

New Look Same Idea

The separation of physical anthropology from cultural anthropology during the 19th century opened new interpretations and emerging ideologies favorable to the Anglo-Saxon world order. “Reactionary visions” rooted from the prior century promoted the opposite ideals of human irrationality and social retrenchment. The two separate fields worked in conjuncture to explain the inconsistencies among both anatomical and cultural understanding. As we trace the track of anthropological thought of both the affirmations and later denunciations of societal order in the 19th century we explore how group variation was perceived, supported, and challenged, in turn producing new understanding on racial difference. (Erickson, Paul A., and Liam D. Murphy. *Readings for A History of Anthropological Theory*. Toronto: U of Toronto, 2010. Print.

Early cultural evolutionists like Herbert Spencer, Sir Edward B. Tylor and Lewis Henry Morgan noted their belief that cultural evolution was a chapter of biology. Unilinear in conception, cultural evolution when in fruition resulted in the perfection of man. (Haller, John S. *Race and the Concept of Progress in Nineteenth Century American Ethnology* Andover, MA: Warner Modular Publications, 1973. Print. Pages 710-723). The newly formed distinction between cultural and physical anthropology resulted in validation towards one another’s theories, encouraged the convergence of the “physiological or purely biological structure of man, and the aspects of his social life.” Through what is referred to as the comparative method, biological evolution, and social evolution became synonymous in meaning. (Haller, 711) The use of the comparative method is a prime example of how the 19th century anthropologists and ethnologists reminded vulnerable during his traverse “between his science and his assumptions.” (Haller, 711)

The term “evolution” was applied to the early ethnographers vocabulary but in doing so an adjusted definition more accurately describing “progress” was formed and built upon concerning theories of culture. In *The Organic Analogy Reconsidered* Herbert Spencer conceptualizes society as analogous to a biological organism. He continues this parallelism between individual organizations and social organizations. (Erickson & Murphy, 49-51) He as many other early cultural evolutionists “described the races of mankind moving through successive orders of complexity.” (Haller, 711) Social evolution in these early days both was viewed as stemming from the biological theory of descent, as well as incorporating the “personal” belief in progress.

John Wesley Powell and W J McGee both prescribed that human development was void of cylindrical nature but rather “in the direction of progress” stated by Powell, and “each generation was an improvement however slight upon the next, deeming human development an upward trend, stated by McGee. (Haller, 711)

Race identification by way of ethnology, formed the basis for hierarchical justification. Progress and the criteria that defined it varied greatly among ethnologists. Henry Bates and Frank Baker believed progress was related to cranial sutures and the requirement that prognathism evidenced a development away from quadrumanous features. The overarching theme however showed that progress was only possible for races that showed clear signs of “progression out of savagery and barbarism and into civilization.” Cultural development in this sense reflected elements of natural selection. (Haller, 711-712)

Brain Development was studied by cranial observation in structure and weight. Features deemed favorable were backed with the ideology that the further man advanced from his brutish militancy and freed himself from “slavish toil” cultural achievement of industrialism and the

peaceful arts would then develop. “Cheirization, the coordination of the “initiative and directive faculties of man reflected the value on the development of increased utility rather than physical change in human organs. (Haller, 713) This reflected the mindset of controlling nature rather than reacting to it. The brain, which had varying levels of carrying capacity, was the organ that held the mind. Races with smaller cranial structures would be more limited in levels of intelligence. “Caucasians had traversed the various primitive culture stages long before the progenitors of the Indian and Negro rose out of bestiality. (Haller, 714)

Imperialism connected to the strong mans burden explained that races could all progress but only in the correct succession. It was the enlightened that attempted to lift his fellow man further along in progress. The superior races whose job of spreading their specialized knowledge of progress downward would continue to emphasize the differences of the aggregate. “At any given level of human evolution, there was a “characteristic physical development, a state of material arts, a level of language achievement, and a state of social organization.” (Haller 717)

Daniel Garrison Brinton went further upon the limitations of the racial mind but refuted the idea of brain weight difference, explaining that to it was the inferiors races “unwillingness to make the necessary mental effort to obtain it” (Haller, 721) Which I must add at present day the ideology of laziness in correlation to the poor echo’s Brinton’s mindset.

Throughout the 19th century social organization shifted in design while maintaining the constant singular theme of permanent but progressive social order. Early cultural evolutionists began with the ideology of biological factors being the sole constitute for racial hierarchical categorization which in the latter part of the century while still maintaining a biological

component the ideology's rationalization explains a more social responsibility in the form of morality and psychical life. (Haller 719)