the responsibility of women now there are places where adopted to on sit where women actually work miles to set you know a bottle water and in those cases it is really a trade if not more of an Aikido start for a women or if not a double burden for them and which is easily an account and then not really seen by the man because they are him to be more engaged into bringing the sort of weight to the family.

And also one the works of some scholars like were very you pointed out that or women are more dependent on the neighboring forest like collecting of those non-timber forest products like fruit and then various other is even items and also these anti non-timber forest products are being sold in the nearby market in order to answer kind of extra income so that sort of dependence which is pretty much seen in the context of many southern countries are to be highlighted and to look at when we explained is how women are seen to be closer to nature but by saying.

So that women exposed to nature but one cannot really rationalize by saying that they are innocent more weaker if not inferior to man this is something with them is conceptions which revolves around now this has to innocence as Ortner has argued should be sort of relook at now therefore we have explained certain the important points and these several reasons are innocent given because women's sort of direct bodily involvement with reproductions or with her assigned socialized rules leader within the confines of the subordinate domestic household.

Now this sort of branding is not the position with women or the works which they and get upon into innocence inevitably put her into this subordinate position and also ordinal clarifies that in reality while examining the woman in a biological sense she is Marcos's nature at all than men because since both are mortal beings with consciousness as if man is immortal and woman is mortal so you sort of you know understanding has to be rid of it but when examining a woman as something less powerful even a non-existent old in cultures.

(Refer Slide Time: 59:29)

- ❖ Several reasons are given, such as a woman's direct bodily involvement with reproduction or with her assigned, socialized role that leaves her within the confines of the subordinate domestic household.
- ❖ Ortner clarifies that in reality, when examining a woman in a biological sense, she is not closer to nature than man, since both are mortal beings with consciousness. But when examining a woman's less powerful, if even non-existent role in culture's rituals as well as her focus on child-rearing tasks, she appears that way.

Rituals have focused on child-rearing past she appears that way because by being caring and nursing the gentleman that one is seen to be sort of soft and inferior rather it can be seen otherwise because that sort of scent and ability has to be sort of relook and then we at the mind now women according to order are sort of the primary agents of socialization for children transforming them from a mere organism to a cultural human teaching it men and sort of proper ways to behave in order to be a bona fide member of the culture.

(Refer Slide Time: 59:59)

- ❖ Women, according to Ortner, are the primary agents of socialization for children, transforming them from "a mere organism to a cultured human, teaching it manners and the proper ways to behave in order to be a bonafide member of the culture." (1972, p. 19)
- ❖ On that function alone, Ornter says women should be seen as a symbol of culture just as equally as men.

Now this sort of discourse which is sort of to be think how women actually is responsible for grooming and then perhaps sister the models easily is the first teacher for a child or perfect before they really go into the formulas kind formulas kind of Education now therefore this has to be seen from their perspective now on that function alone order in a innocence is that women should be seen as a symbol of culture just as equally element now they should not be seen as something which is inferior to women.

(Refer Slide Time: 01:01:11)

- ❖ Ortner writes that a "woman's dominant psychic modes of relating would incline her to enter into relationships with the world that culture might see as being more 'like nature,' immanent and embedded in things as given, rather than, like culture, transcending and transforming things through the superimposition of abstract categories and transpersonal values." (1972, p. 22)
- ❖ Ortner finally makes her own views on how women should be viewed in the nature—culture divide. She writes that both man and woman (due to her role of raising and socialising children in her culture) can be seen as active members of culture. Only then will women easily be seen as aligned with culture, in culture's ongoing dialectic with nature. (1972, p. 28)

Now this sort of the dominant psychic modes of relating with Incline harm to enter into a more relationship with the world that culture might see as be more like nature imminent and embedded in thing that is given.

Now ortner finally makes our view on the how women should believe in nature culture divide how women should be contextualized in this major cultural divide see right that both men and women view power role of raising and fertilized children in culture can be seen as active members of culture only them with women in addition as aligned with culture in cultures ongoing dialectic with nature therefore one should give sort of a rightful position or a desiring positions women.

And therefore there has to be contact allies in this divide between nature and culture and finally the critics which is again given by this manliness reading and we noted that nature and culture have penetrated so deeply into the culture analysis and therefore the entry polis I engage into we regard their operation as something which is inevitable that is natural.

(Refer Slide Time: 01:02:42)

## Critiques

- ❖ Marilyn Strathern (1977:64) had noted "that nature and culture have penetrated so deeply into cultural analysis that we regard their opposition as inevitable ('natural'). (1980, p. 178)
- ❖ In her essay *No nature, no culture: the Hagen case*, Mary Strathern writes that nature and culture are two concepts that are highly relative, whose meaning come from a specific ideology.

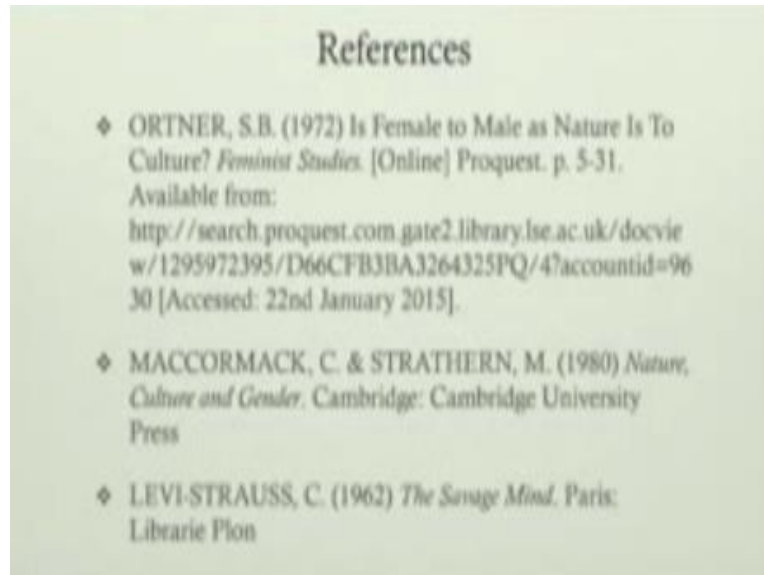
And in how I see again the works no nature no culture the Hagen case Stratton writes that nature and culture are two concepts that are highly relative whose meaning comes from a specific ideology and certain state that there is no such thing as little culture and there is no single meaning no single meaning can in fact be given into nature of culture in wisdom thought there is no consistent dichotomy only a matrix of contrast.

(Refer Slide Time: 01:03:01)

- ❖ Strathern states that "**there is no such thing as nature or culture**... no single meaning can in fact be given to nature or culture in western thought; there is no consistent dichotomy, only a matrix of contrasts (cf. Hastrup 1978:63)." (1980, p. 177)
- ❖ She continues by questioning how large the total assembly of all meanings prescribed to the nature—culture divide might be, stating that we "must be able to identify [the meanings] in other cultures to speak with confidence of their having such notions." (1980, p. 177)

Now she continues by sort of trying to challenge equation Howler's battle total assembly of all meanings sort of prescribed to the nature called the device might be that we must be able to identify in other culture to speak it confidence of their having such kind of notions now I finish here with the sort of the nature culture be bit and then we will try to look in a more a sort of anthropological understanding of perspective for the next lecture.

(Refer Slide Time: 01:03:52)



And these are some of the references for further readings thank you.

**Centre For Educational Technology  
IIT Guwahati  
Production**

**HEAD CET**

Prof. Sunil K. Khijwania

**Officer- in- Charge, CET**

Dr. Subhajit Choudhury

**CET Production Team**

Bikash Jyoti Nath

CS Bhaskar Bora

Dibyajyoti Lahkar



Kallal Barua

Kaushik Kr. Sarma

Queen Barman

Rekha Hazarika

**CET Administrative staff**

Arabinda Dewry

Swapam Debnath