

Centre for Distance & Online Education
UNIVERSITY OF JAMMU
JAMMU



SELF LEARNING MATERIAL
P.G. SOCIOLOGY
SEMESTER- I
S O C - C - 1 0 4

TITLE: PERSPECTIVES ON INDIAN SOCIETY

COURSE NO.: SOC-C-104

UNIT: I-IV

LESSON: 1-22

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<http://www.distanceeducationju.in>

*Printed and published on behalf of the Centre for Distance & Online
Education, University of Jammu, Jammu by the Director, CDOE
University of Jammu, Jammu.*

SOC-C-104
PERSPECTIVES ON INDIAN SOCIETY

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**Syllabus of Sociology M.A. Ist Semester for the examination to be held in the year
December 2025, 2026 and 2027 (NON-CBCS for CDOE)**

CourseNo: SOC-C-104

Title: Perspectives on Indian Society

Credits: 6

Maximum Marks: 100

Duration of Examination: 3 hours.

a) Semester Examination (External): 70

b) Session Assessment (Internal): 30

Objective: The thrust of this paper is to acquaint the students with the Sociology of India. It deals with the emergence and understanding of Indian Society, theoretical underpinnings of the complexity of society and also with the whole discourse contextualizing Sociology in India.

Unit-I Conceptualizing Indian Society

Society and Historicity: Stages of Indian Social History; Questions of Diversity: Regional, Linguistic and Religious; Peoples of India: Groups and Communities; Challenges of Unity: Emergence of Ethnic Identities.

Unit-II Theoretical perspectives-I

Indological/ Textual (G.S. Ghurye, L. Dumont) Structural - Functional (M.N. Srinivas, S.C. Dube) Marxian (D.P. Mukherjee, A. R. Desai)

Unit-III Theoretical perspectives -II

Civilizational View (N.K. Bose, Surajit Sinha). Subaltern Perspective (Ranajit Guha and David Hardiman), Perspective from below: B.R. Ambedkar.

Unit-IV Sociology and Society in India

Social Conditioning of Indian Sociology: Ideology, Theory & Methods; Sociology in/for India, Quest for Indigenization of Sociology.

NOTE FOR PAPER SETTING:

A. Session Assessment Internal (30 marks)

There will be three Internal Assessment Assignments carrying the total weightage of 30 marks.

IAA1. Long Answer Type Questions (10X1=10 Marks)

Long answer type question (of maximum 1200 words) of 10 marks (one to be attempted, out of two, each from unit I and II).

IAA2. Short Answer Type Questions (5X2=10 Marks)

Two short answer type questions (of about 600 words), each of 5 marks. These shall be taken from units III and IV.

IAA3. Very Short Answer Type Questions (2.5X4=10 Marks)

Four very short answer type questions (of about 250 words), each of 2.5 marks. These shall be taken from all the four units.

B. Semester Examination External (70 marks)

The question paper will consist of two sections A and B.

Section A will consist of eight long answer-type questions, two questions from each unit. The candidate will be required to answer four questions, selecting one from each unit. Each question will carry 13 marks (**13 X 4=52 marks**).

Section B will consist of eight short answer-type questions, two questions from each unit. The candidate will be required to answer four questions, selecting one from each unit. Each question will carry 4.5 marks (**4.5 X 4=18 marks**).

Prescribed Readings

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SOCIETY AND HISTORICITY: STAGES OF INDIAN SOCIAL HISTORY

STRUCTURE

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Methodology and Techniques
- 1.3 Mode of Production
- 1.4 Marriage and Family
- 1.5 Socio-economic formations
- 1.6 Political system
- 1.7 Culture and civilization in Ancient India
- 1.8 Let us Sum Up
- 1.9 Glossary
- 1.10 Self-Assessment Questions
- 1.11 Suggested Readings

1.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this lesson you will be able to understand:

- The History of Indian Society
- Various Methods and Techniques used for the Mode of production
- Meaning and functions of the Political system
- Culture and Civilization in Ancient India
- Meaning of Marriage and Family

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Indian society is old and it is extremely complex. According to a popular estimate it has covered a span of five thousand year since the period of its first known civilization. During this long period several waves of immigrants, representing different ethnic strains and linguistic families, have merged into its population to contribute to its diversity, richness and vitality.

Several different levels of social evolution co-exist in contemporary India: primitive hunters and food gathers; shifting cultivators who used digging sticks and hoes (not plough and draft cattle); nomads of different types (breeders of goats, sheep, and cattle traders and artisans and craftsmen); settled agriculturists who use the plough for cultivation artisans and landed as well as aristocracies of ancient lineage. Most of the major religions of the world-Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism-are found here and in addition there is a bewildering variety of cults and sects with different orientation in belief and ritual. Add to these, the modern academic, bureaucratic, industrial and scientific elites, and you will find the past, the present, and the future living together. In the process of its evolution, Indian society has acquired a composite culture, characterized by stable patterns of pluralism. Continuity is perhaps the most remarkable feature of Indian society and culture. To be sure, India's culture and social structure have undergone tremendous changes in the course of several thousand years of its history, but their continuity has not been broken.

Militant Aryan hordes entered India around 1500 B.C. and subjugated the people of the city civilizations that thrived here, as well as tribal inhabitants. The existence of the city civilizations is shown by the ruins discovered at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa and in other parts of India.

The Aryans were predominantly semi- pastoral while the people of proto - Mediterranean culture whom they overpowered lived in 'pure' or cities. It appears that the clash and interaction between the cultures of the Aryans who entered the Indian sub-continent and the earlier settlers has been largely responsible for shaping the pattern of social stratification that finally led to the emergence of the four-fold Varna system. This stratification system perpetuated the supremacy of the Aryans and their

progeny over the non-Aryans from ancient times down to the present day. Later, the criterion of superior racial features was substituted by exclusive observation of intricate and expensive rituals, which the lower castes were forbidden from observing. The hierarchy based on birth was further rationalised by the doctrine of 'Karma' which propagated that birth in higher or lower caste is the inexorable consequence of one's own deeds in earlier lives. This belief was so inculcated that the people of the lower castes too fully internalized it and were convinced that their low status on society and exploitation by the higher castes was entirely justified.

Besides the system of stratification, other traditional institutions too seem to have been shaped largely by the processes of conflict and synthesis between the dominant Aryans and the earlier settlers. It is these processes that have endowed traditional religion and philosophy, the doctrine of Karma, the notion of Purus Artha the Asrama system, and even the traditional pattern of economy their characteristics which have prevailed over as many centuries. In this, the contribution of the non-Aryan elements seems to have been much greater than that of an Aryan. Nevertheless, it is paradoxical that those very beliefs, systems and institutional patterns that belonged originally to the non-Aryan people were used ultimately as weapons of their subjugation.

One of the Jana (people) among the ancient India Aryans was the Bharatas. Their valour was outstanding. The Rig-Veda refers to them. It is after their name that this country is called Bharata.

The north-western part of the Indian sub-continent is referred to as Sapta Sindhu. The sacred text of the Iranian branch of the ancient Aryan, the Zend-Avesta, refers to it as 'Haft-Hindu'. The ancient Iranian Aryan used 'ha' in place of 'sa'. Thus, the entire Indian sub-continent got the name 'Hindustan'. Similarly, the river Sindhu was called 'Indus' by the ancient Greeks, and so they referred to the entire country as India.

It is not unusual to find inquiries of different sorts in the social sciences, these could be classified in two categories, viz., the nomothetic and the ideographic, according to this classification, the ideographic sciences are those which study unique and unrepeatable events, while the nomothetic

sciences attempt to make generalizations. We can thus call sociology as nomothetic science and history as an ideographic science.

Historians try to enhance our accurate knowledge of unique phenomena of the past, whereas sociologists try to seek information about certain uniformities in social behaviour under specific conditions. This in principle is the difference between the two modes of inquiry. However, the data of history are also widely used now by sociologists. This is indicative of the assimilative quality of sociological work, But, increasingly now, historians have also started using data generated by sociologists for their own writings.

1.2 METHODOLOGY AND TECHNIQUES

A fundamentally new approach to the study of Indian history, scientific methodology, modern technique of interpretation, selection and analysis of basic problems make the presentation vivid and absorbing. Kosambi's work is most refreshing in its range of new material, original discoveries of megaliths, microliths, rustic superstition, and peasant customs. He explains how to gain an insight into the past by examination of the monuments, customs and records. For this, makes an impressive use of scientific methods in many fields like archaeology, ethnography and philology.

Kosambi's first book, "*An Introduction to the Study of Indian History*", published in 1956, was a shift from what he professionally stood for. He had little use for a chronological narrative in history since he argued that chronology for the early period was too obscure to be meaningful. For him, history was the presentation order of successive developments in the means and relations of production. Because of the reliable historical records, he argued that Indian history would have to use the comparative method. This meant a familiarity with a wide range of historical works. Kosambi's own familiarity with classical European history is evident in his writings; it also meant the use of various disciplines and interdisciplinary techniques to enable historian to understand the pattern of social transformations.

The knowledge of Sanskrit led Kosambi to a series of etymological analyses which he used to a great effect in reconstructing the social background, particularly of the Vedic period. Thus, he argued that the names of many of the established Brahmanas in Vedic literature and the Puranic tradition clearly pointed to their being of non-Aryan origin. From the study of *gotra* he went on to the logical point that the language of the Vedic texts could not have been pure Aryan and must have had an admixture of non-Aryan elements, reflecting the inclusion of non-Aryans as Brahmanas. This theory is now more acceptable to those who have worked on

Indo-Aryan linguistics, on the basis of the linguistic analyses of the texts and language which clearly indicates non-Aryan structures both in syntax and vocabulary.

Historians, philosophers, social psychiatrists' literary men as well as social scientists, use the historical approach as an aid in visualizing society as a dynamic organism, and its structures and functions as steadily growing and undergoing change and transformation. Since all groups, social institutions and personalities undergo changes to a lesser or greater degree, social scientists concern themselves with the process of social change.

Historical method has also been employed by Marx in conjunction with dialectical materialism in understating the human societies. He took this philosophical device and applied it to the materialistic view of society. Accordingly, he believed that the materialistic structure of societies accounts for their changing evolution and development. Applying this to history, Marx delineated the societal dialectic sequence as follows: primitive communism- slavery- feudalism- capitalism- socialism. In this manner, dialectic materialism becomes a sociological tool in the historical analysis of societal development.

Still another form of historical approach is characteristic of the work of Max Weber, and of a number of later sociologists influenced by him criticizing the Marxist formulations of his time; Weber argued that "the so-called materialist conception of history, as a formula for the causal explanation of historical reality, has to be rejected". His own historical approach is exemplified

especially in his studies of the origins of capitalism, the development of modern bureaucracy, and the economic influence of the world religions.

The main methodological features of these studies are that particular historical changes of social structures and types of society are investigated and are compared in certain respects with changes in other societies. In this manner, both causal explanations and historical interpretations find a place in the social explanation. It is also implicit in Weber's work that the general sociological propositions refer only to trends, while their application to particular societies and situations involves historical study in detail. A very convincing illustration of this approach of Weber is to be found in his treatment of the growth of capitalism in Europe. As he brings out in his book *Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, "Capitalism grew in Europe through the influence of ideas located in Calvinist ethics which governed the lives of the Protestants in general and Calvinist in particular".

Sources of Historical Data

In her book “*Scientific Social Surveys and Research*”, P.V. Young (1973) describes sources of historical data.

The social scientists generally confine themselves to three major sources of historical information: (1) documents and various historical sources to which historian himself/herself has access; (2) materials of cultural history and of analytical history; and (3) personal sources of authentic observers and witnesses. When, how and under what circumstances these sources are to be used depends upon the disunion of the student, his interests, the scope of his study, and the availability of the sources.

Historical data have some limitations too, which arise mainly because historians cannot describe all the happenings in time and space available. It's the time of writing history. Personal biases and private interpretations often enter unconsciously, even when honest attempts are made to select pertinent facts. This can be illustrated by reference to the current controversy that is raging on the writing of medieval Indian history. Here, we are concerned with the Indian historians, mainly D.D.

Kosambi and Romila Thapar, whose writings reflect the historical development of Indian society.

It was the recognition of cultural survival, which led Kosambi to weave so much material from ethnology and anthropology into his historical narrative. He mentioned that the presence of a tribe, which had once given rise to *jati*, and of another which became a quasi-guild. He noticed trees and sacred groves, stones making a sacrificial ritual, caves and rock shelters, which may have been occupied successively by prehistoric men, by Buddhist monks and later by practitioners of Hindu cult. Such places have a remarkable continuity as sacred centres and often provided a greater historical continuity both in object and ritual than many written texts. It is important to clarify that Kosambi was not arguing that religion played a more significant part in Indian culture than has been the case in other cultures, as has been the stand of those who maintain the greater spirituality of the Indian past; but rather, Kosambi's position is that there was a greater survival of the archaic in religious ritual than in other areas of Indian life which speaks of a certain conservatism but at the same time makes it worth investigating historically.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-I

Note: Write your answers in the space given below.

1) Tick the right choice: -

a) Indian Society has covered a life span of how many years

- | | |
|-----------|----------|
| i) 7000 | ii) 2000 |
| iii) 1000 | iv) 5000 |

b) Who are the actual inhabitants of India

- | | |
|---------------------|----------------|
| i) Aryans | ii) Europeans |
| iii) Branchycephals | iv) Protoloids |

c) In the hierarchy who is at the top most

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| i) Vaishyas | ii) Shudras |
| iii) None of these | iv) Brahmins |

2) Answer the following questions in two lines.

a) Who are Aryans.

b) Define Indian Society.

c) What is meant by the term Family.

Answers: 1) iv 2) i 3) iv

1.3 MODE OF PRODUCTION

Kosambi places emphasis on the mode of production. According to him, “the more important question is not who was king, but whether the people used a plough, light or heavy, at the time”. The type of kinship, as a function of the property relations and surplus produced, depends upon the method of agriculture, not conversely. He further says: "Dynastic changes of importance, vast religious upheavals, are generally indicative of powerful changes in the productive basis, hence must be studied as such, not dismissed as senseless flickers on the surface of unchanging substratum. Thus, Kosambi accepts the basic tenets of the materialist interpretation of history. But he adds: "When one applies historical materialism to the Indian problem, it must be kept in mind that it speaks of all mankind, whereas we deal with a fraction." In certain regional contexts, variations cannot be ruled out. For short periods in restricted localities, a dead end, a retrogression, or evolution by atrophy, are possible." Along with the mode of production, we have to reckon with the people mode of reflection as well. "Ideas (including superstition) become a force, once they have gripped the masses; they supply the form in which men become conscious of their conflicts and fight them out. No historian may dismiss or ignore such ideas nor can he be regarded as having fulfilled his task unless he shows why, how and when the grip was secured."

Agriculture Pattern

At a wider anthropological level one of the clues to understand the Indian past was the basic factor

of the transition from tribe to caste, from small, localized groups to a generalized society. This transition was largely the result of the introduction of plough agriculture in various regions, which changed the system of production, broke the structure of tribes and clans and made caste the alternative form of social organization. This process Kosambi traced in part from the evolution of clan totems into clan names and then into caste names. The agency through which plough agriculture was introduced would therefore become the major factor of control in caste society. This society he saw as the Brahminical settlements in various parts of the country. These led to the assimilation of local cults into the Brahmanical tradition as is evident from the various *Puranas* and *Mahatmas*. But equally important is his contribution to the Sanskritization of local folk cults with the incorporation of Brahmin priests and rituals, the association of epic heroes and heroines, and by the inclusion of such cults in Sanskrit mythology.

1.4 MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

Kosambi attempts an anthropological functional analysis in which he argues that it reflects the institution of sacred marriage in prehistoric societies as well as the ritual sacrifice of the hero by the mother goddess. One of the frequent strands in his explanation of myth was related to his belief that societies were matriarchal in origin and many gradually changed to patriliney and that myths, therefore, reflect the transition from the one to the other. Bride-price is also for him a survival of matriliney. The insistence on a transition from matriarchy to patriliney in every case is not now acceptable since many societies are known to have been patrilineal from the beginning.

1.5 SOCIO-ECONOMIC FORMATIONS

Kosambi also refers to the agrarian technology in the Indus Valley. He assumed that it was a culture without the plough, that the river bank was cultivated with a harrow and that the seasonal flood water was utilized for irrigation with dams and embankments helping in retaining this water and the river silt for a longer period. The decline of the Indus civilization is attributed to the Aryans who

destroyed the agricultural system by breaking the embankments, which, he maintains, is symbolically referred to in the Rigvedic descriptions of Indra destroying *Varta*, and releasing the waters. Plough was brought by the Aryans (i.e., the speakers of Indo-Aryan) who thereby changed agricultural technology. Recent evidence on the Indus civilization makes it clear that plough agriculture was practised even as early as the Harappan period and that it was known to the non-Aryan since the more commonly used word for the plough in Vedic literature is of non-Aryan etymology.

Plough agriculture and iron technology, when introduced into the Ganges valley, led ultimately to the growth of urban centres as well as the recognizable forms of caste. Recent views would include as causal factors in this development the role of changes in crop patterns with a dependence on rice agriculture, the diversity of irrigation systems, and the use of labour in the new technologies and the range of control over these factors by different social groups.

An evident departure from the orthodox Marxist pattern of historical periodization is Kosambi's refusal to apply either the Asiatic mode of production 'or the slave mode of production to early Indian history without modification of a major kind. For Marx, the Indian past conformed, by and large, to what he called the 'Asiatic mode of production' characterized by a static society, absence of private property in land, self-sufficient villages, lack of a commercial economy and state control over the irrigation system. Although he and Engels recognized derivations from this pattern, they saw this as a contrast to what was prevalent in Europe and argued that historical stagnancy in India was broken by the arrival of colonialism. Elsewhere, he has argued for the existence of the tenant and of the landowning peasant. He did concede that from the end of the Gupta period there was a relative increase in self-sufficiency. He also argued that the lack of a sense of history and the power of myth further reduced individuality. A static mode of production could not have co-existed with a form of feudalism since the latter breeds its own contradictions. Perhaps if he had been questioned on this ambiguity, he may have modified his position to argue that the degree of self-sufficiency increased, but not to the extent of the static mode of production becoming the dominant future.

The feudal mode of production Kosambi accepts as relevant to pre-modern Indian history, although even here he makes his own distinction between what he calls, 'feudalism from above' and 'feudalism, from below'. Feudalism from above was his characterization of the changes which came about in the late first millennium AD subsequent to the Gupta period. Incidentally, he has little time for the Gupta period and is justifiably contemptuous of the nationalist historians who described it as the golden age of Hindu revivalism. The changes noticeable in the post-Gupta period were mainly those of an increase in the granting of land with a greater frequency of transition from tribe to caste through the introduction of plough agriculture, a decline in trade and commodity production which adversely affected the growth of urban centres, the decentralization of the army and a concentration of wealth at local courts. With this was associated the spread of Bhakti cults whose emphasis on loyalty and devotion he saw as a characteristic feature of feudal society. In a discussion on private property in land, central to the concept of Asiatic mode of production, he argues that it should be viewed in the Indian context which implies that:

- actual cultivators were ex-tribals who still regarded land as territory deriving from kinship rights;
- the holding of a field was proof of membership of community rather than ownership of land; and
- In non-commodity producing village or one located near wasteland, land would have no sale value.

The only conditions were the regular payment of taxes to either the grantee or the king. But no generalization can cover the entire subcontinent since the changes varied from region to region. In his discussion on feudalism from below Kosambi draws his evidence mainly from Kashmir and Rajasthan and depicts a more clearly recognizable form of feudalism but with specific Indian features. This phase is characterized by political decentralization, accompanied by a low level of technology with production for the household and the village and not for market, and the holding of land by lords on a service tenure that also have judicial or quasi-judicial functions in relation to the dependent population. The backwardness of technology allowed an easy conquest of northern India

by those with a more advanced military technology. Changes in the ruling class did not substantially affect the nature of feudalism in India and it continued until the coming of colonialism.

1.6 POLITICAL SYSTEM

The Mauryan monarchy, which controlled the Indian sub-continent, was a feasible political system according to Kosambi because of the expansion of the village economy through Sudra agriculturalists being settled on state lands and by the deportation of prisoners-of-war who were used for the same purpose. He argues against the use of slavery in production in early India. The decline of the Mauryan empire is attributed to economic crisis, the details of which are debatable. Double economic pattern indicated an economic crisis. Inability of the Mauryan polity to survive must be attributed to causes, which in part were certainly economic, cannot be doubted. Mercantile patronage extended to Buddhists and Jains and other sects which rooted them in a society more firmly than did the help they received from royal patronage. The punch-marked coins are an indication of developed commodity production which provided a high status to artisans and traders as members of urban society and their link with religious preachers propagating a universal ethic would not be surprising. In the post-Mauryan period the role of guilds and artisans as donors to the Buddhist Sangha in the light of expansion and diffusion of trade is also visualized. The emergence of occupational *Jati*'s in urban areas can frequently be associated with this development.

Myth and Reality

The essays, in Kosambi's book on *Myth and Reality*, are based upon profound study of library sources and carefully planned field work- a unique combination not to be found elsewhere. Fresh data and logical interpretation cast fresh and novel light on the origins and development of Indian culture. Kosambi has raised and solved questions of vital importance to all those interested in the study of Indology. The date of Karle caves; the background of Kalidas' plays; the significance of the great Pandharpur pilgrimage; the economic, cultural and historical basis of the Goan struggle for reunion with India - these are a few of the many fascinating problems analysed by the Kosambi.

1.7 CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION IN ANCIENT INDIA

The Culture and Civilization of Ancient India in Historical Outline is a strikingly original work of Kosambi. This is the first real cultural history of India. The main features of the Indian character traced back into remote antiquity as the natural growth of a historical process. Kosambi tries to explore the answers of the following questions:

1. Did the ch
2. ange from food gathering and the pastoral life to agriculture make new religions necessary?
3. Why did the Indus cities vanish with hardly a trace and leave no memory?
4. Who were the Aryans - if any?
5. Did the caste system ever serve any useful-social purpose?
6. How does it happen that the slavery of the type seen in ancient Greece and Rome never appeared in India?
7. Why should Buddhism, Jainism, and so many other sects of the same type come into being at one time and in the same region?
8. How could Buddhism spread over so large a part of Asia while dying out completely in the land of its origin?
9. What caused the rise and what led to collapse of the Magadhan empire?
10. Was the Gupta Empire fundamentally different from its great predecessor, or just one more 'oriental despotism'?

These are some of the many questions dealt with fresh insight in this work.

The book is divided into seven chapters as under:

1. The Historical Perspective
2. Primitive Life and Prehistory
3. The First Cities
4. The Aryans
5. From Tribe to Society
6. State and Religion in Greater Magadha
7. Towards Feudalism

Caste in the Ancient India

In his book entitled, *The Culture and Civilization of Ancient India*, Kosambi felt that there is a need

to study rural and tribal society in India. He says that the main feature of Indian society, seen as its strongest in the rural part, is *caste*. This means the division of society into many groups which live side by side, but often do not seem to live together. Members of different castes cannot intermarry by religion, though the law now permits complete freedom in this respect. This great advance is due to the bourgeois mode, because of which caste has begun to disappear in the cities, except for political and economic cliques.

Most peasants will not take cooked food or water from the hands of persons of lower castes. That is, caste has a rough hierarchy. In practice, the number of such caste groups goes into the thousands. In theory, there are only four castes: *Brahmin* or priest caste; *Kshatriyas* - warrior; *Vaishya* - trader; and *Sudra*, the lowest caste, which corresponds in general to the working class. This theoretical system is roughly that of classes, whereas the observed castes and sub-castes derive clearly from tribal groups of different ethnic origin.

The relative status of the small local castes depends always upon the extent of, and the caste's economic position in the common market. A Journal of Bihar suddenly transported to some village of Agris in Maharashtra would have no definite status automatically assigned to him. But, in Bihar, his preliminary status is decided by that of his caste within the range of villages with who he is in normal contact. This goes roughly by the relative economic power of the various castes. The same caste may have different positions in the hierarchy in two different regions. If this differentiation persists for some time, the separate branches may often regard themselves as different castes, no longer intermarrying. The lower one goes in the economic scale, the lower the caste in the social scale on the whole.

At the lowest end, we still have purely tribal groups, many of whom are in a food-gathering stage. The surrounding general society is now food-producing. So, food-gathering for these very low castes generally turns into begging and stealing. Such groups were accurately labelled as the 'criminal tribes' by the British in India, because they refused as a rule to acknowledge law and order outside the tribe.

This stratification of Indian society reflects and explains a great deal of Indian history, if studied in the field without prejudice. It can easily be shown that many castes owe their lower social and economic status to their present or former refusal to take food production and plough agriculture. The lowest castes often preserve tribal rites, and myths. A little higher up we see these religious observances and legends in transition, often by assimilation to other parallel traditions.

The Villages

Not only caste but the emphasis upon village life is also given by Kosambi in his writings. India is still a country of peasants. Agrarian development is extensive, though still with primitive technique. Most of the land is over-grazed and over-farmed after two thousand years of cultivation. The yield per acre is abysmally low because the methods are primitive and holdings too small to be economic. The main feature of the land is the lack of transport. This means that a significant part of the production is local and locally consumed. It is precisely this backward, inefficient and local nature of production that has allowed so many older tribal groups to survive, albeit upon the verge of extinction. The whole rural economy is dominated by the seasonal rains, i.e., the monsoon.

The succession of seasons is all important, while there is little cumulative change to be noted in the village from year to year. This gives the general feeling of 'the Timeless East' to foreign observers. The bullock-cart and village huts seen in *Bharhut* sculptures of about 150 BC or the plough and ploughman in *Kushana* reliefs of AD 200 would cause no comment if they appeared suddenly in some modern Indian village. This makes it easy to forget that the very formation of a village economy with the plough used on fixed plots of land implies a tremendous advance in the means of production. The relation of production had to become correspondingly more involved than at the food-gathering stage. The modern Indian village gives an unspeakable impression of the grimmest poverty and helplessness. There is rarely a shop except in villages that serve many others as a market centre; no public building apart perhaps from a small temple which may be an outdoor shrine open to the elements. Consumer goods are purchased from the rare itinerant vendors or at the weekly

market day at a few key villages. Sale of village produce is mostly in the hands of middlemen who are at the same time moneylenders.

Their grip on the rural economy and the resulting indebtedness of the peasantry is a problem. Once the monsoon is over, most villages experience a progressive scarcity of water; good drinking water is scarce at all seasons. Hunger and disease are the massive concomitants of village India. The lack of medical attention and hygiene brings out most sharply the traditional apathy of the village - always a basic factor in the political economy of the country. And secure foundation for despotism. The surplus taken away from people who live in misery and degradation nevertheless provided, and still provides the material foundation for Indian culture and civilization.

The uniform appearance of passive village distress hides a considerable differentiation. The bulk of the produces are peasants with small holdings. A few are self-sufficient. Some may rise to be powerful in the sense of a *Kulak* class, which is, in fact, being strengthened by current land legislation. Mostly, the richer holdings are possessed by people who are not peasants and do not labour on the land. The great landlords are generally absentees; their titles to land derive as a rule from the feudal period. Many of them shook off feudal obligations to become bourgeois landholders with the advent of the British. However, the British registered all land titles and fixed taxes in cash. This means that no village can today be self-contained. Even, the most secluded must sell something, not only to buy the little cloth and household goods required but to pay some tax or rent.

Even otherwise, the village could not be completely self-sufficient. In most of India, clothing is not a physical necessity, though it has become a social need. Salt, however, he's always been indispensable; metals in some quantity had to be available before regular agriculture could be practised. These two necessities are not produced in most villages, but have to be acquired from outside. In spite of its timeless appearance, the village, too, is tied to commodity production, now in the framework of a bourgeois economy. Nevertheless, it does not remain true that the Indian village is nearly self-contained.

Some production requires specialized technical knowledge. Though the Indian village uses very little metal, the villager does not need pots, usually of earthenware. This means that a potter must be available. Similarly, a blacksmith to repair tools and forge ploughshares, a carpenter for building houses and making simple ploughs, etc. The priest must serve whatever ritual needs the village feels. He is generally a Brahmin, though that is not obligatory for certain lower cults. Certain occupations such 'as that of barber, or skinner of dead beasts, are low; yet the barber's tasks and leather goods are essential. This necessitates the presence in the village of a barber and leather worker; of different castes naturally. Normally, each such profession forms a caste - the Indian substitute for the medieval guild.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-II

Note: Write your answers in the space given below.

1) Tick the right choice: -

a) Who has written the book Homo-Hierarchicus

- | | |
|-------------|--------------|
| i) Dumont | ii) Srinivas |
| iii) Ghurye | iv) Marx |

b) Who have the Brahmanical Knowledge

- | | |
|-------------|------------------|
| i) Aryans | ii) Vaishyas |
| iii) Only 1 | iv) Both 1 and 2 |

c) In the hierarchy who is at the top most

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| i) Vaishyas | ii) Shudras |
| iii) None of these | iv) Brahmins |

2) Answer the following questions in two lines.

a) Define Political System.

b) Define Indian Institution.

c) What is meant by the term Marriage.

Answers: a) i b) i c) iv

1.8 LET US SUM UP

In this lesson, we have conceptualized Indian society by analysing its various elements. It is found that how Indian society reached the present status of diversification. The tracing of ancient pasts helps us in grasping the modification and development of Indian society. Thus, we come to understand India as multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-lingual, multi-regional and multi-racial society.

1.9 GLOSSARY

1. **Indian Society:** Indian society is a complex diverse society with a variety of social groups, languages, religions and ethnicities.
2. **Caste System:** A system of ranked groups that is fundamental to South Asian structure.
3. **Languages:** India is a multilingual society with many different mother tongues.
4. **Pluralism:** A condition or system in which two or more states, groups, principles, sources of authority, etc. coexist.

1.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Kosambi, D.D. (1953). "Brahman Clans", *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 73: 202-208.
2. Nagla, B.K. 2023. Indian Sociological Thought. Paperback. Second edition.

1.11 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q1. Discuss various stages of Indian society.

Q2. Discuss the historicity of Indian society.

Q3. How you conceptualize Indian society by various examples.

QUESTIONS OF DIVERSITY: REGIONAL, LINGUISTIC AND RELIGIOUS**STRUCTURE**

- 2.0 Objectives
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Idea of Region
- 2.3 Forms of Region
- 2.4 Languages in India
- 2.5 Idea of Religion
- 2.6 Let us Sum up
- 2.7 Glossary
- 2.8 Self-Assessment Questions
- 2.9 Suggested Readings

2.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this lesson are to equip the students with:

- Various diversities in India
- Region as a form of diversity
- Language as a form of diversity
- Religion as a form of diversity

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Indian society is made up of elements drawn from diverse origins. Within the population of India are subsumed tribes - no less than three hundred ethnically striking difference in social organization and cultural pattern, even material cultures. There is difference in racial strands and ethnic and cultural identities are strongly defined. Almost all religions from tribal forms of animism and totemism to Hindu are in different proportions. The socio-cultural diversity is perhaps the most powerful manifestation of Indian intensity. The social groups with diverse ethnic origins, representing racial stocks from Australoid and Mongoloid to the different branches of the Mediterranean's, western Brachycephalic groups and the Nordics, found a place for themselves at different points of time adopting themselves to the different ecological niches offered by the physiographic and the climate setting of the subcontinent.

Thus, one can say that Indian society is characterized by glaring diversities in its social and cultural features. The roots of these diversities lie in the hoary past. Tracing the origin of social differentiation, in itself a challenging task, may be necessary in order to understand the pluralistic nature of the present-day society.

2.2 IDEA OF REGION

Region in general is interpreted as a geographical entity, a territory on earth. The region is not expressed or represented in total; it is to be expressed geographically only. What is important is that the people inhabiting in a particular region gives colour and meaning to that region. Thus, Norton Ginsberg say that there is no universal definition of the region, except as it refers to some portion of the surface of earth. We may say that region may be interpreted in terms of physical and non-physical phenomenon may be the culture of that region which is shaped and developed by man.

•Region: Interplay of space and communities

Those who love the environment love the people and the country, for they see a close relationship

among the three. The links between environment, resources endowments, and communities and between ecology and community have been explored in the project. This chapter deals with data on region and eco-cultural zones. The notion of space is crucial to ethnography. The people or communities

Generally, derive one of the levels of their identity in their multi-level identity from space. The land lying south of the Himalayas and bound by the oceans was known as India, Hind and Hindustan to outsiders, and as Jambudweep and Bharate Internally. It was intersected by mountains, rivers, forest, pasture, land, deserts, waterfronts and the people inhabiting them, called *Janah*, derived their identity from these territories. *Vara* and Jati emerged along with Janah, and proliferated with the growth of economy and social stratification. However, the people of *Janah* still formed the substratum in various territories. The country was also divided into region, known as *Janapada*, *Rashtravarsa* etc. In the medieval period language seems to have played a role in determination of the boundaries of a province (subs). The British took over this system and reorganized the provinces to suit administrative convenience. In Independent India language was likely factor in the reorganization of the states in the mid-1950s followed by ethnicity, which influenced the formation of states in the North East.

People of India Project have identified 91 micro-regions within 25 states and LITs by ecology languages, history and administration. The cluster of communities with their components and hierarchies are mostly located within the state and within their micro-region. There are some states like Assam with its two-river valley of the Brahmaputra and the Barak, Gujarat and Jammu and Kashmir with their district regions etc. Other states to have their sub-regions or folk areas, the boundaries of which are getting somewhat blurred, owing to mobility, communication, economy and administration. But it is still possible to trace many communities to their homeland.

Regional identity is grounded in objective realities such as ecology, language, cultural, ethnicity, and in subjective perception. Both objective and subjective processes interact in a region which has

evolved in time and space. Of the regional identities, two may be particularly mentioned- one is Kashmiri Yat and the other is Punjabi Yat. Both are identified by ecology, language, history, local form of culture, cuisine, dress, and ethnicity.

Understanding India's regional diversity

Indian society has varied geographical diversity. This diversity gives different colour to the culture of the people living in that area. The regional diversity is so severe that on one end, a population suffers from drought; while on the other end cold climate is there while on other end, people are dying of hot waves. This regional variation, if has only to do with geography then these would have been no problem, but when these variation takes personal interest and political tone then it is against the unity of India.

For an intelligent understanding of the pattern of development of cultures in India, one should begin with the geographic factors. This old concept of region has received a new life in the hands of modern geographic. According to E.W. Gilbert, "Geography is the art of recognizing and describing the personalities of region". Among the systems based on pure geomorphological features, the most satisfactory one seems to be that of Professor M.B. Pithawala. It is based on the main physiographic sub-division: Himalayan uplands, Indo-Gangetic plain and Peninsular India.

The Isolation of India, then is but relative: yet isolated there is, and within the griddle of mountains and seas has developed the almost incredibly complex culture of Hinduism: not unaffected by outside influences, certainly, but, insofar as we can describe the original of some of its yet existing cults in the earliest Indus civilization, native to this soil. Hinduism gives, or until very recently has given, a certain common tone to most of the sub-continent, but it contains within itself a vast range of diversities.

This human heterogeneity is seconded by more purely geographical factors, which give some colour to the generally accepted description of India as a 'Sub- continent'. It is only to be expected that so vast an area, bordered by incomparably the most massive mountains of the world, intersected by

rivers of the first rank, should contain very considerable physical diversity. In essence the sub-continent falls into only three macro-regions: the Extra-Peninsular Mountain Wall; the Indo-Gangetic Plains; the Old Peninsular Block.

By reducing the number of states in India and increasing their average size, the State Reorganization of 1956 has invited fresh attempts at demarcating the economic regions of India. In indicating regional groupings therefore, the census of 1951, the Rural Credit Survey, and various studies by individual scholars cut repeatedly across state lines.

Study of the map of India since the state reorganization of 1950 indicates that it may perhaps now be possible both to take due account of socio-economic factors and at the time to respect state boundaries. In very rough term we may suggest that the following nine state from sufficiently distinctive areas for each of them to be considered as a separate region: Assam, West Bengal, Orissa, Punjab, Kashmir, Rajasthan, Kerala Mysore and Madras.

The census of 1951 divided the country and five regions had fifteen sub- region on the basis of topography, soil and rainfall. The Rural Creed it Survey sponsored by the Reserve Bank of India in 1951-52 grouped in seventy-five districts into thirteen regions, "On the basis of certain considerations of contiguity and of similarity of physical climate and other natural and demographic conditions", Dr. Then Han-Seng, in his yet unpublished monograph on the Agrarian Region of India and Pakistan prepared in 1948-50 used five criteria as follows: topographical situation, agricultural water supply, crop system, land system and general economic development.

2.3 FORMS OF REGION

We may have following regions on the basis of non-physical aspects:

- (i) **Historical Region:** It is one in which there are sacred myths and symbols, held by significant groups within the area, regarding the relationship of people to their past and the geographical entity. Examples: Tamil Nadu-the Tamil speaking portion of

old Madras Presidency; Bundelkhand - the South Western portion of the present state of U.P, which geographically differs from the Gangetic portion of U.P. and has historical connections with a ruling Bundela Rajput.

- (ii) **Linguistic Region:** In this region, there is shared and recognized literary languages, the standardized form of which is identified by the educated group within the area. Languages diversity is assumed as the necessary preconditions, not only to establish the criteria of linguistic region but to differentiate cultural and structural region as well. Example: Awadhi boli region, Pahari, 'Khadi boli' region, Telugu speaking region etc.
- (iii) **Cultural Region:** It is one in which there are widely shared and recognized cultural traits and patterned behaviours. Gods, ritual, myths and festivals are the most frequent diagnostic trait used to establish the particular region. Other kinds of cultural items may be dress, jewel, very agricultural implements, etc.
- (iv) **Structural Region:** It is the one in which there are groups of associate structural variables which differentiate one structural area from another. The attempt to isolate and analysed social structure variable is the most recent attempt to established a reasonable analytical basis for regional study. McKim Marriott's caste ranking and community structure in five regions of India and Pakistan is example of this type Marriott argues that if one takes a structural view of caste and tries to explain the variation in the sub-continent of one major feature of the caste system, that of ranking, one can develop a scale and then compare regions in regard to one major structural feature of the caste system.

Sociological Utility of 'Region'

Region has been used by various social scientists in different ways for understanding various social realities. One such reality is village, the rural, social life analysed in terms of spatial organization. Various sociologists have attempted to locate the factors generating regional variation. This approach

for understanding variable through physical geographical variable is called as regional; approach. Even the works of Sanderson, Kolb, Taylor and other rural sociologists have attempted to develop rural economic and cultural zone in U.S.A.

In Indian context, village are identified as dispersed or nucleated habitats, on the basis of regional approach. N.K. Bose has tried to understand unit as Indian diversity through regional variation, D. Thorner has also talked about demarcation of organise region of India and stated 20 broad economic regions (based on state reorganisation of 1956)

2.4 LANGUAGES IN INDIA

India is the home of a very large number of languages. In fact, so many languages and dialects be spoken in India that it is often described as 'museum of language'. In popular parlance it is often described as 'linguistic pluralism'.

According to Grierson, India has 179 languages and 544 dialects. Though the constitution of India has recognized 18 major languages but as many as 1652 languages and dialects are spoken in our country. Broadly these languages belong to their families of languages: Indo-Aryan, Dravidian and European. The Indo-Aryan languages include Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Oriyan, Punjabi, Bihari, Rajasthani, Assamese, Sanskrit, Sindhi and Kashmiri languages covering about three-fourth of India's population. Dravidian languages include Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kanad. The European language includes English, Portuguese and French. The last two languages are mostly spoken by people in Goa and Pondicherry.

India has always been a multi-lingual civilization with special elite language and constant interaction between the social, regional and all Indian languages. Of their language families the most diverse is the Indo-Aryan with 19 languages grouped under it. The Dravidian family incorporates 17 different speech communities, while the European has 14 languages.

Of the three language families, Indo-Aryan has by far the largest strength of speakers. In fact, three-fourth of the country population claimed one or the other language of the Indo-Aryan family as their

mother tongue. The Dravidian family comes next with 22.5% of the total population claiming affinity to it. The speakers of the European family consist of small groups.

a) Austro - Asiatic Languages:

The domain of the Austro-Asiatic language lies in the mid-India region and extends from Maharashtra to west Bengal. The two outliers of this domain-Khasis and Nicobarese - have their enclaves in Meghalaya and Nicobar Island respectively. Santali is the foremost among the Munda language. The Santali speakers are mainly concentrated in Bihar, West-Bengal and Orissa. About one- half of them live in Bihar, 35% in West Bengal and 13% in Orrisa. The Santalis living in Assam declared santali as their mother tongue. Another significant language of the Munda branch is Mundari. The domain of Ho language lies in Bihar and Orissa. The territories of the Kharia, Kokru and Savara languages extend over Bihar, Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. However, the Savara and speaker are mostly confined to Orissa.

b) Dravidian Languages: The four southern states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Kerala are the home of the major Dravidian languages viz; Telegu, Kannada, Tamil and Malayalam. The highest degree of concentration is seen in the case Malayalam, followed by Tamil. On the other hand, the lowest degree of concentration is revealed in case of Telugu.

There are several minor speech communities within the Dravidian family. Notable among them is: Yurukala, Yerava, Tulu, Coorgi, Gondi and Malto are confined to Bihar. They belong to the northern branch of the Dravidian family. Gondi, which is classified as a language of the central Dravidian branch is the traditional dialect of the Gonds. More than 90% of the Gondi speakers live in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra. The remaining population is found in Andhra Pradesh and Orrisa.

c) Indo-European languages: The speech territory extends from Rajasthan in the west to Asian in the east and from Jammu and Kashmir in the north to Goa in the South,

keeping in view their importance as many as 13 of the Indo-European languages have been included in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. While Hindi and Urdu are spoken across many states including southern states other languages such as Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati Oriya, Punjabi and Assamese are specified to their own state.

There are other Indo-European languages such as Bhili / Bhilodi, Konkani, Kashmiri, Nepali and Sindhi which have their own specific pockets in northern and western India Bhili/Bhilodi speakers is concentrated in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh. The domain and Konkani lie on the Konkan coast from Maharashtra to Kerala.

- **Linguistic and script: Reflection of People of 'India Project'**

The project, included two items one on the languages spoken within the family or kin group and the other on the languages and dialects spoken outside the family and kin group. The project thus generated for the first time community-specific data on languages and dialects of India and the first definitive list of languages and dialects, 325 of them as against the 1961 Census list of 1652 mother tongues, which were reduced to 321 languages and dialects actually spoken by the people, or to 114 languages in the 1991 Census, spoken by 10,000 or more speakers at the all-India level.

POI generated data on languages spoken by all communities in India i.e. 3855 including ST (50), SC (639) and others (2716). There is no cut off point in the POI like the Census which did not include the speakers of languages of a population of 10,000 persons or less.

The Census of India (1961), which counted the speakers of the languages belonging to different languages families, reported the number of speakers according to the percentages of total population as follows: Indo-Aryan (73.3 per cent), Tibeto-Burman (0.73 per cent), Dravidian (24.47 per cent), and Austro-Asiatic (6,192, 495 persons). The 1991 Census shows a marginal increase in the population speaking Indo-Aryan languages (1.9

percent) and Tibeto-Burman languages (0.097 per cent) and a slight decline in the number of Dravidian and Tibeto-Burman languages speakers (1.94 and 0.28 percent respectively). Dravidian languages such as Gandhi have lost ground. The number of communities speaking the languages belonging to the languages families have been reported by POI is as follows: Indo- Aryan (2549), Dravidian (1032), Tibeto-Burman (175), Austro-Asiatic (44), Indo- Iranian (5), Andamanese (4), other languages families (15), and unclassified languages (5), in all 3489 linguistically homogeneous communities listed against each language or dialect out of 4532 communities. The balance of 683 communities that constitute the remaining 15.07 per cent are made up of the sub-groups of one or another language. Out of 730 communities studied across state or union territory boundaries, 350 communities (47.94 per cent) are linguistically homogeneous speaking the same language when they are distributed in more than one state or Union Territory and as many as 380 communities have been heterogeneous speaking different languages across states and Union Territories. It has been further observed that 198 communities are linguistically heterogeneous speaking the respective languages of the language's areas within the state or Union Territory boundaries. The people of India are in all, linguistically diverse, and 2287 communities (50.46 per cent) speak the 14 languages (except Sanskrit) belonging to the English Schedule of the Constitution.

A significant aspect of finding of POI pertains to the number of tribal communities speaking the Dravidian (123 communities), Tibeto-Burman (146 communities), and Austro-Asiatic languages (30 communities), which are far more widespread than indicated by the number and percentage of tribal speaker of these languages. However, at the national level it now appears that the numbers of communities by and large match the percentages of the speakers estimated by the Census. Hindi is spoken by the largest number communities (1099) and Urdu by 162 communities. Together with the number of those who are bilingual in both languages, we have coverage of 57 per cent

of the communities of India. Telugu comes next with 361 communities. Marwari is the most widespread dialect.

After the reorganization of states on the basis of languages which means the scheduled languages there is a preponderance of the speakers of that language in every region. Yet all states continue to be multilingual and multi-scriptural because of the presence of speakers of other languages belonging to the same language's family and a small presence of immigrants represented by speakers of other languages families. The monolingual communities (1523) are largest in Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Gujarat, Kerala, and smallest in northeast India, because of the large number of tribal languages. Monolingualism is lowest in Bihar. It is also low in U.P and other north-western states in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh Karnataka and Andhra.

There is often a tendency to equate languages with race, but barring most of the speakers of Tibeto-Burman languages and of Andamanese, Parses and Jews, no other family of languages can be identified with one morphological type or group. The speaker of Aryan and Dravidian languages belongs almost to the same morphological groups. The ecologically diverse Northeast is linguistically the most heterogeneous part of India a Hindi state like Bihar in spite of ecological diversities is the least monolingual.

2.5 IDEA OF RELIGION

Religion can be understood as belief in supernatural forces. To Durkheim, it is unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things that is to say, things set apart and forbidden. All religion organization depends upon the belief, knowledge and training to exercise influence upon their members. Religions belief is thus the cognitive aspect of religion.

Hindu communities, 3539 in all, are spread all over the country except in Lakshadweep. Hindu communities show an extraordinary range of heterogeneity, genetical, morphological, linguistic, and culture. Social divisions widely exist in the form of phratry, moiety, clans, sub castes and sub-tribes. Hierarchy with divisions exists among communities place themselves at high level, 46.7 per cent at the middle level and 31.1 per cent at the low level.

The Muslim communities (584) are distributed over almost all states, in the following order: Uttar Pradesh (70), Jammu and Kashmir (59), Gujarat (87), Rajasthan (44), Andhra Pradesh (38), Bihar (41), Karnataka (27), Delhi (30), Maharashtra (25), Tamil Nadu (23), Madhya Pradesh (26), West Bengal (21), Himachal Pradesh (19), Kerala (10) and Pondicherry (10), in Lakshadweep, Assam, Haryana and Chandigarh (7 each); in Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Tripura and Daman and Diu (3 each); In Nagaland and Orissa (2) and in Manipur, Sikkim, Goa, Dadra and Nagar Haveli (one each). Even though the Muslim uniformly share the tenets of their faith, they are rooted in various ecological niches and culture systems, The Muslim communities are also thus heterogeneous and differ from one another in biological, linguistic and cultural traits. The Muslims are mainly situated in rural-urban situation (253) followed by those living exclusively in rural (203) and urban (103) settings. Five Muslim communities such as Watal, Lalbegi Madari / Kalander claim the status of the Scheduled castes and 19 communities have been returned as the Scheduled Tribes Of the total number of Muslim communities, a very large, number, 60.8 per cent have migrated to their present habitat in recent years. While Urdu has been returned as the mother tongue by a majority of the Muslims, 46.27 per cent of the Muslims have also returned the scheduled/ regional languages as their

mother tongues. Social divisions among Muslims exist on a relatively smaller scale in the form of clans (22.4 per cent), sects (9.4 per cent), sub-castes (10.6 per cent), bands and sub-tribes. Hierarchy with social divisions also exists. Differentiation is reported at social, economic, religious (sects) occupational and territorial level.

The Christian communities are heterogeneous like other communities as they are drawn from various socio-cultures, background, and from various categories of groups such as the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, and other communities in various regions. Generally, a great many pre-conversions practise survive among the Christians who share a good deal non-Christian community. The Christians communities (339) are distributed mainly in the southern states such as Tamil Nadu (65), Andhra Pradesh (29), Karnataka (22), Kerala (13) and in the north eastern states such as Assam, Arunachal Pradesh (23) Manipur (23) Nagaland (19), Mizoram (15), and Meghalaya (15). They also live in Tripura (12), West Bengal (10), Maharashtra (14), Andaman and Nicobar Island (9), Orissa (7), Goa (6), Bihar and Madhya Pradesh (5 each) and so on. Social division survive among most of them (76.1) such as phratry (15), moiety (9), clan 190 (56 per cent), and lineages 106 (31.3 per cent). There are sub-castes (9) and sub-tribes (23) among these communities. Hierarchy with social divisions exist among a large number community. Hierarchy with social division exist among a large number.

There are 130 Sikh communities in India, living in Punjab (39), Delhi (20), Chandigarh (15), Haryana (17), Jammu and Kashmir (5), Uttar Pradesh (5), Himachal Pradesh (8), Rajasthan (4), Andhra Pradesh (3), Maharashtra (3), Assam (2) West Bengal (2) and so on. Social division are reported (90.0 per cent) in the form of clans (76.9 per cent) sects (12.3 per cent) and sub castes (22.3 per cent). Hierarchy with social divisions is returned (26.9 per cent against 22.6 per cent). Differentiation is reported at social economic occupations and territorial levels. There is a perception of the three-tier hierarchy. Fifty-three (40.8 per cent) communities perceive themselves as placed high 45.4 per cent at the middle level and 13.8 per cent as placed low. A majority of Sikh

communities have land as their economic resources but a very large number are landless. They are engaged in settled cultivation (3 per cent) in labour (37.7 per cent), animal husbandry, industry, trade and business, government service, private, and self-employment which is as high as 64.6 per cent against the national average of 52.0 per cent.

The Buddhist communities (93) which constitute two percent of all communities are mainly distributed in Arunachal Pradesh (18) Assam (11), Uttar Pradesh (9), West Bengal (7), Himachal Pradesh (6), Jammu and Kashmir (6), Delhi (4), Andhra Pradesh (3) and so on. Most of the Buddhist communities belong to the Scheduled Tribes and share tribal characteristics. The neo-Buddhists another important segment of the Buddhist community consists of such groups as Mahars, Jatay, etc. who are imbued with Baba Saheb B. R. Ambedkar's ideology stressing equality and self-respect and have pushed forward in the arena of political and development.

The Jain communities one hundred in all, are distributed mainly in the central and western states such as Madhya Pradesh (18), Maharashtra Rajasthan and Gujarat

(13) and sporadically in Punjab (2), Bihar (3), Uttar Pradesh (2), Himachal Pradesh (2), even in the state of Nagaland, Meghalaya, Assam, Jammu and Kashmir, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Pondicherry, Daman and Diu, Haryana and Chandigarh. They are mostly located in rural-urban situation (58), followed by their exclusive settlement in urban areas (34), a small number of them also live in rural areas. The Jains have now rapidly moved into government service (90.0 per cent) alongside of private service (66.0 per cent), and self-employment (63 per cent).

Among the other religious minorities we studied Jews, Parsis (9), and other, which include the followers of tribal religions (411).

Note: Write your answers in the space given below.

a) Who has written the book “The Caste System in India”

- i) Dumont

ii) Srinivas

- iii) Ghurye

iv) Marx

b) According to Grierson how many languages there are

- i) 100 ii) 78

- iii) 21 iv) 179

c) Who are called as service providers

- i) Vaishyas ii) Shudras

- iii) None of these iv) Brahmins

2) Answer the following questions in two lines

a) Define Region.

b) Define Religion.

c) What is meant by the term Regionalism.

Answers: a) iii b) iv c) ii

The above discussion dealt basically with the issue of diversity in India. It discussed especially with reference to region, religion and language. Through this chapter we came to know the various forms of diversity within each category. But we should not feel that these diversities lead to more disintegration of society. The chapter on unity in diversity will make up understand that how these various diversities are put together on a common platform and reflect cultural plurality with integration.

2.7 GLOSSARY

1. **Region:** A part of the country or the world. Basically, a region is an area.
2. **Religion:** Human Beings relation to which they regard as holy, sacred, absolute, spiritual, divine or worthy of especial reverence.
3. **Language:** The system of Communication in speech and writing that is used by people of a particular country.

2.8 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q1. What do you mean by region? Discuss it in terms of diversity.

Q2. How religion can be understood as an agency of diversity in India.

Q3. Are languages a problematic issue in India? Discuss briefly.

2.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Singh, K. S; 1992: *People of India*. Oxford Publication New Delhi.
2. Ahmad, Aijaz Uddin; 1999; *Social Geography*, Rawat Publisher, New Delhi.
3. Desai, A. R; 1969; *Rural sociology in India*, Popular Prakashan, Bombay.
4. Srinivas, M.N.; 1986; *India: Social Structure*, Hindustan Publishing Corporation, Delhi.

PEOPLES OF INDIA: GROUPS AND COMMUNITIES

STRUCTURE

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 A Note on Project Series
- 3.3 Conceptual Framework & Methodology
- 3.4 Ecology, Space and Communities
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- 3.10 Suggested Readings

3.0 OBJECTIVES

In this lesson you will be able to know about:

- Various communities in India.
- Details of 'People of India' project.
- Regional, Linguistic & Regions Variation of Indian communities.
- Various Social organisations in India.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The first edition of 'People of India' (POI): *An Introduction*, Volume I, was published by the Anthropological Survey of India in May 1992. The project had been in the making for many years and it was decided by the competent authority to publish a preview of the People of India project and display the book in the library of the Parliament by 6 May 1992.

Thirty volumes have been published and 13 remaining volumes have been finalized. The second revised edition of Volume I, incorporates the final report. On scrutiny, a few of the segments and territorial units were also shifted. However, the data set of 4635 communities has been maintained for the purpose of analysis and interpretation, even though the total number of communities studied now stands at 4694. The 'People of India' project was initially launched by the ASI on 2nd October, 1985. As there existed an information about large number of communities of India, and/or the information that existed on them was scanty and needed to be updated, the objective of the project was to generate a brief, descriptive anthropological profile of all communities of India, the impact on them of change and development processes, and the linkages that bring them together. Unlike the surveys in the colonial period, which covered British India and a few princely states, the project covered the whole country, bringing within its purview parts that had not been ethnographically surveyed earlier or had been surveyed in a perfunctory way. Each state and union territory were treated as a unit of the study. It was decided to start with the investigation of the least-known communities and then move on to the field study of the lesser-known and better-known ones. The ASI received ample cooperation, particularly from the welfare and backward classes departments of the state governments, local officers of the Census of India, tribal research institutes, university departments of anthropology, and other departments of local universities. The progress in the investigation and coverage of communities from 2 October 1985 to 31 March 1991 was most encouraging. It was possible to identify, locate, and study 4635 communities in all states and union territories of India, out of the 6748 communities listed initially.

According to schedule of publications, the 43-volume series generated under the POI project is being published in two parts. The first consists of the nine-volume national series, which contains an abstract of the material on all communities spread across the length and breadth of the country, and the analyses of the data, which have been strengthened by the addition of information from the census and other secondary sources. The national series include two volumes on Scheduled Castes (SC) and Scheduled Tribes (ST) prepared as part of the celebration of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's birth centenary.

3.2 A NOTE ON THE PROJECT SERIES

There is an information gap on a very large number of communities in India, and the existing information is scanty or needs to be updated. The Anthropological Survey of India (ASI) launched a project on the People of India on 2 October 1985. The objective of the project was to generate a brief, descriptive, anthropological profile of all the communities of India, the impact on them of change and development processes, and the links that bring them together. This was in accordance with the objectives of the ASI established 45 years ago in December 1945. The ASI has been pursuing bio-cultural research among different population groups from its eight regional centres. Its objectives were redefined in the policy resolution and adopted in 1985, which commits this organization to a survey of the human surface of India.

The identification of the communities and their listing began at an early period of our history, with Manu. Regional lists of communities figured in Sanskrit works. Medieval chronicles contained a description of communities located in various parts of the country. Listings in the colonial period were undertaken on the extensive scale, after 1806. The process gathered momentum during the censuses from 1881 to 1941. In compilation of the lists of the communities of India under the People of India project, they drew upon ethnographical surveys, the lists of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes drawn up by the Government of India, the lists of backward classes prepared by Backward Classes Commissions set up by various state governments, and the list included in the

Mandal Commissions Report. They were able to put together about 6748 communities at the start. This list was taken to the field, tested, and checked, and finally 4635 communities were identified and studied.

The progress in the investigation and coverage of communities from 2 October 1985 to 31 March 1992 was steady and impressive. They were able to identify, locate, and study 4635 communities in all the states and union territories of India, out of the 6748 listed initially. As many as 500 scholars participated in this project, including 197 from 26 institutions. About 100 workshops and rounds of discussions were held in all the states and union territories, and in these about 3000 scholars participated. The investigators spent 26,510 days in the field, which works out to 5.5 days per community studied in the various states and union territories of India.

A major achievement of this project was the preparation of maps showing the distribution of the communities and the locations at which they were studied. About 4000 maps were prepared. Yet another achievement was the visual documentation of the 'People of India' as part of the field operations. About 21,362 photographs were generated, most of them in black and white, and a substantial number of colours, by amateur photographers.

It should be noted that the study of the communities has been conducted in 3581 villages and 1011 towns situated in 421 districts of the states and union territories of India. The information was collected from about 25,000 of the 'learned' informants by the scholars, 500 of them, over the period 1985 to 1992. Therefore, the observations relate to this limited time frame and to the universe of the ethnographic project titled 'People of India'. The percentages relate strictly to the response made by information schedule guidelines.

3.3 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK & METHODOLOGY

There are two dimensions to the perception of a people; one is its perception by others and other its perception of itself. The people living across Sindhu were identified as the Hindu and territory was Bharat or Hindustan. As the people became self-aware, they identified their constituents from very

early days, by territory, craft or occupation, Jati or Varna, and even religion. Gradually the perceptions by people and those of 'others' converged. From the fourth century AD, the concept of Bharat as we understand it emerged, with its diversities, and a vibrant sense of unity.

Medieval chronicles such as *Ain-i-Akbari* contain interesting accounts of what we call a dominant community today, of landowning communities, groups of artisans, forest-dwelling communities, and so on. However, it was during the colonial periods that were taken up systematically of the communities, which were listed from 1806 onwards for economics and administrative reasons. This period could be divided into two phases. The first phase extended from the establishment of the East India Company to the first War of independence (1857), when information was generated about trade, economy, and crafts engaged in by the various communities with which the Company's administration came into contact. After the establishment of the Raj from 1857 onwards, in the second phase, an intensive investigation of castes started.

Around the mid-1880's, in the second sub-phase, serious ethnographic investigation was undertaken. In 1885, three ethnographers, C.J. Ibbotson, John C. Nesfield, and H.H. Risely, met in Bombay to discuss and finalize a 27-point format of what later turned out to be the first ethnographic survey of India. The items listed in this format derived from the colonial ethnographers' concern-almost obsession-with caste and its peculiarities such as exogamous and endogamous divisions, limits of marriage, history, sexual licence before marriage and prostitution laws of inheritance, local religion, life-cycle ceremony, occupation, and commensal norms regarding food.

The age of descriptive ethnography came to an end with the onset of the 'critical' phase of Indian anthropology, as the focus of research shifted to micro-level studies including the writing of monographs on tribe and castes, in the best traditions of the structural-functionalist school of anthropology, which provided a holistic perspective. What was gained in consequence was an in-depth view rather than an overview of the communities. After almost 40 years of intensive research, which also generated and discarded, many a model, it is now realised that while our insight has

depended, our knowledge of the people as a whole and at the macro level has not actually grown. In order to understand a society of such complexity and of such continental proportions as ours, what is required is not only a series of monographic studies but also the surveys simultaneously undertaken so that both insight and perspective can be combined to yield a meaningful study of our people.

As the new project was conceptualized and later designed to bridge this information gap, two problems emerged. The first was whether such a community-wise study did not offend Article 15 of the Fundamental Rights of the Constitution of India, which forbade discrimination between citizens on grounds of religion, age, caste, sex, or any of them. In accordance with the policy to discourage community distinction based on caste, the Census of India 1951, departed from the traditional recording of race or caste except in the matter of the SC/ST. So strong has been the bias against such enumeration that even the *National Gazetteer*, which describes the physical Characteristics of the people of India, does not deal with the ethnography of castes, the 'official' pursuit of which appears to have been discarded or at least reached a dead end.

The Constitution of India speaks of the 'People of India'. One of the Fundamental Duties laid down in the Constitution is to promote harmony and the spirit of common brotherhood among all the people of India, transcending religious, linguistic, and regional or sectional diversities, and to value and preserve the rich heritage of our composite culture. The Constitution also recognizes five social categories, namely: (1) the Scheduled Tribes (2) the Scheduled Castes (3) socially and educationally backward classes and other weaker sections, (4) minorities, linguistic and religious, and (5) Anglo-Indians. The state governments have drawn up the lists of socially and educationally backward classes. These five categories account for nearly 80 per cent of the communities of India. **Article 15A** speaks of all people of India. Therefore, taking up the study of all people of India is not inconsistent with any provision of the Constitution, nor is it particularly inconsistent with **Article 15A** of the Constitution. In fact, no discrimination is involved in the study of all communities.

There has been a great deal of interaction between the Census of India and the ASI, but there has

been no similarity in the operations conducted by the two organisations. On the face of it, there is a difference in the methodology of enumeration undertaken by the Census of India and that of the study of such communities by the ASI or other organizations or scholars. The census counts heads and generates data in terms of demographic, socio-economic, linguistic, and religious parameters. The Census of 1931, which was the most comprehensive of all censuses of India, fully covered for the first time the primitive tribes and exterior caste, known as tend the SC respectively. The policy resolution revised in 1985 commits the ASI more explicitly to the anthropological study of all people of India and to the survey of its population. The ASI has developed the necessary infrastructure and competence to undertake this task, which it has already performed in carrying out a number of projects relating to physical and social anthropology.

The ASI has produced 164 tribal studies (1984). Less than 50 per cent of STs have been studied and the study of the SCs in monographs has not gone beyond that of the Chamars and a few others. There remain a large number of economically and social backward classes about whom not a scrap of information exists, much less up-to-date information. Between the so-called 'advanced' communities and the minorities, the latter appear to have been better studied. The 'advanced' communities recently studied are Marwaris, Kayastha and Brahmins. Contrary to general impressions the ethnographic surveys of different regions of the country did not cover all communities. To give an example: E. Thurston in his monumental seven-volume work on southern India covers about 529 communities and refers to very large numbers of sub-castes (28), clans (494), sub-divisions (519), titles (153), and synonyms. According to our own list for the south there are 1200 communities (excluding sub-divisions, etc.), which means that a large number of them have remained unstudied.

In 1976, the Anthropological Survey of India was entrusted with the task of designing the first museum of anthropology. Both anthropology and anthropological museum which was known as the museum of man were located in the zoological departments that stressed the 'genetical' relationship between zoology and anthropology. The first outline of the National Museum of Anthropology

brought out by the Anthropological Survey of India in 1977 sought to bring together the perspectives on these subjects generated by physical anthropology, archaeology and cultural anthropology. This project was revised in 1982 to stress contextualisation, the linkages with environment, technology and culture. The museum was not going to be a museum that will combine both the universal and national perspectives on biological variation and cultural diversities.

This formed together with other developments the background to the 'People of India' project launched in 1985, in terms of the parameters of rapidly emerging post-colonial ethnography extending beyond the territorial (provinces) limits of colonial ethnography. For the first time, the People of India project undertook the survey of human surface of the entire country. Keeping in mind the provisions of the Constitution of India for the groups, such as, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes, linguistic and religious minorities that it identifies for special treatment, the project also noted the provisions of equality and social justice that had to be translated in terms of equal treatment of all people in the survey and anthropological studies.

The Conceptual Framework

The physical coverage apart, there were difficulties in establishing the conceptual framework of such a study. A distinction is made these days between society and state or citizen and nationality. We are concerned with a broad definition of community. A community is marked by territoriality, the 'we' feeling, and a social system. There are many types of communities, backward and forward, rural and urban, regional and national. In this project, we are concerned with the community as generally studied in ethnography, which is marked inter alia by endogamy, occupation, and perception. The old ethnographic surveys were concerned with exploring caste and its sub-divisions. In fact, the ethnographers seemed to take a peculiar delight in describing the divisions and sub-divisions, clans, titles, and synonyms rather than the structural aspect of caste or its ideological base as it existed at that point of time. Some of them gave greater importance and large space to the description of clans or sub-castes which formed an endogamous unit. For them this was more

important than to identify larger formations such as caste-clusters or wider networks. At the cognitive level, castes considered themselves degraded either by pollution of food or touch or by marriage, which led to the formation of the category of Varna Shankar, a notion that orientalist ethnographers like Risley tried assiduously to locate or foist on some communities.

Notion of Community

The first problem concerned the definition of this type of community in an all- India framework. It required a level of conceptualization that could subsume caste, non-caste structures, the minorities, and those who stood outside the varna-jati framework. First, jati is not an all-India word for caste; there is also the word kulam or samudaya. While caste or caste-like structures are shared by a large number of communities, there are a few communities which both ideologically and in practice deny following caste norms. Caste has weakened to some extent in recent years in terms of its adherence to hereditary occupation and norms of purity and pollution. It has also acquired new strength in political sense as a constituency and as a vote bank. In fact, it is acquiring the characteristics of a community as it sheds some of its traditional features. Therefore, the word 'community' or 'samudaya' (as it is called in Kerala and other states) could be a more appropriate concept for an all-India reference than 'caste' with its various local names. Scholars also told us that jati is inadequate as a concept. They expressed their support for the term 'community' (samudaya), which was less 'offensive' and sounded more meaningful and befitting than 'jati'. The community is also a large social entity; jati is a closed structure, endogamous and placed in a hierarchy within the parameters of purity and pollution. In fact, the triangle of endogamy, hierarchy, and pollution norms is breaking down, as mentioned above. For operational purposes, therefore, 'community' is considered the appropriate term and could relate to caste, tribal, and other non-caste-like categories.

The Methodology

The study of all communities of India, big and small, was undertaken in terms of the parameters of a modern post-colonial anthropological study, uniformly and equally. The objective of the present project as mentioned above was to generate a brief profile of each community, the processes of

change, inter-community linkages, and attitude to development so as to provide a holistic perspective. At best endogamy is only one level of identity. There are many other levels of identity, such as perception, occupation, and other parameters.

While it is recognized that a community categorically cuts across the present political and administrative boundaries of a state or a union territory, the ASI has always recognized the state and the union territories in our federal structure as the unit of study. In this project also, each state and union territory of India is the universal of our study. A community is seen in various cultural zones within a state, which is also a linguistic, cultural, and in some parts a multi-ethnic formation.

The 15-point format of the Scheduled Guidelines (Appendix A) sought to generate information on such items as (1) nomenclature, identity, history, migration, distribution, natural environment, constitutional status, etc., (2) bio-anthropological material, (3) food and food habits, (4) social divisions hierarchy, and stratification, (5) Institution of marriage, (6) family, (7) status of women, (8) life-cycle rituals, (9) occupation and economic activities, (10) mechanism of social controls, (11) religious attributes, (12) art and culture, (13) inter-community linkages, (14) attitude towards development process and impact, and (15) any other observation of importance concerning the life and culture of the community.

The guidelines for the study of a community were thus divided into four parts. The first was of a general nature about a community's perception of its history, migration, distribution, and identity as reflected in its myths and jati, purana or ethnographic accounts, which were checked to see if there was any change in their self-perception. Myths are being constantly adapted and recreated. The old ethnographic accounts had one kind of myth about degradation. Today, the old myths have been discarded or have been modified to reflect a new attitude of self-respect formed by the set of new, radical realities. Therefore, correlation between changing myths and the pattern of social change was established as far as possible. Similarly, while collecting information about a community, various levels of the perception of its identity, in terms of both larger or 'generic' and small categories, have

been considered.

The second part of the format, reflecting the many dimensions explored by anthropology in recent times, with special reference to bio-anthropological traits, food and food habits, status of women, art and culture, and other aspects. The ethnographers were aware of the order of hierarchy in which various Communities were ranked. Studies have revealed the existence of both Varna and non-Varna-like hierarchies, the latter fore were collected on the spatial spread of such hierarchies and of distribution of various traits.

This leads us to the question of interaction and interrelation of communities at the grassroots level. As mentioned earlier, old ethnographers like Risley had taken literally Manu's concept of Varna, of mixed marriages, of hyper gamy and hypo gamy and tried to trace the formation of caste to inter-marriages as laid down in Manusmriti. Shades of this exist in Risley's work on eastern India and have been reported by our investigators. But there are aspirations to seek a higher status. In recent years, many disciplines have tried to explore the process of integration of communities. The old ethnographic accounts described a community in isolation, even though gave information about interdependence in isolation, even though they gave information about interdependence in terms of ritual observance, economic function, etc. However, colonial ethnography generally ignored linkages of communities. Our objective is to explore this dimension of interaction closely to see how our communities share, interact, and integrate at the grassroots level and in the local situation. In anthropology today, the concept of network also needs to be explored in terms of the roles of the elite, scholar, entrepreneur, white- and blue-collar workers, function of migration, etc., in catalysing and integrating a community in the changing social situation. Irrespective, this was essentially an ethnographic project centred on a community. It was not a household survey, a sample survey, or one based on counting of heads. The focus was on ethnography, which is the study of a community, and not on territory. Therefore, wherever a community was accessible, it was studied there.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Note: Write your answers in the space given below.

1) Write a short note on ecology, space and communities.

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2) What is Social Organization.

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3) Discuss briefly languages and scripts.

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3.4 ECOLOGY, SPACE & COMMUNITIES

Those who love the environment love the people and the country, for they see a close relationship among the three. The links between environment, resource endowments, and communities and between ecology and community have been explored in the project. This part deals with the data on regions and eco-cultural zones the notion of space is crucial to ethnography. The people or communities generally derive one of the levels of their identity in their multi-level identity from space. The land lying south of the Himalayas and bound by the ocean was known as India, Hind and Hindustan to outsiders and as jambudweep and Bharat internally. It was intersected by mountains, rivers, forest, pastures land, and deserts their identity from these territories. Varna and jati emerged along with janah, and proliferated with the growth of economy and social stratification. However, the people or janah still formed the substratum in various territories. The country was also divided into regions, known as rashtravarsa, etc. In the medieval period, language seems to have played a

role in determination of the boundaries of province (Suva). In independent India language was the key factor in the recognition of the states in the mid-1950s following by ethnicity, which influenced the formation of states in the North-East. Ecology, ethnicity and backwardness seem to have determined the formation of the three states of Uttaranchal, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand in 2001. We have presented our data in terms of the states (25) and union territories (7) as they existed in the 1980s. 91 micro-regions within 25 states and UTs are identified by people of India by ecology, language, history and administration. As mentioned earlier, the cluster of communities with their components and hierarchies are mostly located within the states and within their micro-regions.

Regional identity is grounded in objective realities such as ecology, language, culture, ethnicity, and in subjective perception. Both objective and subjective processes interact in regions which have evolved in time space. Of the regional identities, two may be particularly mentioned-one is Kishmiriyat and the other is Punjabiya. Both are identified by ecology, language, history, local form of culture, cuisine, dress, and ethnicity-a cluster of communities and components. Within the broad rubric of the regional identity and similarities, there are also differences among communities in terms of region, food habits, and ways of preparing food and dressing, etc. In fact, our endeavour has been to explore regional identity in its biological, linguistic, and cultural dimensions and to show the extent of sharing and togetherness among communities.

Four types of communities were identified for study in this survey. The first consists of the very large categories of communities including castes, tribes, and minorities. The second consists of the linguistic and cultural categories of most of the speakers of the scheduled languages listed in the English Schedule of the Constitution of India-Assamese, Bengali, Gujarati, Rajasthani, Tamil and so on. When these communities emigrated, they were known by the state and language area to which they belonged.

The relationship of the community and its segments need to be discussed briefly at this stage. There is a range of variations in this relationship. For instance, there are first the segments which are

autonomous, ethnically and territorially distinct, and almost independent of one another. The Adi, Naga, Monpa, Mishmi, Kachari/ Boro, Tangsa, Mizos, almost all of the major tribes with their tribal groups in north- east belong to 'generic' political categories which have recently emerged. From the mainland there is the Gond, constellation of 31 communities, while the Bhil are made up of 10 communities. The Kolis show wide-ranging formations as peasants, tribes, fisherfolk; a section of them were involved in state formation and wielded power and are recognized as Koli-Rajput. Second, there are large, complex, territorial formations with clusters of endogamous groups (jatis) among Brahmans and the Scheduled Castes like Shilpakar, Chamar, Doms; Peasant groups like Vokkaliga (10), Reddy (34), Maravar (12), Velalala (20), Kunbi (9); Religious communities like Lingyat (18), traders like Chettair (10) and others like Yerukala (6). Third, large clusters of exogamous divisions exist among widely spread-out communities. There were very large formations reportedly having 250 to 500 clans and gotras such as Rajputs (250), Brahmans (131), Holeya (110), Sonar (100), Jats (95), and Kumars (90). There are large, complex territorial formations with clusters of endogamous jatis or exogamous clans often existing in hypergamous relationship among most of the Brahmans, Rajput's, and Banias. There are tribal communities consisting of segments which are endogamous but have a great deal in common with one another, such as the Gond, Bhils, Minasetc. There are some segments which have ceased to be endogamous or have become part of the large endogamous community. They have retained only the names and forms of segments, but for all practical purposes the entire community is one endogamous whole. These communities are Balmiki, Bairagi, Khatik, Kuli, Lambadi, Namsudra, and Nicobarese. Fourth, there are small groups with only a few segments.

An interesting finding of our project concerns the spread of the communities across the states. Out of 2795 communities, 2006 communities are restricted to one state or union territory, while 778 communities are distributed in adjacent states or union territories. Thus 71.77 per cent of the communities are located within the states or union territory boundaries. This shows that our states and union territories are not only linguistic and cultural but also ethnic or 'social' categories.

Communities distributed across a large part of the country number 111 (3.97 per cent). The Dhobi, Jain, Jat, Mali, Pasi, and Sansi are distributed in eight states, while the Bairagi, Chamar, Khatri, and Rajput are spread over nine states. The Lohar and Pathan live in 10 states, while the Khatri exist in 11 states.

The communities inhabit all climatic zones of India. Most of them live in warm and temperate zone (2211), followed by moderate (1853), cold (639), extreme warm (434), and extreme cold (111) zones. Some of the communities are found in more than one zone. The plains account for the largest concentration of the communities (2485), followed by the hilly terrain (1197) plateau (804) coasts (686) valleys (236) Semi-arid regions (240) high altitudes (102) deserts (69) islands (29).

a) Scheduled Tribes

POI has studied 461 scheduled tribes of which 172 are segments. They constitute about 8 per cent of total population and are spread over all the states except Punjab and Haryana and over all Union Territories except Chandigarh, Delhi and Pondicherry. They inhabit all climatic zones but most of them are concentrated in the hilly areas of the country, northeast, middle India and southern India and the islands. They are heterogeneous, biologically, culturally and linguistically. The other characteristics of tribal population are their relative isolation, various modes of subsistence ranging from hunting and gathering, shifting cultivation to terms and settle cultivation and labour, many forms of marriage, bride price, barter, colourful attire etc.

They are also heterogeneous, biologically, culturally and linguistically as they are spread over wide spaces. Most of the tribal communities are marked by division and even by incipient forms of hierarchy, even though the tribes are relatively egalitarian. They have been influenced by the development process, particularly education. Forms of private property emerged. While the tribes practise all religions of the country, there has been a revival of ancient tribal religion as a marker of their identity.

b) Scheduled Castes

POI studied 751 scheduled castes, spread all over the country except in Nagaland, Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep. They present a highly heterogeneous profile, culturally, biologically and linguistically. There are divisions within a community and there exists hierarchy both within a community and outside it. They are mainly land-less with little control over resources such as land, forest and water. While untouchability had disappeared, untouchability persists in many pockets, and not only between the Scheduled Castes and other communities but also within and between categories of the Scheduled Castes. They have been increasingly involved in modern occupation including government services. While the development process had made an impact, they are yet to achieve a measure of equality. The old myths which legitimized degradation are being discarded. Instead, there is a new sense of self-respect, and self-assertion symbolized by new literary and art forms.

c) Other Backward Classes

Revised work of peoples of India (1992) carries the Central list of Other Backward Classes notified by the Government of India based on the entries common to both the Mandal list and state lists, to which the National Commission for Backward Classes have also added a few more communities identified as OBCs by the organization.

The Government of India as on 1 February 2001 has notified 2267 communities as OBCs. They have been identified in terms of educational and social backwardness. They are spread over all states of India except the four tribal states of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya and Mizoram, and all union territories except Lakshadweep and Dadra & Nagar Haveli. Although, most of them are restricted to one state, there are 331 communities spread over adjoining areas and a large part of the country such as the Banjaras, Barba/Hajam/Nai/Joggi, Mali, Dhobi, Teli, Carpenter, Badi etc. They are concentrated in Maharashtra (220), Orisa (197), Tamil Nadu (179), Karnataka (178), Bihar (127), Assam (123), Andhra Pradesh (103), and Andhra Pradesh (103). The smallest numbers are from Goa and Himachal Pradesh.

They mostly consist of artisan groups pursuing occupation traditionally considered inferior, middle level peasants and workers/labourers. There are also some nomadic, semi-nomadic and ex-communal tribes. According to a study conducted by us earlier for 1064 communities, most of them live in the plains. They are non- vegetarians; they consume mostly coarse grains. They were generally perceived as occupying a low position, pay bride price, and re-marry.

A later study confirmed that the OBCs mainly represent intermediate peasants, artisans and labour, a higher proportion of the community's benefit of reservation accounts for a higher representation in government service. Other traits that stand out are payment of dowry in cash and kind and replacement of bride price with dowry reflects the growing strength of the educated elite. However, the perception of the lower social status among the OBC is as high as 78.09 per cent as against the national average 72.19 per cent, which underlines social backwardness despite educational advancement.

D) Religious Categories

All religious communities at one level project themselves as monolithic or homogeneous; however, at another level they are structurally different.

Hindu communities, 3539 in all, are spread all over the country except in Lakshadweep. Hindu society articulates diversities of continental dimensions. The Hindu communities show an extraordinary range of heterogeneity, genetical morphological (being a mixed group), linguistic, and cultural. Social divisions widely exist in the form of phratry, moiety, clans, sub-castes and sub-tribes. Hierarchy with divisions exists among a quarter of the communities. In Hindu society, 21.6 per cent communities place themselves at high level, 46.7 per cent at the middle level and 31.1 per cent at the low level.

3.5 LANGUAGE AND SCRIPTS

The ASI published its findings on the survey of linguistic convergence conducted in 1977-79. The findings were many. In terms of kinship terminology, the words for farther, mother, grandmother, grandfather, and uncle are more commonly used in all of the four language families. The vigesimal (counting in twenties) system of counting is found in both Tibeto-Burman and Austro-Asiatic languages. This trait originally belonged to the Austro-Asiatic languages. The multiplicative numeral system of the Indo-Aryan was borrowed by the Austro -Asiatic languages. Various kinds of echo- formations attributed to the Austric family are found in all other languages families of India.

3.6 SOCIAL ORGANIZATION

Most of the communities by POI are characterized by division, hierarchy, endogamy, commensality, occupation, and descent in lesser or greater degrees. In fact, each community considers it distinct from others, and endeavours to preserve its autonomy or exclusiveness in matters of marriage, various other forms of contact, occupation, commensality, etc. Every community both looks up to some and looks down upon others. Even the lowest placed one has someone to look down upon in the local situation.

Social divisions include phratry, moiety, and band, exogamous units including clan, lineage, sects, sub-castes and sub-tribes.

Phratry is reported among about 151 communities belonging to mostly the Scheduled Tribes including the Gond tribe of central India. The second largest area of concentration of phratry is in the northeast, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, and Meghalaya.

Moiety exists in about 64 communities, most of which are tribes. Arunachal Pradesh reports the highest incidence of moiety followed by Nagaland, Assam, Orissa, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, and so on.

Band organization is reported from 16 hunting and food-gathering communities. Clan organization is the most pervasive and is found in almost two-thirds of the communities, including 131 Muslim

groups, followed by lineage. The clan and lineage formations are generally reported to exist in a caste society. But there are strong clans in tribal society in Mizoram, Nagaland, and Arunachal Pradesh and in parts of tribal middle India.

Social anthropologists reported the distribution of kinship traits all over India which they divided into four regions: western, southern, central, and eastern, with their characteristic features. The POI data have confined most of their findings and even go beyond them. For example, village exogamy is almost non-existent in the south, which is unique for its surname exogamy. Village exogamy is present in high proportion among the communities of Mizoram, Punjab, Haryana, Chandigarh, Himachal Pradesh, Assam, and Rajasthan. Most communities follow exogamy of various types. The exogamous units include the clans (41.3 per cent), gotra (27.4 per cent), surname (16 per cent), and other units (16.9 per cent). Where clan exogamy does not exist, surname exogamy prevails in a higher degree among the communities of Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. Most communities follow exogamy of various types, the dominant type being clan gotra and surname exogamy. There are also instances of endogamy at clan and gotra levels (107 communities) because of the looseness of these structures but beyond the prohibited degrees of generations, where the population is very small, and in situations, of disturbance and instability.

There is a much larger spread of consanguineous marriages than generally believed. To give an illustration, marriage with mother's brother's daughter exists in 2368 communities while marriage with father's sister's daughter is reported in 2040 communities. Maternal uncle-niece marriage takes place in 336 communities. Parallel cousin marriage among brothers' children and sister's children is found in 383 communities. Marriage with mother's brother's daughter occurs in 97 per cent of the communities of Tamil Nadu followed by Karnataka, Goa, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Pondicherry, Maharashtra, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Jammu & Kashmir, Nagaland, Gujarat, Meghalaya, and Orissa.

The primary mode of acquiring a mate is through negotiation. The next mode is by mutual consent

followed by exchange, elopement, service, courtship, intrusion, symbolic capture, capture, purchase, and trial. However, more than one mode of acquiring mates prevails in many communities, particularly tribal communities.

Monogamy is the norm in all the Indian communities. Polygamy is a social approved norm of marriage under certain conditions such as barrenness but there are as many as 839 communities who reportedly practise polygamy along with monogamy. Among them 680 communities permit sororal polygyny. The incidence of sororal polygyny is reported to be high among the Scheduled Tribes (24 per cent), followed by Muslims (21 per cent), Christians (15 per cent), and Hindus (13 per cent). Polyandry, a combination of both polygyny and polyandry, is reported from seven communities, fraternal polyandry from 23 communities, and non-fraternal polyandry from five communities. Polyandry is reported from seven communities, fraternal polyandry from 23 communities, and non-fraternal polyandry from five communities. Polyandry is reported from seven communities, fraternal polyandry from 23 communities, and non-fraternal polyandry from five communities. Polyandry is reported mostly among the Scheduled Tribes (15) mostly distributed in the hills in the Nilgiris and along the Himalayas. Such marriages take place only with the elder brother, whereas other brother, whereas other brothers have a right to cohabit with the wife.

Both nuclear and extended types of family co-exist, in all categories like the Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and other communities. This shows that both are fairly representative of the Indian situation. The nuclear family and joint family is the norm. The joint households among the traditional higher castes and business classes have increased. The joint household is used as a tool for mobility by the rural masses, the urban middle class as well as among the lower castes. The nuclear family is the predominant type found in as many as 4122 communities with vertically extended family type reported from 2272 communities, horizontally extended among 536 communities, and mixed extended in 1518 communities. All these types overlap.

The dominant rule of residence is patrilocal (4517 communities), with only 42 communities

following matrilineal residence and 19 following bilocal residence.

Most communities recognize descent either in the male line called patrilineal descent, which is predominant or in the female line called matrilineal descent.

That the concept of purity and pollution is an integral aspect of the caste system is abundantly revealed in our project. The three key ingredients in the traditional notion of purity and pollution are common. The **first** is non-polluting raw uncooked food (*sidha*) which is given as *dakshina* (gift) or ration. The **second** is food cooked in water (*kachcha*) which is considered polluting. The **third** is food cooked in milk, ghee and oil (*pucca*) which is considered non-polluting. However, the acceptance and exchange of food and water takes place within the traditional order of hierarchy. The principle underlying the commensal restrictions seems to be that neither water nor cooked food can be accepted from the communities placed lower in the hierarchy but raw grains can be. There are variations in such practices from region to region.

The four-fold Varna system, stretched to include the fifth category of untouchables, has been studied by sociologists and social anthropologists as an all- India frame of reference within which each jati relates to others. POI data suggest a wide spread awareness of Varna system. Nearly 68.5 per cent of the communities are aware of it. There are variations in the awareness of Varna from the northwest of Bihar and Orissa. Most tribals stand outside the Varna system. Castes are more involved in Varna system than tribes. More than half of the Indian communities (2804) see themselves as part of Varna order and recognize their place in it. About 8 per cent of the communities perceive themselves as Brahman, 15.9 per cent as Kshatriya, 9.36 per cent as Vaishya, and 29.1 per cent as Shudra. However, among 3539 exclusively Hindu communities, 354 are Brahmans, 381 Vaishyas, 708 Kshatriyas, and 1306 Shudras. Most of the Scheduled castes claim the status of Shudra (70.2 per cent).

The highly-placed communities are marked by (1) higher position in the regional socio-ritual hierarchy, (2) better control over land and other resources and (3) non- commensal relations with other resources, and (3) non-commensal relations with other communities of inferior status. The

'high' communities are represented by Brahmins at the top all over India. The next two or three positions after Brahmins in the 'high' group usually go to Rajput/Kshatriyas, Kayastha, Bania or other dominant castes, which may vary from region to region.

The low-placed communities mainly consist of the SC and a few other castes, placed at the bottom due to their (1) abject poverty caused by less possession of land and less control over economic resources, (2) socio-ritual degradation based on the notion of purity and pollution, and (3) traditional engagement in occupations considered ritually unclean.

The tribals have their own notions of hierarchy in perception of status in relation to themselves and others. Generally, they consider themselves autochthons, superior to all those who came later. Thus, the Santal view themselves (hor) as superior to the outsiders (dikus). The Munda consider themselves as superior to the Oraon in Chota Nagpur. In Madhya Pradesh, the Gond, especially the Raj Gond, considered themselves superior to the other sections of Gonds and to the other tribes of the regions.

3.7 LET US SUM UP

POI project's anthropological study of all communities of India can be seen in the context of ethnographic studies conducted from the colonial period onwards. The changed ideological context of colonial and post-colonial studies has been discussed. Colonial ethnography studied communities in isolation and projected a synchronic rather than a diachronic view. The orientalist bias in ranking and perception of castes and communities was evident. Through the freedom struggle and the framing of the constitution, a new-perception of Indian people has emerged. Social progress since independence has served to heighten the awareness of cultural pluralism. Anthropological researches have highlighted diversities and variations of all types: morphological, genetic, linguistic, and cultural. The Constitution treats all communities

Equally in spite of the ugly realities of inequality, dominance, and exploitation which still prevail. Each community has its identity, its world-view, its boundary, and in many cases a strong sense of

solidarity and cultural distinctiveness.

This project had documented diversities of all types, linguistic, cultural, and ecological. It has also highlighted the processes that transcend them. It has also highlighted the processes that transcend them. It has been possible to identify, locate, and list as many as 4635 communities, all over India. This amounts to the first survey-probably as complete as any could be-of the human surface of India. In spite of many difficulties inherent in the social situation, an attempt has been made to generate the first definitive list of communities in India, which includes castes, tribes, minorities, and SC.

The study reveals the strength and continuity of regional identities. The communities, no matter how they are ranked, share a regional space and ethos. The states were reorganized on the basis of language. Eighty-three per cent of the communities are located within state or union territory boundaries. This shows that our states and union territories are not only linguistic and cultural but also social categories.

3.8 GLOSSARY

1. **Diversity of Indian Population:** This unit discusses India's population density, which were 422 people per square kilometer in May 2020.
2. **Racial Classification of Indian Population:** This unit discusses the three main racial types of India, which are Dravidian, Indo-Aryan, and Mongoloid.
3. **Classification of Human Populations:** This unit discusses the Nordics, a group of people with characteristics such as tall stature, fair complexion, and blue or grey eyes.
4. **Tribes and Ethnicity:** This unit discusses the long history of tribal populations in India, and how their physical features can indicate their migration and traditions.
5. **Classification of Indigenous Peoples:** This unit discusses India's diversity of human beings, including food-gatherers, hunters, fisher-folk, and more.

6. **Indigenous People of India:** This unit is available as a PDF file for viewing or opening.
7. **Tribe-Caste Continuum in India:** This unit is available as a PDF file for viewing or opening.

3.9 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q.1) Discuss the project a people of India in brief.

Q.2) How scripts and language help in understanding the different categories of peoples of India.

Q.3) Discuss people of India under the following categories

- (a) The Schedule Caste
- (b) The Schedule Tribe
- (c) Other Backward Class

3.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Singh, K.S. 2001; *People of India*; Oxford University Press, New Delhi.

2. Dube, S.C. 1990; *Indian Society*, National Book Trust, New Delhi.
3. Ahmad, I. 1978; *Caste and Social stratification among Muslims in India*; Manohar Publishing House, New Delhi.
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CHALLENGES OF UNITY**STRUCTURE**

- 4.0 Objectives
- 4.1 Introduction
 - 4.1.1 Idea of Unity and Diversity
- 4.2 The Making of Indian Society
 - 4.2.1 Salient Features of Indian Society
- 4.3 Source of Diversity
- 4.4 Unity of Pre-Capitalist Culture
- 4.5 Factors Contributing to Unity of Indian Society
- 4.6 Dilemma of Unity in Diversity
- 4.7 Let us Sum Up
- 4.8 Glossary
- 4.9 Self-Assessment Questions
- 4.10 Suggested Readings

4.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this lesson, you should be able to:

- Explain the idea of unity and diversity.
- Describe the forms and bases of diversity in India.
- Examine the bonds and mechanism of unity in India.
- Provide an explanation to our option for a plural cultural model.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This lesson deals with unity and diversity in India. In general, we talk about unity in diversity but what does this phrase convey? This unit will try to explain the meaning of this phrase on sociological lines. The unit will take about the meaning of unity in diversity; forms of diversity like race, language, religions, caste; and further how the Indian society is bound together through various social, cultural, political and religious factors.

4.1.1 Idea of Unity and Diversity

Diversity in general means differences. But within a nation, these differences are not individual but collective in nature. It includes diversity of races, castes, religions, regions, languages etc. Thus, diversity means variety of groups and cultures in a territory.

Unity, on the other hands means, integration or solidarity. This unit bring the differences of variety under one common jacket which we call a nation or a country. Thus, unity may be understood as togetherness of similar as well as dissimilar elements on some ground. Patriotic feeling is one channel for unity which all above the race, caste, creed class etc.

4.2 THE MAKING OF INDIAN SOCIETY

Indian society is old and it is extremely complex. According to a popular estimate, it has covered a span of five thousand years since the period of its first known civilization. During this long period, several waves of immigrants, representing difference ethnic strains and linguistic families, have merged into its population to contribute to its diversity, richness and vitality.

Several different levels of social evolution co-exist in contemporary India: primitive hunters and food-gatherers, shifting cultivator who use digging sticks and hoes, nomads of different types, settled agriculturists who use the plough for cultivation, artisan and landed well as aristocracies of ancient lineage. Most of the major religions of the world-Hinduism, Islam, Christians, Buddhism-are found here, and in addition there is a bewildering variety of cults and sects with different

orientations in belief and ritual. Add to these the modern academic, bureaucratic, industrial and scientific elites, and you will find the past, the present and the future living together. In the process of its evolution, Indian society has acquired a composite culture, characterised by stable patterns of pluralism.

Earliest Inhabitants of India

We can speculate about the original or earliest inhabitants – of India on the bases of information provided by physical anthropology regarding the ethnic elements i.e. the racial groups and the population of India like Negrito, Proto-Australoid, Monogoloid, Mediterranean, Western Brachycephals, and Nordic. Of these, the first three are the older residents of the sub-continent.

This account of the coming into India of various ethnic elements and the Indus valley civilization that predated the advent of the Aryans is based on commonly accepted theories in anthropology, archaeology, and history. The Indus valley civilization is associated principally with the cities of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa. This civilization is believed to have originated around 2500 B.C., to have been flourishing by 2000 B.C. and in decline around 1700 B.C.

The Indo-Aryan came later and had a long encounter with earlier inhabitants of the land. They did not bring a civilization with them; they were essentially a pastoral people with a flair for poetry, philosophical speculation, and pastoral rituals. They were "racists" in the sense that they regarded themselves as superior and tended to look down upon and deprecate the earlier inhabitants of the land, for whom they coined several derogatory terms. They were required to marry within their own group i.e. practise endogamy and had some elementary notions of ritual purity and pollution which governed their physical contacts and commensal-inter-dining relations with others. This led to the origin of the Varna's (literally, "Complexion") and also of Jati (Caste).

Stratification in Vedic India

The ideological and social framework of Indian society began taking shape when the area of interaction between the Indo-Aryans and the earlier inhabitants widened. The Indo-Aryans were

divided into three groups the Rajanya (warriors and the aristocracy), the Brahman (priests), and the Vaishya (cultivators). The Rajanyas later came to be known as Kshatriyas. The Brahmins raised their status by claiming the right to bestow divinity on the king. The Vaishyas gradually took to trade and commerce. These were Dvija-twice born groups - born first at physical birth and a second time when initiated into Varna status. The Shudras were the fourth Varna; they were from outside the Indo-Aryan and the Dasa (the pre-Aryan inhabitants of the land). They emerged as cultivators, but were denied twice-born status. Outside the four-fold vertical Varna structure, there was a fifth group - Avarna or the Pancham - whose ethnic status was so low their occupation so degraded and polluting that any physical contact with them was prohibited for the twice born and the Shudra.

Formation of Hinduism

Hinduism derives from diverse literary sources including the Vedas, the Brahmanas, the Aranyakas, the Upanishads, the Sruta, Grihya and Dharma sutras. The Rig Veda is the oldest of the four Vedas, some of its hymns are believed to have been composed before 1000 B.C. The other three Vedas - the Sama, Yajur and Atharva Vedas - were composed later. Two more works that had considerable influence on the Indian social system are Kautilya's Arthashastra (321-300 B.C.) and Manusmriti (the laws of Manu, A.D., 100-200).

What is known as Hinduism developed through dual processes of considerable conflict and much accommodation and compromise? The word Hindu appears to have been coined by the invading Arabs around the 8th century A.D., for people living beyond the Indus. It had no religious connotation.

Because it was loosely structured, Hinduism occupied the growth of heterodox doctrines, cults and sects like the philosophy of the Ajivikas, who were followers of a philosophy of complete-pre-determination, the Lokayats or Charvakas, who preached total materialism, and several varieties of Tantric cults. It also accepted considerable issue and reform. Jainism grew out of dissent and achieved a countrywide spread. Buddhism also grew out of the flexible setting and gradually

became a world religion. The Hindus, in their turn, eventually accepted the Buddha as an incarnation of Vishnu. Later, Sikhism also developed as a distinct religion, although it has taken elements freely both from Hinduism and Islam. Bhakti cults represent another dimension of change in religion. They first surfaced as an articulation of dissent, but most of them were rigidly codified in due course and today they operate almost like fates.

To understand the texture of Indian society, we have also taken note of the long presence of Christianity and Islam in the country. Of these two, Christianity came to India earlier, but the later arrival of Islam - made a greater impact on society.

Impact of British Rule on Indian Society

The English created a new landed aristocracy and the middle and lower rungs of the civil service to ensure a stable group of loyalists. A complicated system of titles and honours were evolved to keep their men happy. Interference with local custom was minimal, except when it came to eradication of gross abuses like sati. The country was unified by a common system of administration, a common Penal Code and Civil Procedure Code, and a network of railway. Responding to this alien rule, Indians developed a new self-image and created initiatives for an Indian renaissance. The English-educated intelligentsia, which was initially created as a pool for the loyal services of British rule, adopted new postures, became critical of British misrule and excesses, and launched a movement for independence. Indian society also developed awareness creativity to alien rule; Indian society found itself generating new impulses for reform and social transformation.

4.2.1 Salient Features of Indian Society

a) Indian Humanity: Ethnologically, most of the major types of ethnic groups of mankind are represented in the country. According to physical appearance, indicated in India year Book 1956 the following five types could be easily distinguished: (a) The Negritoes of the Andaman Islands, having physical affinity with Asian and Oceanic people like Semangs of Malaya, and Popuans of New Guinea, but not with the African Negroes or Negritoes; (b) The Vedis or Proto-Australians - majority of the tribal people of the Central and Southern India. Genetically, they are supposed to

be related to the Australians and the Europeans; (c) The Mongoloids found in the mountain zones of North and North-East India. Generally, the word Dravidian was used for these groups incorrectly; (e) The Indians are found mainly in North India, Central Deccan and the West Coast. Genetically and physically, they are considered by Anthropologist as forming a part of the South European Stock.

Herbert Risley had classified the people of India into seven racial types. They are - (i) Turko - Tranian (ii) Indo Aryan (iii) Scytho-Dravidian (iv) Aryo-Dravidian (v) Mongolo - Dravidian (vi) Mongoloid and (vii) Dravidian. These seven racial types can be reduced to three basic types - Indo-Aryan, the Mongolian and the Dravidian.

Other administrative officers and anthropologists, like J. H. Hutton, D. N. Majumdar and B. S. Guha, have given the latest racial classification of the Indian people based on further researches in this field. B. S. Guha's (1952) classification of 6 types are - the Negrito, the Proto-Australoid the Mongoloid, the Mediterranean, the Western Brachycephals and the Nordic.

(b) Indian Villages: Villages is one of the unique features of Indian Society. One of the most useful and objective means is furnished by the physical forms taken by a village. This form put the village in a diversified category.

The different pattern of villages in Indian may be

- (a) Shapeless cluster
- (b) Linear cluster
- (c) Square or rectangular cluster
- (d) Isolated homestead

These diversified forms of village provide of great diversity in Indian culture.

(c) Land of Religions: India is a land of numerous religions. It is inhabited by people belonging to almost all major religious and derivative religious cults providing rich complexity of other worldly beliefs, rituals, sacrifices and institutional diversity. Even the Hindu Religion, which is followed by the vast bulk of people, reveals great regional variations as well as religio-ideological diversity.

(d) India's Multi-Lingual Population: India presents a spectacle of a museum of tongues. According to the 1951 Census Report, there are 845 languages or dialects in the country. These includes 720 Indian Languages each spoken by less than a hundred thousand persons and 63 non-Indian languages.

These fourteen languages have a long historic past. They have reached a high stage of development. They are further considerably localised in specific territorial zones thereby transforming various Indian Linguistic groups into separate nationalities within the Indian Nation. Some of these languages like Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam are also associated with a body of traditions which have a predominantly Dravidian cultural background, differing in some respects qualitatively from the Indo- Aryan Group of languages. The difficulties involved in evolving national languages for the Indian union can be appreciated only if this background is kept in mind. The great fragment which has exploded into veritable tempests in contemporary India on the issue of the Reorganisation of State within the Indian Union, the objective of which has been to evolve administrative units composed of linguist groups occupying specific territorial segments of India.

(e) Caste Hierarchy: The institution of caste which emerged in India many centuries ago, which has a hoary history, and has survived numerous political upheavals and military convulsions and which has been still persisting, though slowly losing vitality, due to the presence of the forces of modern, social, economic and political developments is a unique institution unparalleled in the history of mankind. The considerable role which this institution still plays in influencing the life of the Hindus. Caste decides to a great extent the social status and the vocation of a member of the Hindu community, which is hierarchically graded in numerous castes and sub-castes. It largely determines the opportunities accessible to him for material and cultural self-advancement.

Further, caste differences also engender different patterns of domestic and social life, different cultural complexes, even differences in the type of house which various caste groups inhabit. Not

only that Due to historical reasons, property rights exist, markedly in agrarian area, on caste lines as also administrative functions and occupations. Hindu community which still holds almost decisive sway over their mind is caste contoured. It has fixed the psychology of the various social groups and has evolved such minutely graded levels of social distance and super or inferior relationships that the social structure looks like a gigantic hierarchic pyramid with a mass of untouchable as its base and a small of elite, the Brahmins, almost unapproachable, at its apex. The Hindu society is composed of hundreds of distinct self-contained caste world piled one over the other.

4.3 SOURCES OF DIVERSITY

What are the sources of diversity? The most obvious are ethnic origins, religions and languages.

(a) **Religion:** Religious boundaries are more clearly drawn. There are eight major religions communities in India: Hindus (82.7% of whom a substantial proportion roughly 16% is scheduled castes), Muslims (11.8%), Christians (2.6%), Sikhs (2%), Buddhists (0.7%), Jains (0.4 %), Zoroastrians (0.3%) and Jews (0.1%). The tribes constitute 6.9%.

Each major religion is sub-divided along the lines of religions doctrines, aspects and cults. This is true both of indigenous religions - Hinduism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism - and of introduced religions, especially Islam and Christianity. The Hindus are now broadly divided into Shaivite (worshippers of Shiva), Vaishnava (worshipper of Vishnu) Shakta (worshippers of the mother goddess in various manifestations), and Smarta (those who worship all three - Shiva, Vishnu and the Mother Goddess). Even among them there are sub-divisions based on doctrinal differences and details of Sects and cults add to the complicity of Hinduism. Are sects like the Kabir panthi, Satnami, and Lingayats - to take only a few examples - separate religions, as claimed?

The Indian Muslims are divided broadly into the Sunni and Shia communities; the latter are the smaller of the two sections. Indian Christians are divided into Roman Catholics and Protestants and into many denominational churches.

Though Sikhism is a synthesising religion that emphasizes, it has not been able to undo some of the less wholesome aspects of the "caste" system. For example, the lower Jatis converted to Sikhism are known as Mazhabis, they live in separate hamlets. Buddhism was spread widely in India once, but without the revival of Vedic Hinduism it lost its hold in the country of its birth and remained confined only to a few pockets. Neo-Buddhists are these people are called, have undisguised Jate lines. Buddhism in India has a two-tier structure and not the conventional four-fold Varna division, in the upper tier were placed the Brahman, the Kshatriya and certain categories of Gnhapats and in the lower tier were tribal and other marginal groups. The divisions of Buddhism into Mahayana and the Hinayana were based on doctrinal differences and do not represent a gradation in society, Jainism too, once held wide sway in India, and though its followers are now numerically small, they are found in both the northern and southern states. They have two main divisions - Digamber-unclothed, and shwetamber - white Drobed.

The Parsis are a small community, but they have played an important role in India's industrial development. They first came to India in the eighth century A.D. from Persia and have the Jewish faith like Christianity. The Jewish faith, like Christianity and Zoroastrianism has been established in India for over a millennium. The small Jewish population had two main settlements - Once in Cochin (in Kerala) and another in Maharashtra).

(b) Languages: Languages are another source of diversity. It contributes to collective identities and even to conflict. The Indian constitution lists fifteen Languages, but this is an official list for official purposes.

Another important source of diversity is the cultural identity of particularly communities and regions, while some Jatis acts and communities have an individual ethos, they also have organic links with other elements of the population of the region, which develops a cultural personality over time.

4.4 UNITY OF A PRE-CAPITALIST CULTURE

As many Hindu Writers have pointed out, the concept of the fundamental unity of India is an important element in the Hindu heritage. But these religions and, as it were, ideological unity - fostering the love of the land" as a sacrament of a culture which it embodies" - was based on the minute social differentiation that goes by the name of caste.

What is more, the system was clothed with all sanctions of religion. Indeed, it was the Hindu religions and this massive and complex social structure which was declared to be rooted in the eternal order of things.

Thus, while Hinduism unified India, it obstructed the further development of unity by upholding on religious grounds a social system composed of bits and piece, of interlocked fragments. But the economic system was stabilised at a low level. It was based on the village community which was a more or less self-sufficient unit, combined agriculture and handicrafts. Production was everywhere on a small-scale, and for consumption rather than exchange. It was, in short, a pre-capitalist economics system parochial, static and, in many respects, primitive. There was indeed, a market of varying dimensions for different commodities; but it was not a self-expanding dynamic market binding together the whole country, or even any large areas of it, in a process of continuous and vital commodity exchange.

Structure of society fluctuated from time to time, dynasties rose and fell and wars and invasions ravaged some part of the land or other. But they left the life of the people largely unaffected, for it was governed ultimately not by the laws of the state but by caste, code of function and privilege, by caste origination, and by virtually autonomous bodies such as the local guilds and village communes.

The British conquest initiated and enforced a series interrelated change. Each of them by itself would have been revolutionary enough in its consequences, but, occurring simultaneously as they did, they shattered once for all within the space of a few decades, the foundations of a civilisation that had endured for well-nigh three thousand years. There was a new land system, a new revenue system

and a new system of administration. Railways were built, trade was encouraged and market widened. The transition to a money economy was speeded up. A uniform system of coinage was introduced and the use of money, the most potent dissolvent of ancient ties was made obligatory. At the same time, law more and more tended to replace the customs which has for a long-kept India lathered to her immemorial past.

Underlying and domination these changes was the political unification of the country. For there is an essential, qualitative difference between the unity which enables the Government in India today to exercise at need a direct and immediate control over any village or hamlet in any part of India and the sort of general and in the main nominal over lordship exercised by Ashoka or Akbar.

The basis of this unity was three-fold. In part, it was technological; railways, telegraphs, etc. In part it lay in the character of British power in India: it was not, as in the case of the Turks and Moguls, the power of a body of military adventures acting on their own behalf and for their personal gain, hence liable to fall out among themselves, but of rulers who were the nominees and agents of foreign Government - of the highly organised and unified British Government and the capitalist class which supported it.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS- I

I) Mark which of the following is the correct meaning of diversity.

- a) Differences between two individuals
- b) Similarities among the members of a group
- c) Dissimilarities among groups.

II) Mark which of the following is the correct example of social diversity.

- a) Temperamental differences between men and women
- b) Property differences between the two neighbours
- c) Differences of religious belongingness between two groups.

III) Indicate which of the following statements are true and which are false.

- a) Unity means absence of differences.
- b) Unity is opposite of diversity.
- c) Uniformity is a necessary condition for unity.
- d) Unity in diversity is a contradiction in terms.
- e) Mechanical solidarity is based on uniformity.

Answers: I) c

II) a

III) a) False b) False c) True d) False e) True

4.5 FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO UNITY OF INDIAN SOCIETY

(a) Religion, Art and Culture: Hinduism is the dominant religion in India. It has influenced the ethos of Indian culture and society, of course, it is not timeless and changeless and has had dissenting influences from within and from outside.

The two great epics - the Ramayana and the Mahabharata- are known widely but not through Sanskrit originals. They have several folk and regional languages versions. More the Valmiki's epic on Rama in Sanskrit, the legend has been diffused to large sections of Indian through classics on the theme in Indian languages by poets like Tulsidas (Awadhi / Hindi), Kamban (Tamil), Ponna (Kannada), and many others in their respective languages.

In north India, the Rama Lila and Rasa Lila recreate the Rama and Krishna legends in folk ideas.

Yaksha Gana in Kamatka and Kathakali in Kerala also take up religious themes. In fact, episodes from the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, especially the Krishna legend, have inspired most of the classical dance forms of India such as Bharatnatyam, Kuchipudi, Mohini Attam, Katha Kali, Odissi, Manipuri and the devotional branch of ceathale down the centuries the heroes of epic proportions from these works have been immortalised in song and verse in all languages in India, imparting both unity and continuity to the Hindu tradition. Saint-poets have popularised religions through their compositions and have taken them to the masses. These endeavours have contributed significantly to the unity of India.

Hindu society would have been fractured and ultimately disintegrated had it not been for the traditions of dissent, protest, and reforms which acted as safety valves and were instrumental in bringing about adaptations in society to keep it united.

Sacred Geography: The scared geography of India has contributed to its cultural unity. The Himalayas in the North are believed to be the adobe of gods; countless sages have meditated here in search of true knowledge.

The four great Hindu religious centres of pilgrimage are located in four different directions - Badrinath in the North (UP) Puri in the east (Orissa) Dwarka in the west (Gujarat) and Rameshwaram in the South (Tamil Nadu). Kamakhya temple in Guwahati, Assam is perhaps the most important seat of Shakti cult. Other sacred centres too numerous to list-are scattered all over the country. The most important among them are Haridwar, Prayagraj in Allahabad, U.P., Gaya in Bihar, Amaranth and Vaishno Devi in J&K, Pushkar in Rajasthan, Ujjain in Omkareswar in M.P., Nasik and Pandharpur in Maharashtra, Tirupati in Andhra Pradesh, temple cities of Madurai, Thanjavur and Kanya Kumari in Tamil Nadu, and Guruvayur in Kerala. They attract pilgrims from all over India.

Many rivers are regarded as scared: Ganga, Yamuna, Narmada, Godavari, Krishna and Kaveri especially, on their banks are located several major and minor sacred centres.

(b) Monuments and architecture: Islamic mosques, monuments, and shrines can be seen all over India; several of them stand out of their distinctive architecture. Taj Mahal, a creation of breath-taking beauty, is a part of the precious heritage of India. Several monuments represent a fusion of Hindu and Muslim styles; they represent bold and innovative departures in architecture. India also has churches conceived on a grand scale. Sikh places of worship - Gurudwaras stand out as a class apart, with elements of Hindu and Muslim architecture, but with a distinctive character. The Golden temple at Amritsar is an outstanding example, but there are several others, in different parts of the country, which attract attention. It may be recalled that Sikh Gurudwaras are open at all irrespective of their religion or creed and they attract a large number of non-Sikh devotees also.

(c) Music: Indian classical music presents another fact of the country's cultural unity. The developments of this musical tradition truly represent the composite culture of India, for folk Hindu and Muslim lineages-Gharanas of musicians have contributed to its stylistic variety and richness. The subculture of music does not recognise the barriers of creed. Both Hindu and Muslim rulers extended their patronage to it. There is a great deal of convergence between the north and south Indian styles of music, many of the Ragas are common to both.

(d) Philosophy of Hinduism: A running thread of unity joins the past and present, and also the different parts which represent ethnic and cultural diversity. The framework of traditional Hindu society has some broad features which are common throughout India.

- First, traditional Hindu society believed in ascribed status. In simple words, one's status is determined by the accident of birth in a jati and not by the quality of one's performance.
- Second, Hindu society was hierarchical. The basic grades were the vertically arranged varnas and a fifth grade outside the Varna system within each of these grades there were and still are several jatis that are again fitted into hierarchy.
- Third, the criteria of status evaluation were ritual not economic or political. One comes

in close contact, including touch and eating together, only with those of equal ritual status, not with lower groups.

- Fourth, there was the concept of Purusharthas-the goals of life. They are: Dharma (pray/ morality) path of righteousness / duties of the individual and the Jati), Artha (pursuit of wealth and well-being) Kama (Pursuit of bodily desires, particularly sex), and Moksha (salvation).
- Fifth, related to their four objectives of life were the four Ashramas or stages of life. They were Brahmacharya (celibacy/ student life), Grihastha (the householder's life, involving earning wealth, fulfilling sexual desires, and begetting children), vanaprastha (the hermit's life/ gradual detachment), and Sanyas (renunciation from family and worldly concerns).
- Sixth, there is the notion of Rin (debt/ obligations) in traditional Hinduism. One paves a debt to the gods, to the sages, to ancestors and to society. The repayments of those debts are also a part of Dharma.
- Finally, the doctrine of Karma remains basic to Hinduism. It is extremely difficult to define this concept but to the common man it means that the deeds of one's previous lives influence the present life, and needs in this life determine future lives. The idea of rebirth is embedded in the notion of Karma.

Modern education, the development of network of transport and communications, and industrialisation and urbanisation provided a new basis for unity.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS – II

- i) Discuss briefly some of the major forms of diversity found in India.

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- ii) According to Grierson, how many dialects and languages are spoken in India.

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4.6 DILEMMA OF UNITY IN DIVERSITY

One has heard so much about India being an outstanding example of a society which exemplifies the value of unity in diversity that one begins to take it for granted and to assert that this is in fact a true representation of the historic experience of our society. Yet, what we see to be happening contemporaneously in our society- whether in Kashmir or in Punjab or in the north-eastern states or in Ayodhya - cannot easily be reconciled with these claims. One sees life to be full of contention and dissension, of conflict any violence, and of insurgency and terrorism.

So, one wonders what exactly one has in mind when he speaks of “our glorious tradition and our ability to forge unity out of diversity”.

All large societies are heterogeneous or plural in their composition. The lines on plurality may be drawn along one or more of several factors such as race, religions, caste, languages, nationality, sub-region differentiation, etc. All large societies have had to find ways of coping with this diversity in their composition and the possible strain that they might have given rise to the economic, social, political and religion Cultural spheres of life.

Diversity poses problems to societies in two ways. First, different imply a commitment of different

groups to different styles of living and different values frameworks and questions often arise about which life-style should prevail. Besides, diversity has also a way of giving rise to disparity disparate access to opportunities and an unequal share in his power structure of society.

Historically speaking, equality was not always the core value organizing, political, economic or social relationships between individuals or groups in society.

Inequality prevailed, particularly in the relatively societies, and was accepted as God- given, whether in the form of the divine right of kings and the birth-right of the nobility or in the form of the superiority of certain castes or races.

One process of accommodation to diversity in Indian society followed the path of hierarchization and led to the development of the hierarchical structure.

There were, of course, other processes of accommodation. One of these was the accommodation between major religious doctrines within the mainstream society itself. Prior to the entry of Islam and later Christianity the main religions doctrines were those of the Vedic religions, which gradually gave place to Brahmanism and of Jainism and Buddhism.

The process of accommodation to Islam raised several unprecedented issues, went on for several centuries and took various forms at different levels of society. Islam did not come to the country at one point of time but through diverse groups and in several waves at various points of time between the 7th century when first the Arabs came and the 16th century when the Mughals entered India. In between, the Turks, Ghaznavids, Gaurs and Afghans and others had invaded Indian and had established their kingdoms or sultanates as far as the Ganga and as far south as the Kaveri. The Persians also came to India but in smaller numbers but their influences must have been strong enough for Persian to have become the preferred court languages in later years.

One direct consequence of the purely indigenous response to the egalitarian, non-ritualistic message of Islam was the emergence of the Sikh religion based on the teachings of Guru Nanak. Sikhism was

originally an effort to express the spirit of reconciliation between the two religions. It was rooted in the spiritual and devotional strain native to India and asserted itself in the heartland of Muslim dominance.

Despite these alternating currents in religions and politics at the court the Hindu and Muslim stream seem to have given rise to a strong unified culture in languages, music and the arts. Urdu is an Indian language though it may have come to be associated exclusively with the Muslims as a result of mistake and overzealous partition claims. But, in music and the arts, the Hindu and Muslim continue to participate actively and independent of their religious proclivities. North Indian music was nurtured at the Muslim courts in the Hindu temples and in the Kolhas. Hindus songs at the court and Muslims have sung Bhajans at Hindu temples. Krishna, Radha and the Gopis have provided the staple theme for many of the brandishes sung Hindu and Muslim masters alike. In contemporary life, the film as a medium has been nurtured by artists, directors and techniques drawn from every faith working together.

The British, who remain expatriate rulers throughout their stay India and were very sensitive to their business interests, remained more circumspect in their approach to religious matters. They consciously distance themselves from the efforts of Christian missionaries to spread Christianity.

During the period of British rule, a new hierarchy emerge in India society a hierarchy headed by those who could claim British descent, followed by other Europeans. Anglo-Indians and Indian Christians in that order, these groups, only the last-the Indian Christians-were required to find niche for themselves in terms of the local community. They were often themselves divided by a caste system based upon their pre-conversion can status. In relation to other community's new Christian converts suffers relative isolation and tended to move into urban areas.

If the above review of our historian experience in achieved reconciliation between different religious streams is at all valid, it suggested that our claim to having achieved unity in diversity is at best patchy. Varna/ Jati mechanism and religious ideology supported by political of the house and

later when Islam came as the religion of the conqueror. In former case Brahmanism won the contest over a period of time and Buddha last out in political power and in the affiliation of the people. Islam remains politically dominant for many centuries until the British power came did not become the religion of the majority. Hinduism an Islam has coexisted in India for over a thousand years though one cannot say that this co-existence has been without its many ups and downs.

Unity in diversity thus is not a contemporary social reality. It probably reflected the best of our cultural aspirations. What is more, it is a pre-condition, in the present context, to our achieving a peaceable society in the midst of plurality. One thing should be clear that to seek unity is not to seek to establish uniformity.

4.7 LET US SUM UP

In this lesson, you have studies that diversity refers to patterned difference between groups, socio-cultural variation and lack of uniformity. Unity means integration of similar or dissimilar elements on a particular aspect. The various forms of diversity in India - race, languages, caste, religion, village etc. contributed to diversity by the unity in Indian formed on the basis of religious accommodation, secular outlook, functional inter-dependence of caste, administrative jointness etc. Thus, one can find various factors which contribute to unity in this pluralistic society.

4.8 GLOSSARY

1. **Brachycephalic:** In terms of anthropometric measures, heads with a breadth of 80 cephalic index and over are categorised as broad or brachycephalic. Those with an index under 80, but not under 75, are classified as medium heads or meso-or mesati-cephalic. Long or dolicho-cephalic heads are those heads, which have the cephalic index of below 75.

2. **Caucasian:** Relating to the white race of mankind as classified according to physical features.
3. **Cephalic:** The proportion of the breadth of the head to its length is expressed as a percentage and it is called the cephalic index.
4. **Mediterranean:** Relating to a physical type of the Caucasian race characterised by medium or short stature, slender build, long head with cephalic index of less than 75 and dark complexion.
5. **Mongoloid:** A major racial stock native to Asia including peoples of northern and eastern Asia. For example, Malaysians, Chinese, Japanese, Eskimos, and often American Indians also belong to this race. In India, besides several others the Naga tribes in north east belong to this race.
6. **Negrito:** A people belonging to the African branch of the black race. In India, the south Indian tribes like Kadar, the Irula, etc. are said to belong to this race.
7. **Nordic:** Relating to the Germanic peoples of northern Europe and especially of Scandinavia. This is a physical type characterised by tall stature, long head, light skin and hair, and blue eyes. In India, they are found in different parts of north of the country such as Punjab and Rajputana.

4.9 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q1. Discuss the idea of unity among different castes in Indian Society.

Q2. How can you say that India is a perfect example of unity written complexity of diversity.

4.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

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EMERGENCE OF ETHNIC IDENTITIES

STRUCTURE

- 5.0 Objectives
- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Ethnicity: The Problem, Definition and Identity
- 5.3 Various perspective of Analysis
- 5.4 Characteristics of Ethnicity
- 5.5. Pluralities and larger Identity
- 5.6 Problems due to ethnic identities
- 5.7 Let us Sum Up
- 5.8 Glossary
- 5.9 Self-Assessment Questions
- 5.10 Suggested Readings

5.0 OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter you should able to:

- Understand what is meaning of ethnicity
- Various perspectives on ethnicity
- The major reason for the different ethnic identities

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Communities are involved in the process of defining and maintaining boundaries and through these various processes they constitute identity. Identity is highly contextual and an individual can choose appropriate aspect of identity to be displayed in a particular context social anthropologist have argued that it is normal for groups or segments to define themselves in relation to other through 'We' and 'they', 'Us' and 'them', 'Insiders' and 'outsiders'.

According to Laclau, identities are dyadically and contingently constructed. It depends entirely on the condition of existence which is contingent. When the ascribed identity such as caste, language, religion becomes the bases of collective mobilization, then the social identities tend to get naturalized. As one is born into these identities, the patience that emerged is the result of one's full range of socialization. These ascriptive mobilizations are so strong that one is willing to die for them.

If we try to analyse various terms like caste, religion, region language, dress etc. then they are hot the problems of social identity. But when these individual categories are mobilized and shaped then they become a serious problem like casteism, fundamentalism, communalism, regionalism, linguism and others.

But before going in details about the problems of social identity, let us understand the concept of ethnicity first.

5.2 ETHNICITY: THE PROBLEM, DEFINITION AND IDENTITY

The word ethnicity comes from the root word 'ethnic' which loosely means race. An ethnic community does not strictly have a racial connotation. A community can be distinct from others in many ways; their racial stock or origin being one of them. A community may distinguish itself from others by way of the particular or distinctive culture, language, religion or a combination of all these. Because of this distinctive aspect the ethnic communities often come in conflict with other communities with whom they come in contact.

In this section we will understand this problem of ethnicity by first understanding what ethnicity means and the nature of identity of ethnic communities.

- **The Problem of Ethnicity**

Ethnic activity and separation came in big way in the post-colonial, newly emerging nations like Malaysia, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nigeria etc. This was very easily and crudely explained away as tribalism, backwardness etc. But ethnic activity affected even the developed west; even the seemingly egalitarian conflict - free melting pot America has been shattered by black ethnic activity. The erstwhile Socialist block now, and for a long time, has been cauldron of ethnic crisis, with Croatian, Serbians, Bosnians, Slovak, and Czech etc. in a conflict. In fact, ethnicity has now become a worldwide phenomenon.

The problem of ethnicity and national building has been widely discussed over the past few decades. The phenomenon of ethnicity has become an intrinsic component of the socio-political realities of multi-ethnic or plural-cultural societies, especially in a country like India.

In India, with its variety of pluralities in terms of languages, race religion and so on, ethnic conflict has become a part of the political scenario. In most countries, including ours, the processes of development and change have generated conditions for ethnic conflict, as the fruits of these development processes have come to be distributed unevenly. Also, the nature and character of the power structure and rule of the political leadership have their role to play.

- **Definition of Ethnicity**

Ethnicity in real sense comes from Greek word 'ethnos' meaning spiritual or cultural sense of belonging. Though the definition of a concept in any field of social science is usually difficult and a term such as ethnicity loaded with meaning, values and prejudices are even more difficult to define.

Ethnicity pertains to the word ethnic which is distinction of mankind based on race. Ethnicity has now lost the original connotation. "It is now employed in a broader sense to signify self-consciousness of a group of people united, or closely related by shared experience such as language,

religions belief, common heritage etc. While race usually denotes the attributes of a group, ethnic identity typifies creative responses of a group who considered themselves marginalised in society".

F. Barth and Benedict Anderson feel that boundary is an important criterion for self-definition by ethnic group, to separate themselves from others.

Let us see how the identity of a group is defined vis-a-vis another community and how this identity becomes psychologically and socially important for a member or members of the community.

- **Ethnic Identity: A Psycho-Sociological Reality**

William G. Summer observed that people have their own group as the centre of their lives and rate all other groups with reference to their own. He called this tendency of individuals to cling to their clan ethnocentrism. It is a generalised prejudice.

Why do human beings slip so easy into ethnic prejudice? Human beings have a natural tendency to form generalisation, concepts and categories. Their categories are close to their first-hand experiences. They also categories based on hearsay, fantasy and emotions. This process of social categorisation leads to the formation of an "in- group" and "out-group". All groups develop a way of living with characteristic codes and beliefs. Therefore, the formation of ethnic attitude is functionally related to becoming a group member. According to the social categorisation theories given by H. Tajfel (1981) as well as J.C Turner (1982), every social group attempts to achieve an identity in contradiction to the "out group". Identity can be broadly characterised as the process by which an individual is bound to his/ her social group and by which he she realises his /her social self. In the context of the Indian political identity, such a formulation has several implications. The emotional fervour associated with linguistic issues can perhaps be viewed in the context of this definition of social identity structure of the different language's groups in the country.

A sense of identity is a very natural human tendency but when an ethnic identity is consolidated and used as a reference point for mobilisation to share in the power structure, the mobilisation becomes far more effective. While ethnic attributes are categorisation for the purpose of classification which

is a static formulation, ethnicity is a dynamic process, whereby a group of people or community re-groups itself as an adaptive strategy in response to specific demands of the situations.

Various scholars have looked at this phenomenon in various ways. We will have quick look at some of the approaches to the study of ethnicity in next section.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-I

Note: Write your answers in the space given below.

1) What are the various bases on which a community considers itself as distinct and different from others.

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2) Write in few lines what you understand by the concept of identity.

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5.3 VARIOUS PERSPECTIVES OF ANALYSIS

Ethnicity has given new forms and meanings with changing processes such as imperialism and modernity. Consequently, ethnicity has become an important field of study for social scientist. There are varieties of assumption regarding ethnicity.

There are some scholars who see the ethnic problem in terms of assimilation and integration; wherein an ethnic group is absorbed into the mainstream group or a dominant ethnic group: an assimilation of this kind in effect is homogenisation to create a nation state. To diffuse tension and to protect the dominated group it is also suggested to co-opt the marginalised group.

There are social scientists that see ethnicity as a natural bond between people, immutable or primordial (Grertz, 1963). Thus, the formation of political identity is seen by them as stemming from this pyramidal loyalty.

There are still others who essentially see no difference between class interest and ethnic interest. They argue that ethnicity is another alternative avenue for mobility (Berge 1976), loyalty which goes in the way of mobilisation.

In this section and sub-section which will follow we have given few ideas on ethnicity by some scholars who have worked in this area. Though there are conflicting and differing opinions of ethnicity some common points can be gathered from these various understanding.

- **Perspectives on Ethnicity**

The conception that ethnicity is culturally predetermined with its primordial loyalties and sentiments are largely discounted among social scientists. By and large scholars agree that an ethnic group is essentially a social group when it is mobilized for collective action in pursuit of the interest of the group.

Writing on the politics of ethnicity in India and Pakistan Hazmza Alavi feels that the boundaries of ethnic categories are not 'objectively' pre-given for whenever there is change of interest or situation, realignment has occurred as is evident from experiences. A so-called objective criterion like religion can be abandoned in favour of another like region or language. Alavi further states that the ethnic community therefore is not simply a politically mobilized condition of a pre-existing set of people described as an ethnic category. The ethnic categorisation itself is dependent in some way in the very emergence of the community. Experience shows that both ethnic category and ethnic community are simultaneously constituted in a single movement.

Writing about ethnicity and nation-building in Sri Lanka, Urmila Phadnis says that ethnic identity is a significant but not a sufficient requisite for evoking ethnicity. It is the mobilisation and manipulation of group identity and interest by the leadership that leads to ethnicity. Ethnicity is used as an ideology

and also as a device to wrest greater concessions and shares in the power structure. Dipankar Gupta also argues that the manifestation of ethnicity in Indian politics is not so much an outcome of popular grass-root passions as it is creation of vested political interests. He applies the notion of 'conspiracy' to ethnic politics in India to draw attention to the deliberate and calculated manner in which such politics is fashioned. He justified his approach by asking the question as to why from a variety of ethnic identities that abounded in one society only certain ethnic dyads are politically activated and that too very selectively at certain points of time.

K. S. Singh and Sandra Wallman (1988) feel that ethnicity is being increasingly used to denote people with a distinctive set of bio-cultural and bio-social characteristics. Ethnic difference is recognition of contrast between us and them. In their opinion, ethnicity is an excellent tool for identification of the aspirations of a community for delineating its boundary, and for preserving its identity. These are some perspectives or approaches to study ethnicity.

5.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF ETHNICITY

Following is some of the characteristics of ethnicity:

- 1) Ethnicity relates to ascriptive identities like caste, languages, religion, region etc.
- 2) Inequality in terms of sharing power between two ethnic groups results into conflict. The ethnicity is socially mobilised and territorially confined. It has numerically sufficient population and is pool of symbols depicting distinctiveness. It has a reference group in relation to which/ whom a sense of relative deprivation (real or imagined) is aggregated.
- 3) Being left out of the development process or been being a victim of uneven development, ethnicity causes ethnic movements.
- 4) Ethnicity is manifested in Indian politics not merely due to grassroots discontent but is also a creation of vested political interest.
- 5) Ethnic groups that use ethnicity to make demands in the political arena for alteration

in their status, in their economic well-being etc. are engaged very often in a form of interest group politics.

It is important to stress that whatever the difference between ethnic groups, the focus of their interaction finally boils down to the centrality of politics that gets what, when and how? As already stated, the focus of interests of an ethnic group, is to get some benefits for itself. The group often uses ethnic criterion like religions, languages or caste to mobilise itself to give identity to itself which separates it from other groups to groups. Thus, delineation of boundary of an ethnic group of community is an important aspect of ethnicity markers. But exactly which one will get projected at a specific point of time would usually depend on where or how the person draws the boundary. Since delineations of the nature of boundary rests on the conditions existing at a given moment, the whole exercise becomes a response to the specific conditions. This adds fluidity to the situation and makes the identity projection a dynamic phenomenon. The nature of identity shifts along with changing circumstances and calls for change in boundary or a change in identification. The seeming singularity of identity, by and large, conveys a notion only. In reality, plurality of identities appears much more widespread than it ordinarily appears to be. Apart from this the identities can be seen in two ways as -

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-II

1) Write in few lines the opinions of K.S. Singh on ethnicity.

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2) Who coined the word ethnicity.

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3) What is meant by ethnic identity.

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4) Discuss briefly the characteristics of ethnicity.

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•Latent and Manifest Identities

With plurality of identity as a matter to reckon with, it is important to appreciate that all the identities of individuals or groups cannot be noticeable at a time. In fact, among various identities only one becomes manifest or apparent at given point of time and the rest of the identities remain sub-surface or latent. It may be repeat here that exactly which type of identity becomes manifest at a specific hour would depend on the nature of the immediate boundary delineation. It is, thus through the interplay of latent and manifest identities that ethnicity expresses itself in a dynamic process. In general, whether an individual would identify himself/ herself as a Hindu or a Rajput or a Bihari would depend, by and large on the existing conditions and felt needs of a given moment. A person ordinarily exercises his / her mind in order to work out what responsible would be most appropriate

at the given dynamics of the process.

5.5 PLURALITIES AND LARGER IDENTITY

Indian as we know has cultural economic and social heterogeneity. The complex ethnic plurality of our nation is a known fact. The ethnic groups vary in size, culture, consciousness of group's identity etc. And very often no clear boundaries can be demarcated between groups. The system on the whole is highly segmented and heterogeneous. In such a system what are the way in which these groups have incorporated into a nation state.

Thus, we will discuss these constant dynamics; the quest for a large identity at one level and pursuance of ethnic identities at the other level.

a) Quest for a Larger Identity

There is a general notion that narrow loyalties are expression of retro gradation or prejudice. This originates from the concern for broader identity and lack of appreciation of the fact that plurality of identity is a reality. In fact, emergence of ethnicity all round primarily on cultural counts has put the boundary of any nation- state under severe stress. Implicitly assuming the political boundary as something very sacred, the quest for larger identity is usually emphasised. No, doubt, this serves some immediate political purpose. But at the same time, this emphasis on a large identity like nation ignores the reality of plural identities and their possible interplay and thus reverts back to the nation where religion, language etc. become static categories of ethnic attributes. At this stage, it will be beneficial to understand how nationality or a nation has originated in India. This, we hope will clear some confusions regarding the conflicting relationship between ethnicity and nationality.

b) The emergence of India as a Nation

Geographically, Indian sub-continent has facilitated the existence of numerous groups belonging to various racial stocks, speaking different languages and having different patterns of culture. Centuries of living together has not removed these differences. At the same time, the different

groups moved in a union in the political, economic and social spheres. The different groups were united by a common historical destiny which created a psychological unity. Though diverse practices were allowed, the Hinduism retained a pan-Indian quality. Languages too played its role in uniting the diverse elements: Sanskrit in ancient India provided the bridge between various pluralities, while Urdu, English and Hindi sought to do the same in later tie. Thus, there existed a pan-Indian culture as well as various diverse, regional local and ethnic culture what we may call as great and little tradition respectively. Politically and administratively, India came under an umbrella under the centralised rule of Ashoka's Kalinga Empire. Later the strong centralised monarchy under the Mughals created a pan-Indian sentiment. At the same time, several political power small identities had emerged in India. These were like the kingdom of Marathas in Maharashtra, Sikhs in the most of Punjab in the North-West and in Bengal in the East. There territorial identities were not always well defined.

By the time of the British took over the region of India, the change was enormous. With the British came the printing press, new system of education, new means and mode of communication and transportation and ideas of secular state, fraternity and liberty. Years of discontent with the British rule and its policies resulted in the first indigenous revolt in 1857. "The failure of the movement of 1857 to drive Britishers out of India led to rethinking amongst educated Indians about alternative ways and means of getting rid of foreign domination. They commented that new education, science and technology have to be accepted in order to forge a new Indian national identity. Indians could strive as a single entity; the task would be easily and quickly accomplished. Thus, in the second half of the 19th century organisations with the prefix 'Indian' began to appear" The growth of national feeling was facilitated by infrastructural facilities and conditions such as printing press new, means of communication and transportation etc. as mentioned above. This growing consciousness was implicit in the growth of such pan-Indian organisation like British Indian Association and later the Indian National Congress in 1885. Indian nationalism reached a maturity and became the upper most concern, though these were occasions when ethnicity and plural identities were in conflict with

national. The latter, very often appeared as integral part of Indian nationalism. The latter, very often, appeared as integral part of Indian nationalism. Although secular ideas of nationalism were on the rise the questions of regional identities and were not dead and buried; rather they were just relegated to the background. Thus, we not only had pan-Indian organisation like Indian National Congress, there were organisation at the regional level like the Justice Party with its undertones of ethnic chauvinism in the Madras presidency. However, "Secular nationalism, in the face of foreign rule kept ethnic and caste identities under control. It did not subdue them, but made compromises.

Once the freedom was won all the subdued forces surfaced again in the independent democratic India. Political power came to be the key to economic prosperity and enhanced social status. Henceforth, conscious attempts have been made by vested interests to whip up ethnic identity and invariably all political parties have made compromises with ethnic demand. Thus, we can see that the articulation of ethnicity or ethnic movements has closely been related to the power structure, the democratic process and initiation of socio-economic development.

5.6 PROBLEMS DUE TO ETHNIC IDENTITIES

After talking about the issues of ethnicity and identity let us understand various problems of identities

a) Regional and Ethnic Identities

The Post-Independent India has seen a lot of changes. We have made some new strides in development activity. Amidst this there have emerged new classes and groups which have asserted for their separate identity and have enabled them to claim a large share in the fruits of development. They have also realised that in a federal political structure like ours, which has a strong central state, the best way of carving out more power is to capture power at the state level.

Soon after independence most powerful manifestation of ethnicity in India was the demand for creation of state or province on linguistic basis. The State Reorganisation Committee was formed in

1956 and boundaries of the states were redrawn on the linguistic basis. This forming of linguistic state was a manifestation of ethnic identity. This process reinforced the regional and linguistic identity and ethnicity. Thus, the demand for separate state on various accounts like ethnicity, languages etc. soon become a part of the political scenario. Various political parties were formed at the state level which was, by and large identified with ethnic elements. Although in the fifties, many saw regionalism as the threat to Indian unity. But in fact, regionalism at no stage was a major factor in Indian politics and administration

Patriotism and loyalty to a locality or region or state and its language and culture do not constitute regionalism. To have pride in one's region or state is also not regionalism. Aspiring to or making special efforts to develop one's state or region or to remove poverty and implement social justice there is not also to be branded as regionalism. But the interest of one region or state to assert against the country as a whole or against another region or state in the hostile manner and a conflict is promoted on the basis of such alleged interests can be dubbed as regionalism.

The linguistic reorganization of Indian and the resolution of the official language controversy have played a very important role by causing a feeling of cultural loss or cultural domination which results in inter-religions conflict domination which results in inter regional conflict. Many regional disputes occur due to the friction between different states over the showing of river water for example, between Tamil Nadu and Karnataka Karnatak and Andhra, and Punjab and Haryana and Rajasthan. Boundary dispute has arisen out of the formation of linguistic states as in the case of Belgaum and Chandigarh.

Jharkhand Movement as an Example

The tribal belt of Central India comprising the portion of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa and West Bengal has seen the rise of the Jharkhand Movement, agitating for the formation of a separate state for tribal. The Jharkhand Movement is a good example of politics of ethnicity. The movement draws its sustenance mainly from the growing discontent among tribals on account of their land alienation

exploitation, and political neglect of their problems at the national level.

The Jagirdari system in the 18th century turned tribals into more tenants. And they were exploited shamelessly by non-tribals. In the wake of this, there were a series of tribal uprisings since 1789-1900 A.D.

The Christian Missionaries entered there around middle of the 19th century. They made available for the tribals the facilities of education and helped, increases employment opportunities and economic improvements for them. A few educated tribal Christians organised Chhota Nagpur Unnati Samaj (CNUS) in 1928 for the tribal upliftment.

The turning point came when a separate province of Orissa was carved out of Bihar in 1936. The Chhota Nagpur Unnati Samaj in its new incarnation was **ADIBASI SABHA** in 1938, emerged as the dominant political party under the leadership of Jaipal Singh, a British educated tribal of the area and this party demanded, for the first time, a separate tribal province.

The principal arguments given for the demand of separate state are: the physical characteristic of the area is such as there is a large concentration of the tribal their mental make-up, language culture and values are totally different from those of non-tribals. Also, the tribals feel that the welfare and developmental works both provided and carried out for them are pittance in comparison to the mineral wealth and forest resources exploit from the region. The tribals have strong fear of losing their identity as they are in minority surrounded by the non-tribals.

The tribals are marginalised at all levels. This has generated tremendous frustration among them. This harsh reality has provided the ground for effective propaganda which has facilitated the growth of an internal solidarity and out-group antagonism. There is an antipathy among them towards the non-tribals or Dikus. Interestingly, the definition of Dikus has changed with changing context. Originally Dikus were Zamindars and their non-tribal employees. Later non-tribals of upper castes background were identified as such. At present, the people from North Bihar are branded as Dikus.

In more than four decades of its independence India has had to face several kinds of ethnic

movements of considerable power for example:

- 1) The demand for a district homeland based on religions or language i.e. the demand for a sovereign state by section of the Sikhs, Kashmir pandits or the Tamil demand for an independent state.
- 2) The demand for a political administration unit with in the Indian state i.e. Gorkhaland for Nepalis, Jharkhand state for the tribes of central India.
- 3) The demand for expulsion of outsiders when the entire state is engulfed by migrants from other state or neighbouring countries i.e. in Assam and Tripura.
- 4) The demand to expel those who do not belong to the same culture region although they are from the same state i.e. the demand for the expulsion of Andhra from Telangana region
- 5) The demand to expel migrants from other linguistic states who came to work and reside in metropolitan centres i.e. mobilization against Tamil in Bombay and Bangalore.

The common thing to this entire situation is the strong identification with respect to specific territories.

b) Religion as a Problem of Social Identity

The 1991 census figures report that the major religion in India are Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism and Jainism Religion has been used to fulfil narrow social and political ends. A number of associations and groups have been founded with religions name with a view to evoke religions consciousness for getting support or favour from member belonging to a particular religions group. The Hindu Mahasabha and Muslim League are glaring examples of this practise.

Hindu nationalist has an attitude of indifference and even tolerance towards the migrant religion i.e. Jews, Zoroastrian etc. not only because their numbers are small but also because they have not claimed any part of Indian territory as their homeland.

The Hindu nationalist attitude to Muslim is very negative for several reasons i.e.

- 1) They number over a 100 million and constitute perhaps the single most important vote bank against Hindu nationalism.
- 2) The presence of two Muslim Majority states i.e. Pakistan and Bangladesh as immediate neighbours makes the relationship between Hindu majority and Muslim minority uneasy and even tricky.
- 3) Hindu nationalist holds the Muslims responsible for the vivisection of India which is the sacred and ancient land of Hindus.
- 4) Indian Muslim has not entirely given up the claim to nationality even after Partition although they are territorially dispersed.
- 5) Finally, the claim by Kashmir Muslim that Kashmir is their exclusive homeland.

The inter-religious hostility in independent India is most pronounced between Hindus on the one hand and the Sikhs and Muslim on the other.

Thus, the religious disharmonies began with the killing of innocent people in different states in the name of religion

In Punjab Sikhism and the Nanak Panthis grew in opposition to rigid Hindu and Muslim practices. Later, Sikhism left the Nanak panths behind and took on militant anti-Muslim character from the time of Guru Gobind Singh. This lasted much till Maharaja Ranjit Singh. Then came a period which was disturbed in the 1870 with the Singh Sabha where the important issue was to culturally separate the Sikhs from Hindus. During 1940's Sikh identity again focused around their enmity against the Muslim. The Akali opposition to Pakistan was fuelled by this cultural memory. The Punjabi Suba movement of 1950's and 1960s did not enliven the Sikh militant tradition to any significant extent, but only sought paucity with other regional community.

In Akali movement, it is found that there was a Sikh insistence that they are separate religious community and that they are definitely not Hindus. This view points of galvanization of the poorer Sikh peasants in their efforts to free the gurdwaras from the control of Hindu

Mahajan's with their idolatrous practices. Thus, the Sikh took to the streets and to the broad open field of Punjab with their agitation which results into non-violence. Thus, Gandhi commended the Akali movement of the 1920s as India's first non-violent agitation.

The demand for Khalistan is merely on religious basis too. A small section of Sikhs was not satisfied with the limited notion of homeland and initiated a movement for an independent sovereign Sikh state which was known as Khalistan. Even the day-to-day massacres in J & K state are only due to religious disharmonies.

c) Language: Lingua as a Problem of social Identity

According to Grierson, India has 179 languages and 544 dialects. Though the constitution of India has recognized 18 major languages, but many i.e. 1652 languages and dialects are spoken in our country. Broadly these languages belong to three families of languages: Indo-Aryan, Dravidian and European.

The Indo-Aryan languages include Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati, Oriya, Punjabi, Bihari, Rajasthani, Assamese, Sanskrit, Sindhi and Kashmiri languages covering about three-fourth of India's populations. Dravidian languages include Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada. The European language includes English, Portuguese and French. The last two languages are mostly spoken by people in Goa and Pondicherry.

India has always been a multi-lingual civilization with special elite languages and a constant interaction between local, regional and all-Indian languages. Unity and assimilation at various interactional levels have been specific features of the Indian sub-continent. Amidst vast diversities, the doctrine of a single language, essential for national identity, cohesiveness and unity has been challenged from time-to-time. Rajni Kothari suggests a pluralist solution for the languages problem about 90% of the people claim 15 national languages as their mother tongues. However, official (national) language is Hindi and English according to eight schedules of India's constitution. The fact is that even national languages are regional in scope. Even today English is considered as a

necessary licence to get lucrative and prestigious jobs. English has thus created a hiatus between the elite and the masses.

Regional and local languages have out timed demanded "linguistic autonomy" with a view to replace English by Hindi or some other national" (regional) language. Advocating Hindi as the official language for the entire country has evoked sharp protests in non-Hindi speaking areas such as Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerela, Karnataka, Bengal and Assam. According to non-Hindi speakers, the language policy of the government meant an advantage for the Hindi speakers, who are perceived to dominant the economic institution and have political authority. On the other hand, the indigenous language has received the attention required for their preservation and enrichment. One view is that the extended use of indigenous language can bring about emotional integration and national consolidation, as this would be direct attack on the small upper class entrenched in administration, law-enforcement profession, business and industry. If English language is the medium of debate in Parliament or a State Assembly the elected member cannot be considerable true representative of their people. Thus, it is argued that indigenous language should be used in administration and planning. Though, it seems to be a plausible way out; but it may block proper communication between people speaking different national languages. Inter language rivalry might also arise. One of the examples of such rivalry is the riots that broke out in 1972 in Assam between the immigrant Bengali, Hindi and the local Assamese population. The Assamese demanded the withdrawal of the option of answering in Bengali. Earlier, similar riots have occurred after independence, when the Assamese has demanded their language to be made the regional language.

It is clear that the language situation in India is quite complicated for national consolidation and development. A structure of linguistic state came into existence in India after a great deal of acrimony and bad feeling. Language riots in undivided Bombay state and anti-Hindu riots in Tamil Nadu are still fresh in our memory. The first Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru, once suggested that the people in the North should learn one of the South Indian languages and the people of South should learn Hindi voluntarily.

d) Caste: Casteism as a Problem of Social Identity

The caste system in India originated about 2500 yrs ago. It is prevalent not only among Hindus but also among Sikhs, Christian and Muslim.

The most obnoxious part of the caste system was that it designated certain groups as untouchables and out castes and then used this to deny them access to ownership of land, entry into temples, access to common resources such as water from the village tank or well.

At the top of the caste hierarchy are Brahman. The Untouchables come at the bottom. There are several caste groups in between. Ritual pollution and purity based on birth in a particular caste is considered the basis of high and low caste ranks. Those who occupied the lowest position of the caste hierarchy were known as Chandals, they lived on the outskirts of town and villages. These castes remained low and suppressed for ages and have been listed as Scheduled Caste.

The Scheduled Tribes are neither called as Adivasis nor are they treated as a category by themselves. By and large they are treated together with Scheduled castes and are considered as one group of backward classes. The Backward classes together are considered backward and form about one-third of the total population of India.

To elevate their position in the society the backward classes launched several anti-Brahman and anti-twice born movements. The inhuman and exploitative conditions in which these scheduled castes were forced to live for centuries made them conscious of their deplorable condition in Hindu society. The constitution of India has listed the untouchable caste as the Scheduled caste with a view to provide them protection for their social, economic, political, culture and educational uplifting. Provisions have been made against social discrimination and untouchability with a view to attain equality of the backward classes. The reservation for the Scheduled Castes was provided in the Indian constitution framed after independence but the reservation for other backward classes were announced by the Janta Dal government only on Aug. 7 1990. As many as 27% seats were proposed to be reserved for 3,742 OBCs. This was done in accordance with implementing the Mandal

commission report. The commission submitted its report on Dec. 31. 1980. The sudden announcement of accepting its recommendation has been made by Prime Minister V. P. Singh. The commission suggested the following steps.

1. The reservation of 27% jobs for those who do not qualify on the basis of merit
2. The reservation of 27% for promotions at all levels
3. The reserved quota, if unfilled, should be carried forward for a period for 3 years and de-reserved thereafter.
4. Age relaxation for the backward classes should be the same as it is in the cases of scheduled castes and scheduled Tribes
5. A roster system should be prepared for the backward classes on the pattern of the one done for the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes.
6. The principle of reservation should be made applicable to all the public sector undertakings, banks, private undertaking receiving grants from the central and state governments, universities and colleges.
7. The government should make the necessary legal provisions for implementing these recommendations.

Thus, the reservation for the backward classes provoked wide spread resentment among students, Spontaneous agitations erupted all over the country. Most students were haunted by the nightmare of unemployment and many of them ended their lives to show their disagreement for this commission.

5.7 LET US SUM UP

In this lesson on ethnicity and ethnic identity we have attempted to bring across to you the meaning of ethnicity. We have also mentioned about various perspective on ethnicity and I hope that you would realise that ethnicity can be looked from various angles. The problem of ethnicity cannot be seen only as an identity problem but a problem of deprivation and lop-sided development. They are

represented through various movements demanding for a large share of the fruit of development and for this adopt various strategies of mobilisation.

5.8 GLOSSARY

1. **Boundary:** A line that marks a limit in terms of identity. A boundary separates one group from the other by pointing to the distinctive aspects of each group.
2. **Ethnocentrism:** It is a word coined by W.G. Sumner and used in his book 'Folkways'. It is a technical term for the view of things in which one's own group is the centre of everything and all other groups are scaled and rated generally inferior to it.
3. **In-group:** A social group of people having the same interests and attitudes.
4. **Out-group:** A social group of people other than those of in-group and their interests and attitudes are also different from those of the former.
5. **Primordial:** Existing from the beginning. That is why it is said to be very basic. For example, identity to one's group by way of language, ethnic stock etc. is primordial because it seems to have always existed.

5.9 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q1. Define ethnicity and discuss its salient features.

Q2. What is the problem related to the issue of ethnicity.

Q3. Discuss various ethnic identities in India by giving suitable examples.

5.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Jodhka, S. S; *Community and Identity*, Sage Publication New Delhi.
2. Oomen, T. K.; *Citizenship and National Identity*. Sage Publication, New Delhi
3. Gupta, Dipankar; *The Context of Ethnicity*, Rawat Publication, New Delhi
4. Singh, K. S.; 1992, *Ethnicity, Caste and People*. Manohar publication, New Delhi
5. Brass, Paul; 1992, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*. Sage Publication, New Delhi.

INDOLOGICAL / TEXTUAL PERSPECTIVE: G.S GHURYE**STRUCTURE**

- 6.0 Objectives
- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Overview of Perspectives
- 6.3 G.S. Ghurye: His Life and Works
- 6.4 Ghurye's views on Caste, Tribe and Kinship
- 6.5 Let us Sum Up
- 6.6 Glossary
- 6.7 Self-Assessment Questions
- 6.8 Suggested Readings

6.0 OBJECTIVES

This lesson will help you to understand:

- The meaning of Indological/textual perspective.
- Different perspectives utilized for analyzing Indian Society.
- Important contributions of different perspective.
- Insight into works of Ghurye's works.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Indian society is a culturally diversified society and it has remained the attraction of the social scientist, either native or abroad, to explore the reality of this society. Since understanding of the social reality requires a temper for scientific analysis or approach, so we have to rely on various sociological perspectives for scientific analysis of social reality.

Social perspective is simply different ways of trying to understanding the social world. They are scientific tested method to explore the reality and they are the directing agents for conducting research and analysing the social phenomenon. It is to be further enforced that no sociological perspective - or even all of them in combination can give us the truth about the world. Sociological perspective merely provides us with ways of trying to understand the world but none of them has a built-in assurance that eternal truth will be produced from a specific perspective. Still a scientific sociological perspective necessary involves standards and procedures for demonstrating the 'empirical warrant of its findings, showing the match or fit between its statements and what is happening in the real world. These perspectives thus act as a guiding lamp for exploring society. Although these perspectives have in common their basic scientific justification, they differ to varying degrees in terms of the concept they use, the method they use to deal with the phenomenon or the possible solutions they arrive at. It is often the case that the basic assumption of one social science perspective constitutes the basic problems and criticism to the other. Thus, there is no ultimate way of determining truth of any society or social phenomenon. This leads to formation of perspectives with different grounding and they individually try to explore society in their own way.

Let us try to understand various perspectives which are helpful in understanding and analysing Indian society.

6.2 OVERVIEW OF PERSPECTIVES

- 1) **Indological/Textual Perspective:** This perspective rested on the assumption that historically, Indian society and culture are unique and that this 'contextual' specificity of Indian social reality could be better grasped through the 'text'. The 'text' basically included the classical ancient literature of ancient society and included the text like Vedas, Puran, Manu Smriti, Ramayan, Mahabharat and others. Indologists, i.e. the follower of Indological perspective, has to analyze the typology and understanding of social phenomena by interpreting of this classical text. Apart from Sanskrit Scholars and Indologist many professional sociologists in India have dependent, extensively on traditional text for the study of society in India. Regarding this Dumont and Pocock observes that the first condition for the development of a sociological of India is found in the establishment of the proper relations between it and classical sociology. Since the dependence of this perspective is on the 'text' so it is also called as 'textual' view of social phenomenon or textual perspective. Indology is also claimed to be branch will deal only with the study India and its culture.

The use of Indological approach during the early formative years of Indian sociology is seen in the works of S.V. Ketkar, B. N. Seal, B. K. Sarakar. G.S Ghurye, K. M. Kapadia, P. H. Prabhu and others. Initially Sir William Jones established the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1787 and here he introduced the study of Sanskrit and Indology. The knowledge of Sanskrit also helps to understand the great culture and philosophical tradition of India. The Indological writing dealing with the Indian philosophy, art and culture are reflected in the works of most of the Indian scholars like Coomaraswamy, B. K. Sarkar, Radha Kamal Mukerjee, G. S Ghurye, D. P. Mukerji, L. Dumont and others

2) **Structural-Functional Perspective**

The follower of this perspective focus on the understanding of the ordering and patterning of the social world. Their focus of attention is mainly 'problem of order' at a societal level.

Their theoretical and empirical analysis have generally been based on the assumption that societies can be seen as persistent, cohesive, stable, generally integrated wholes differentiated by their culture and social structural arrangements. They even pose the question, how did various institutions or customs originate, how does it fit in the broader context how does the part relate to the whole? Regarding this perspective Radcliffe Brown says - 'that the total social structure of a society together with the totality of social usages, constituted a functional unity, a condition in which all parts 'work together with a sufficient degree of harmony or internal consistency', that is without producing persisting conflicts which can neither be resolved nor regulated. Further, to explain any belief, rule, custom or institution demanded an analysis which linked the elements functionally with the structure of the culture as a system.

This perspective of society stresses the elements of harmony and consistency not those of conflict and contradiction. The functional unity of a system is defined in terms of social order. In defining society in holistic terms structural functionalism implies that as everything within the system is necessarily functional for the whole. They are the believers of the fact that society is a relatively persisting configuration of elements and consensus is a ubiquitous element of the social system. It treats change as a slow, cumulative process of adjustment to new situation. Its explanation consists essentially of pointing out how the different types of activity fit on top of one another, and are consistent with one another, and how conflict is contained and prevented from changing the structure.

This perspective relies more on the field work tradition for understanding the social reality so it can also be understood as 'contextual' or 'field view' perspective of the social phenomenon. The important followers of this perspective in India are:

M. N. Srinivas, S. C. Dube, McKim Marriott, I. P. Desai, D. N. Majumdar and others.

3) Marxian Perspective

The main assumption about this perspective is:

The social world is better characterized by flux and change rather than by stability and the permanence of phenomenon.

- ii) In the social in men's relationship in the economic order.
- iii) Society can be viewed as an interrelated system of parts with the economy very much shaping the other parts.
- iv) Contradiction, strains and tensions are within the system. These contradictions are, in fact created by the system. Thus, this perspective treats 'change' or 'tension' to be ubiquitous in society. It presupposes that value conflict is a universal of any stratified social structure. Further most changes are revolutionary and effect qualitative transformation in the social structure and also the sources of changes are immanent in the system itself.

The study of Indian social reality from Marxian view point has been conducted by scholars like: - M.N. Duta, S. A. Dange, D.D. Kosambi, A. R. Desai, D.P. Mukerji, P. C. Joshi, R. S. Sharma, Irfan Habib, D. P. Chattopadhyay and others. Their work mainly effects the role of economic structure and conditions shaping and determining the social life.

4) Civilizational Perspective

This perspective lays stress on complex structure of great and little tradition. It includes the studies on the tribal, rural and urban culture. This perspective also views civilization as an organization of specialist in functional relation to folk societies. Thus, civilization perspective involves study of combination of many subjects like analysis of classical and medieval text administrative records, village, caste and its wider social network and ultimately the issue of unity in diversity. It thus analyses the structural underpinning of any civilization to get sharp and historically framed portrait of religion, caste, village, state formation, land relations and so on. The followers of this perspective believe that a social system, a nation or civilization has to be understood in a historical -civilization frame.

Further, in order to understand the civilization, one has made study based on cataloguing (listing of cultural traits); cultural essence (to identify the essential underlying process); and

cultural communication (enduring elements that are transmitted among the parts of the society).

The important followers of this perspective are N. K. Bose, Surjit Sinha, B.S. Cohn and others who have tried to explore the historicity, continuity and interlinkage of various structures in India. The believer of this perspective has faith on the issue like unity in diversity, folk-urban continuum, Tribe-caste continuum, little-Great tradition linkage and so on.

5) Subaltern Perspective

The word 'subaltern' as given in Oxford dictionary stands for the general attribute of subordination which is expressed in terms of a caste, class, age, gender, office or any other way. It includes the characteristic of defiance and submission. Thus, in literal sense it conveys 'view from below' i.e. a view or understanding from the bottom of society or the flow of knowledge from below:

It is an important approach to the study of tribal peasant movement. This perspective seeks to restore a balance by highlighting the role of politics of the 'masses' as against the elite politics. The whole thrust of subaltern historiography is on reconstructing the other history i.e. the history of people's politics and movement and their attempt to make their own history. This perspective emphasizes not to view peasant or tribal insurgents merely as 'object' of history but to treat them as 'makers of their own history'- endowed with a transformative consciousness of the own. The important proponents of this perspective in India are B. R. Ambedkar, Ranjit Guha, Kapil Kumar and others. These subalternist claims to have unfolded the capacity of nationalist and elitist historiography to incorporate the voices of the weak in the project of history re-writing. Subalternists focussed their attention on the circle of elite politics and have emphasized the insurrectionary activities and potential of the 'subaltern' classes (artisan's poor peasants, landless labours, tribals etc.). To make these classes

possessed self-conscious and coherent conception of resistance that was directed against rich peasants, urban traders or the colonial revenue administrators.

Sociology in Bombay developed under the leadership of G.S. Ghurye. Exploration of diverse aspects of Indian culture and society through the use of Indological sources permeated Ghurye's intellectual concern and empirical research. His monograph on Indian Sadhus, on religious consciousness, on Gotra and Charan as the two Brahminical institutions were important. Ghurye also maintained the tradition established by civilian scholars of studying castes, races and tribes in India. He was really trained in the art of Indology i.e. promoting an arm chair textual scholarship.

It would be appropriate to characterize Ghurye as a practitioner of "theoretical pluralism". Basically, interested in inductive empirical exercises and in depicting Indian Social reality using any source material-primarily Indological-his theoretical position bordered on *laissez-faire*. His knowledge of Sanskrit enabled him to use the Scripture and epics in analysing and interpreting Indian culture and society. A few of his students K.M. Kapadia, Irawati, Karve and S.V. Karandikar carried his approach to material in the sacred text and other Sanskrit literature.

His own work on caste with regard to origin and evolution as analyzed with the help of textual and literary data it is undeniable that when sociologists engaged in analysis of evolution and growth of social institutions in India, he has to draw heavily on Indological material. To Dumont and Pocock the first condition for a sound development of a Sociology of India is found in the establishment of proper relations between it and classical Indology. Thus, profound knowledge of Sanskrit literature provided Ghurye's way. He believed that who so ever want to do sociology of India in particular, must have thorough grounding in Sanskrit literature.

6.3 G.S. GHURYE: HIS LIFE AND WORKS

Govind Sadashiv Ghurye is a towering figure in intellectual and academic life of India. For his unique contribution in the field of Indian Sociology, he has often been acclaimed as the father of Indian Sociology". Analysis of his life and works is very interesting as it gives a perspective of the development of Sociology in India. It was opportunity for Ghurye to have been in Bombay University where sociology got its start in 1919 throughout the efforts of Patrick Geddes. Since then, Ghurye had been there and he did single-handedly what was possible for his to do for Sociology in this country, because of his unique role played in the development of sociology in India, high attributes and panegyrics have been offered to him both in India and abroad.

Ghurye was born in December 1893. Sociology was not a school or college subject when Ghurye was a student. From the very early years, Ghurye showed a flair for Sanskrit. After passing the matriculation examination, Ghuryes got himself admitted in the Elphinstone College with honors in Sanskrit, Ghurye finally came to Sociology. This profoundly influenced Ghurye's own writing and the course of research made in the field of Sociology under his leadership. Love for Sanskrit and a thorough acquaintance with the classical religious texts are so much characteristic of Ghurye that sometimes it even clouded the Sociologist in him. Thorough knowledge of western literature political ideals and history were the characteristic feature of the Elphinstone but this indirectly encourage students to examine their own past and seek for greater interest in Indian ancient heritage. The rediscovery of the Indian past, and in particular, the renewed interest in Sanskrit religious texts by those also possessing knowledge of western religious and philosophic system led to an increased stress on religious reforms as the percussor of a renewed Hindu society. Early Elphinstone endeavoured to know India's social history and also contemporary customs, practices and institutions of the Hindus. One has to take into consideration tis prevailing intellectual climate at the time of Ghurye in order to assess him properly.

In 1919, after Ghurye got his MA degree, he applied for university foreign scholarship for studying Sociology. Ghurye's visit in Cambridge and his meeting with Prof. Rivers gave a new turn in his life. It was under the influence of Rivers that Ghurye came to the conclusion that "the anthropological approach to sociology as also his range of interest in sociology was influenced by his contact with Rivers. It was under Rivers' exhortation that Ghurye fixed up his range of interest. In view of his Sanskritic and Indological knowledge and his familiarity of Indian Institutions of caste on broad historical evolutionary lines. Later he wrote paper on "The Funerary Movements of India" and "The Egyptian Affinities of Indian", Funerary practices and Megalithic movements; Dual organization of Society in India and Ethic theory of caste for his doctorate.

After his return to India, Ghurye was appointed as Reader and Head of the Department of Sociology in Bombay University in 1924. From this time up to 1959 when Ghurye retired, the story is that of singular devotion to academic cause, research dedication and persistent effort to promote the cause, research dedication and persistent effort to promote the cause of Sociology in India.

Up to 1980, he authored thirty books; only five of them were written before 1950 and thirteen up to 1959 when he retired from the University service. He was elected the president of the anthropological section of the Indian Science congress in 1934. In the same year he was elected as the nominee of the Royal Asiatic Society. In 1942 he became the president of the Bombay Anthropological Society and Continued to hold this position till 1948. He was an ethnographer who studied tribes and castes of India using historical and Indological data. His knowledge of Sanskrit enabled him to study the religious scripture in the context of Indian Society. He studied castes and tribes, rural-urbanisation, about the Indian Sadhus, Indian Costume and so on. During his life time he won several top honours accorded to any intellectual in India. He died in the year 1984.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-I

Note: Write your answers in the space given below.

1) Tick the name of the British anthropologist who influenced G.S. Ghurye very much.

a) W.H.R Rivers

b) Bronislaw Malinowski

c) Radcliffe Brown

d) Mary Leakey

2) What was the approach of Ghurye in studying caste in Indian society.

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Answer: 1) a

❖Central Ideas of G.S Ghurye

G.S. Ghurye's contributions to Indian sociology were mainly in the areas of ethnography of castes and tribes, rural-urbanisation, religious phenomena, social tension and Indian art.

•Caste and Kinship in India

In the early 1930s, he published a book 'Caste and Race in India' which still is an important source book on Indian castes. In this work, he examined the caste system from historical, comparative and integrative perspective. Later, he made a comparative study of kinship in Indo-European cultures. In his studies of kinship and caste, Ghurye emphasised two points: (a) the kin and caste networks of India had parallel in some other countries also; and (b) the kinship and caste in India served as interrogative frameworks. The evolution of India society was based on the integration of diverse racial or ethnic groups through these networks.

•Ghurye's Notion of Caste

Ghurye describes caste as a form of social organization that is unique to Indian civilization, which presents a clear contrast to social groupings in the rest of the world. Hindu society is divided into groupings known as caste, with varying degrees of respectability and social interaction. Ghurye

brought out the following six features of the caste system:

- 1) **Segmental division of society:** The caste society comprises of heterogeneous groups with a distinct life of their own and the membership is determined not by selection but by birth. Castes are small and complete social world in themselves, marked off definitely from one another, though subsisting within the larger society.
- 2) **Hierarchy:** One of the principal characteristics of the caste society is the hierarchy of groups. This implies a definite scheme of social precedence amongst the castes with the Brahmin at the head of the hierarchy.
- 3) **Restrictions on feeding and social intercourse:** There are minute rules pertaining to what sort of food or drink can be accepted by a person and from what castes. While lower castes have no scruples in accepting cooked food from any higher caste, the Brahmins and other castes did not accept food or water from other castes that stood lower than itself in the social scale. Ghurye also mentions about the theory of pollution communicated by some castes to members of the higher ones.
- 4) **Civil and religious disabilities and privileges of the different sections:** Ghurye noted that one of the most obvious markers of civil privileges and disabilities that prevailed all over India was the segregation of individual castes or a group of castes in a village. Southern India stands out as the most rigid in the matter of rules pertaining to ceremonial purity and untouchability. In Southern India, certain parts of the town or village were inaccessible to certain castes. Even the type of houses that were to be built and the materials that were to be used for construction were prescribed for lower castes.
- 5) **Lack of unrestricted choice of occupation:** The occupations have been fixed by heredity. Generally, the castes were not allowed to change their traditional occupations. All caste people maintain their supremacy and secrecy in their jobs and do not allow the other caste group to join in. The upper caste people like Brahmins are free to opt for study of religious books, while this cannot be done by other classes. The lower natured jobs like sweeping

bathrooms, washing clothes, scavenging etc. have been kept in the untouchable category.

Restriction on food, drink and social interaction were areas in which some rules have been imposed upon all castes people.

- 6) **Restriction of marriage:** Caste groups follow the principle of endogamy. This means that caste groups marry within their own groups. Marrying outside the caste group is strongly condemned.

6.4 GHURYE'S VIEWS ON CASTE, TRIBE AND KINSHIP

•On Caste

Caste constitutes an area of fore most importance in Ghurye's writing. He enumerates six factors which are outstanding features of Hindu society. These are: -

- i) Segmental division of society
- ii) Hierarchy
- iii) Restriction on feeling and social inter course.
- iv) Civil and religious disabilities and privileges of the different section.
- v) Lack of unrestricted choice of occupations.
- vi) Restriction on marriage.

•Caste through the Ages

G.S. Ghurye has given a picture of Hindu caste society as it was functioning before modern ideas.

G.S. Ghurye breaks up the Indian history into 4 periods.

1. Vedic period ending about 600 B.C. and comprises the literary date of Vedic Samhitas and Brahmins.
2. Post Vedic period-In this period the sacred laws of the Aryans present the orthodox and the more or less idealistic standpoint.
3. Dharma shastras and ends with the tenth or 11th century A.D. In this period many Yajnavalkya and Vishnu are the chief exponents.
4. Modern period this period brings us down to the beginning of 19th century.

•Rigveda

In the Rigveda, 3 classes are frequently mentioned. Brahman, Kshatriya's and Vaishya's the first 2 represented the 2 professions of the poet priest and warrior chief. The third division Vis comprises of common people. It is only in one of the later hymns that Brahmin, Rajanya, Vaisya and Sudra are mentioned who have come from the mouth, the arms, the thighs and the feet of the creator. G.S. Ghurye says that the particular limbs associated with these divisions and the orders in which they are mentioned probably indicate their status in the society.

Ghurye holds the view that the fact the four classes are described as of divine origin, although in a later hymn, must be taken as a sufficient indication that they were of long duration and very well defined, even though the exact demarcation of their function the regulations guiding their interrelations and the extent of their feasibility may not be referred to in the main body of the Vedic literature. These orders of class are referred in literature as Varnas so much so that Hindu religion has come to be defined as Varnadharma yet in the Rigveda the word "Varna" is never applied to any one of these classes.

•Post Vedic Period

The Brahminic literature of the post-Vedic period while reiterating that there are only 4 varnas, mentions certain mixed castes (Sankara Jati) and also a group of outcaste classes (Antya Vasin). In this period the text books are analysed into 4 parts. Asramas (four stages in individual life) and their duties;

Varna-Dharma- much of the past describes duties of the Kshatriya; the two other parts deal with Expiatory acts & Inheritance. Though the main bulk of the law is treated under "Varna-Dharma" yet the "Sudra" does not figure much in these texts.

Among the four varnas, the old distinction of Arya and Sudra now appears predominantly as Dvija and Sudra, though the old distinction is occasionally mentioned. The first three varnas are called Dvijas (twice born) because they have to go through the initiation ceremony which is symbolic of

rebirth. This privilege is denied to the Sudra who is therefore called "Ekajati" (once born). Mixture of castes is regarded to be such a great evil that it must be combated even though the Brahmins and Vaisyas have to resort to arms, a function which is normally sinful for them. Of the mixed castes those that were the outcome of hypergamous unions, were proposed to be treated in two different ways. Gautama excludes from the Brahminic law only the issue of a Sudra female by males of the first three orders. It is not clear how he would like to treat the remaining three possible groups. Person born of unions in the inverse order of castes-technical known as the "pratiloma" (reverse) caste are of course, outside the pole of the sacred law, with the possible exception of one, viz. the suta. This period sees a great consolidation of the position of the Brahmin class, while the degradation of the Sudras comes out in a marked contrast to the growing superiority of the Brahmins. Prof. Ghurye says that the post Vedic period testifies to the rigid stratification and internal solidarity of the four varnas. Each group was recognised as distinct, almost complete in itself, for its social life. Endogamy was being sought to be rigorously prescribed and was followed to a large extent. The epics contain some examples of intercaste marriages, but they illustrate the practice prevailing among the aristocracy and the sages e.g. Darsaratha had a Sudra female one of his wives. But the Ramayana does not drop any hint that the children of the union were regarded as in any way different from the Kshatriya. Santanu married Satyvati, the daughter of a fisherman. In the story of the Mahabharata no suggestion is made that the issue would be considered lower than the Kshatriyas.

The third period of Indian history as conceived by Prof. Ghurye is marked by two developments in the ideals of the Hindu Dharma, which had an important bearing on the theory and practice of caste. The glorification of gifts to Brahmins, which became so absorbing a feature of later Hinduism, was largely the contribution of this age. Another noteworthy development is the schematic growth of imaginary hells as punishments for certain offenders and the progressive application of the doctrine of rebirth. According to Manu the Brahmin is the lord of this whole creation, because he is produced from the purest part of the Supreme Being, namely the mouth. Both the gods and manes have to receive their offerings through them. Feeding the Brahmins is one of the acknowledged ways of

gaming us religion merits. A Brahmin is entitled to whatever exists in the world. In fact, the whole world is his property, and other live on his charity. Vishnu is more audacious than Manu in asserting the worth of the Brahmins. He observes the Gods are invisible deities, the Brahmins are visible deities. Householders when sipping water for personal purification must not use it if brought by a Sudra. A member of the first three castes must not travel in the company of Sudras. Ghurye feels it seems that the Sudras were considered to impart some sort of defilement to objects like bed & seat by their touch.

The state of caste organizations as revealed by literature and the inscriptions of the fourth period is strikingly similar to that which we noticed as prevailing about the middle of the 19th century. The leading authorities of this period are Parasara, Hemadri, Madhava and Kamalakara. As regards the regulations of marriage, the four castes and the other groups are regarded as completely endogamous units, hypergamy being positively discouraged. Thus, by the end of this period Ghurye visualise caste organization, as revealed in the literature of the period, to be not at all different in any essential point from the one which are described as prevailing in the middle of the 19th century.

•Tribes as Backward Hindus

Ghurye presented his thesis on tribes at a time when a majority of the established anthropologists and administrators were of the opinion that the separate identity of the tribes is to be mentioned at any cost. Ghurye on the other hand believes that most of the tribes have been hinduized after a long period of contact with the Hindus.

Ghurye holds that it is futile to search for the separate identity of the tribes. They are nothing but the 'Backward Hindus'. Ghurye presents a huge data on the thought, practices and habits of the tribes inhabiting the central Indian region. He quotes extensively from various writings and reports to show that Kataris, Bhuiyas, Oraons, Khonds, Gonds, Korkus etc. have substantially adopted Hinduism as their religion. Ghurye suggests that the economic motivation behind the adoption of Hinduism is very strong when the tribals adopt Hindu religion, they can come out of their tribal crafts and adopt a specialized type of occupation which is in demand in society.

Thus, regarding the relationship between the tribals and Hindus, Ghurye holds that a grand historical process of merger between two communities has almost been completed at a result of which the tribes may now be regarded as 'backward Hindus'.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS -II

1) Describe the opinion of G. S. Ghurye on the tribes in India.

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2) Describe Ghurye's approach to the study of kinship in India.

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● **Kinship in Hindu Society**

In the analysis of kinship, Ghurye has successfully combined Indology and Sociology. Ghurye is concerned with Kinship as an institution regulating marriage in Hindu society that leads him to discuss (i) the relation between kinship and caste (ii) the origin development and social implications of Gotra, Chana and Pravara in Brahmanic literature and society; and (iii) the operation sapinda Exogamy.

The **gotra** and **charana** were kin-categories of Indo-European languages which systematised the rank and status of the people. These categories were derived from rishis of the past. These rishis were the real or eponymous founder of the **gotra** and **charana**. In India descent has not always been traced to the blood tie; the lineages were often based on spiritual descent from sages of the past. Outside the kinship we might notice the **guru-shishya** relationship, which is also based on spiritual descent; the disciple is proud to trace his descent from a master. Likewise, caste and sub- caste integrated people into a ranked order based on norms of purity-pollution. The rules of endogamy and commensality, which marked off castes from each other were, in fact, **integrative** instrument, which organised them into a totality or collectivity. The Hindu religion provided the conceptual and

ritualistic guidelines for this integration. The Brahmins in India played a key role in legitimising the caste ranks and orders through their interpretation of dharmashastras, which were the compendia of sacred codes.

•New roles of Caste in India

Ghurye's work on caste contained some interesting speculations, which have been proved to be correct. Firstly, he noted that the Indian castes had fostered voluntary association for the furtherance of education and reformist aims. Thus, Nadars, Reddys and Kammars of South India, Saraswat Brahmins of Maharashtra and Vaisyas, and Kayasthas of North India, to mention only a few, founded caste associations. Ghurye presumed that in the future they would give rise to a political consciousness based on caste ties. In the post-Independent India, the caste associations have been quite vocal about getting political concessions to their members. In the recent years, Rajni Kothari, a political analyst; has extensively analysed the caste associations. Unlike Ghurye, Kothari recognised the positive roles of these caste associations such as taking up welfare activities, etc. According to Ghurye, they have served to articulate the people's political aspirations in a democratic framework. Secondly, Ghurye referred to the various agitations of the backward classes for better privileges. These struggles seemed to be undermining the integrity of the Indian society. Thus, the caste system was becoming "pluralist" in the sense that each caste was in competition or conflict with the other for bigger share of the nation's wealth. Hence, this scramble for privileges was damaging the unity of society.

•Study of tribes in India

Ghurye's works on the tribes were general as well as specific. He wrote a general work on scheduled tribes in which he dwelt with the historical, administrative and social dimensions of Indian tribes. He also wrote on specific tribes such as the Kolis in Maharashtra. Ghurye was of the view that the Indian tribes were like "backward Hindus". Their backwardness was due to their imperfect integration into Hindu society. The Santhals, Bhils, Gonds, etc. who 'live in South-Central India are examples of it. He wrote: "While sections of these tribes are properly integrated in the

Hindu society, very large sections, in fact the bulk of them are rather loosely integrated Under the circumstances, the only proper description of these peoples is that they are the imperfectly integrated classes of Hindu society" (1963).

The incorporation of Hindu values and norms into tribal life was a positive development. With increasing contact with the Hindu social groups, the tribes had slowly absorbed certain Hindu values and style of life and came to be considered, part of the Hindu caste society. The tribes gave up liquor-drinking, received education and improved their agriculture under Hindu influence. In this respect, Hindu voluntary organisations such as Ramakrishna Mission and Arya Samaj played a constructive role. In his later works on north-eastern tribes, he documented secessionist trends. He felt that unless these were held in check, the political unity of the country would be damaged.

•Rural-urbanisation in India

Ghurye was interested in the process of rural-urbanisation. He held the view that the urbanisation in India was not a simple function of industrial growth. In India, the process of urbanisation, at least till recent years, started from within the rural area itself. He quoted Sanskrit texts and documents to illustrate the growth of urban centres from the need for markets felt in rural hinterland in other words, owing to the expansion of agriculture, more and more markets were needed to exchange the surplus in food grains. Hence, in many rural regions, one part of a big village was converted into a market; in turn, this led to a township which developed administrative, judicial and other institutions. We may add here that urban centres were also based on feudal patronage. In the past, demand of royal courts for silk cloth, weapons, jewellery, and metal artefacts led to the growth of urban centres such as Banaras, Kanchipuram, Jaipur and Moradabad etc.

In sum Ghurye's approach to "rural-urbanisation" showed the indigenous source of urbanism. The growth of metropolitan centres during colonial times altered the Indian urban life. The towns and cities were no longer the outlets for agricultural produce and handicrafts; but they became the major manufacturing centres, which used rural hinterland for producing raw-materials and turned it into a market for selling industrial products. Thus, metropolis came to dominate the village economy. In

contrast to previous pattern, now the urbanisation started making inroads into the rural hinterland.

Ghurye made the study of a village in Pune district of Maharashtra to highlight the continuity of the social structure. This village named Lonikand had been studied by a British officer in 1819. He described its general layout, economic infrastructure, caste composition, market-transactions and political and religious disposition. The re-survey of the village made by Ghurye in 1957 did not reveal any far-reaching differences in the demographic, economic and social dimensions of the village. Besides, he found that the layout of the village corresponded to the pattern laid down in a text of antiquity. He also noted that the village did not have a very well-knit social structure; there were loose strands in its social fabric. In spite of it the village had survived as a viable unit.

•Religious beliefs and practices in India

Ghurye made original contributions to the study of Indian religious beliefs and practices. He wrote three books on this in the period between 1950 and 1965. He argued that the religious consciousness in ancient India, Egypt and Babylonia was centred on the temples. There were also similarities between Indian and Egyptian patterns of worship and temple architecture. In his work on the role of Gods in Indian religion, Ghurye traced the rise of major deities such as Shiva, Vishnu and Durga to the need to integrate local or subregional beliefs into a macro-level system of worship. The diverse ethnic groups in India were integrated into a religious complex centring on these deities. Political or public patronage was often the basis for the spread of popular cults in India. The Ganesha festival in Maharashtra and Durga festival in Bengal gained popularity due to the efforts of nationalists such as B.G. Tilak and Bipin Chandra pal who were using religious idiom for the propagations of political ideas during the freedom struggle. Till this day, these festivals have retained some political overtones.

•Role of the Sadhu in Indian tradition

In his work on “**Indian Sadhus**”, Ghurye examined the paradoxical nature of renunciation in India. In India culture, the **Sadhu or Sannyasin** is supposed to be detached from all caste norms, social conventions, etc. In fact, he is outside "the pale of society". It is the usual practice among Shaivites

to conduct a "mock" "funeral" of one who is entering the path of renunciation. It means that he is "dead" to society but is "reborn" in spiritual terms. Yet, interestingly enough since the time of Shankara the 8th century reformer, Hindu society has been more or less guided by the Sadhus. These Sadhus are not individual hermits. Most of them are organised into monastic orders which have distinctive traditions. The monastic organisation in Indian was a product of Buddhism and Jainism. Shankara introduced it into Hinduism.

Indian Sadhus have acted as the arbiters of religious disputes, patronised learning of scriptures and even defended religion against external attacks. So, renunciation has been a constructive force in Hindu society. Ghurye considered in detail the different groups of Sadhus: important among them were the Shaivite **Dashnamis** (literal meaning: ten orders) and Vaishnavite **Bairagis**. Both these groups had the Naga (militant naked ascetics) contingents which were ready to fight off those who threatened the Hindu religion. Incidentally, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee's Bengali novel **Anand Math** recounts the story of a group of Shaivite monks who put up an armed struggle against the British forces in the 19th century. They were no doubt defeated by the British but they thereby revealed their staunch commitment to Hinduism. These Sadhus who assembled on a large scale at Kumbh Mela were the very microcosm of India; they came from diverse regions, spoke different languages but belonged to common religious orders. Asceticism, according to Ghurye, was not a relic of the past but a vital aspect of Hinduism. The well-known ascetics of the recent times, Vivekanand, Dayanand Saraswati and Sri Aurobindo worked for the betterment of Hinduism.

•Indian art and architecture

Ghurye was also keenly interested in Indian art. According to him, the Hindu, Jain and Buddhist artistic monuments shared common elements. But contrast, Hindu and Muslim monuments were grounded in diverse value systems. The Indian temples were indigenous in inspiration. The **Veda**, **Epics** and **Purana** provided them with popular themes. But Muslim art was Persian or Arabic and had no roots in this soil. He did not agree with the view that the Muslim monuments in India represented a synthesis. The Hindu elements merely remained decorative in Muslim buildings. By

contrast, the Rajput architecture retained its commitment to Hindu ideals, in spite of political control of Rajasthan by Muslim rulers. Ghurye traced the costumes in India from the ancient to the present time. He drew upon Hindu, Buddhist and Jain artistic works (architecture and sculpture) to illustrate the variations in costume over the ages.

Radhakamal Mukerjee, as noted earlier, wrote on Indian art. There was, however, a difference in his approach to art. Mukerjee viewed it as a vehicle of values, norms and ideals of a civilisation which had thrived through centuries. Ghurye, by contrast, was looking at art as a specifically Hindu configuration. Ghurye wrote that Rajput architecture was the assertion of Hindu faith in its own destiny. Mukerjee looked at the same phenomenon of artistic activity somewhat differently. He holds that the Rajputs were fervently engaged in building monuments which they believed would outlast their artistic heritage. Thus, in spite of their continuous battles with the Muslim overlords, they used their resources to patronise art.

•Hindu-Muslim relationships

Ghurye's works often discussed Hindu-Muslim relationships. He regarded Hindus and Muslims as separate groups, with little possibility of mutual give and take.

The pro-Hindu stance of Ghurye was based on the conflicts engendered by nearly seven centuries of Islamic rule in India. The forced conversions, destruction of places of worship, etc. no doubt damaged the Hindu psyche. But it is necessary to add here that the predatory acts of Muslim rulers find no sanction in **Quran**. Islam does not advocate violence. What happened was that political expediency rather than commitment to faith made the Muslim rulers use force against their subjects. Besides, Hindu-Muslim interactions have been culturally productive and socially beneficial. Sufism stimulated Bhaktism in India; the growth of Urdu literature, Hindustani classical music and shared patterns of life style showed that Islamic rule has a positive side. Communal tensions were in fact mainly a product of colonial rule. It was a political strategy of the British to divide the Indian society, especially the Hindus and the Muslims, after the 1857-Mutiny so that they could not fight them as a united force.

Communalism also received a fillip by the expansion of urbanism due to conflict of interest. At present also the communal riots have mainly taken place in India's urban centres due to political and economic reasons under the garb of religion. Ghurye's works have focused on the contemporary disturbances. In reality, in pre-British times was good cooperation between the two communities. Up to 1980, he authored 31 books, only 5 of them were written before 1950 and 13 up to 1959 when he retired from the University service.

•His Important Works are: -

1. Caste and Race in India 1932,1969 (Fifth Edition)
2. Culture and society-1947
3. Indian Sadhus (1953)
4. Bharatnayamandits Costume (1958)
5. Family and Kin in Indo-European Culture (1955,1961)
6. Cities and civilisation (1962)
7. Gods and Men (1962)
8. Anatomy of a Rural- Urban Community (1962)
9. Scheduled Tribes 1943, 1962,1963
10. Religious Consciousness-1965
11. Indian costume (1966, 2nd Edn.)
12. Social Tension in India-1968
13. I and other Explorations - 1973
14. Whither India-1974
15. Indian Acculturation -1977
16. Vedic India-1979
17. Bringing Cauldron of North East India-1980

•Caste and Kinship

The relationship between caste and kinship is very close because (i) Exogamy in our society is

largely based on kinship, either real or imaginary and (ii) the effective unit of caste, sub-caste is largely constituted of kinsmen. To Ghurye, there are three types of marriage restrictions in our society which shape the relationship between caste and kinship. These are Endogamy, exogamy and hypergamy. Exogamy can be divided into 2 parts (i) Spinda or prohibited degrees of kin (ii) Sept or Gotra exogamy.

Ghurye undertakes this task in details and on a gigantic scale in his two Brahmanical institutions i.e.

Gotra and Charan.

Gotra and Charan (1972): There are three underlying ideas which prompted Ghurye to take up this work. First, sociological categories like Gotra, Charana and Pravara have been the most important ones regulating the Brahmin's social relations for centuries. Secondly, all these Brahmanical institutions have penetrated the social organization and behavioural pattern of the non-Brahmin Hindus. And thirdly, that these rules relating to gotra and Pravara exogamy still govern substantially the social relations of the Hindus. It is on the basis of these assumptions that it is claimed that Ghurye has combined Indology and sociology in an efficient way.

The range of Ghurye's interest is encyclopaedic. His abiding interest is in the course of world civilization in general and in Hindu civilization in particular. He has analyzed various aspects like the origin and evolution of caste, the evolution of Indo- Aryan family structure and its connections with the Indo-European family structure, of specific institutions like gotra etc. Analysis of the diverse aspects of the evolution of Indian social history and culture thus constitutes the major preoccupation of Ghurye.

Ghurye has been concerned not merely with the past evolution of Indian society and culture but also with its present tensions and problems. The task of sociologists according to him is to explore the social history of the past. He says one cannot understand the present with reference to the past.

Criticism

During his creative period of writing Indian Sociology was engaged in the debate on tradition and

modernity. But Ghurye did not enter into this controversy. Nor he took up the issue of the role of tradition in Indian Society. He further stressed that Indian traditions are actually Hindu tradition and to understand Indian society one must know the Hindu Tradition. It would not be wrong to suggest that Ghurye created a special kind of Hindu sociology and the tradition which we have in India are Hindu traditions only. Despite Ghurye's prolific writings on issue pertaining to Indian Society, he has not defined traditions nor has he discussed the impact of modernity. His sole concern is that the core of Hindu society and, in this sense, the Indian Society is tradition and this tradition has its roots in its scripture is a much-narrowed vision about Indian society.

Apart from this, his most work was trapped in textual/scriptural analysis. The choice of scripture and the way of writing by themselves can have a bias toward one section of society i.e. elite class. He further fails to recognize that a qualitative change in the dynamic of Indian unity has occurred in modern India. His knowledge of India's past, instead of helping him, has stood in the way of this realization on his past. Admitting that the past is important for present, the question is how much of the past is useful.

6.5 LET US SUM UP

This lesson attempted to explain Ghurye contribution to the study of caste. His approach to caste was basically Indological and structuralist. To him the hierarchy of caste is religious in nature and is marked by the disjunction between status and power. Ghurye's understanding has been traced mainly from ancient text and therefore put him in the category of cognitive-historical and as Indologist.

6.6 GLOSSARY

1. **Hierarchy:** Ordering of society in a rank order from top to bottom, e.g. Caste System.
2. **Pollution:** state of mind and body which is connected with occupation and caste and regarded as unclean.

3. **Purity:** A state of ritual cleanliness associated with caste occupation.

6.7 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q1. Discuss contribution of G.S Ghurye in understanding Indian society

Q2. How can we relate Ghurye's work as Indological approach to Indian society.

Q3. Discuss Ghurye as an Indologist.

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INDOLOGICAL / TEXTUAL PERSPECTIVE**LOUIS DUMONT****STRUCTURE**

- 7.0 Objectives
- 7.1 Introduction
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7.0 OBJECTIVES

This lesson will help you to understand:

- Insight into works of Louis Dumont.
- To get knowledge about the concepts like pollution and purity

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Indian society is a culturally diversified society and it has remained the attraction of the social scientist, either native or abroad, to explore the reality of this society. Since understanding of the social reality requires a temper for scientific analysis or approach, so we have to rely on various sociological perspectives for scientific analysis of social reality.

Social perspective is simply different ways of trying to understanding the social world. They are scientific tested method to explore the reality and they are the directing agents for conducting research and analysing the social phenomenon. It is to be further enforced that no sociological perspective - or even all of them in combination can give us the truth about the world. Sociological perspective merely provides us with ways of trying to understand the world but none of them has a built-in assurance that eternal truth will be produced from a specific perspective. Still a scientific sociological perspective necessary involves standards and procedures for demonstrating the empirical warrant of its findings, showing the match or fit between its statements and what is happening in the real world. These perspectives thus act as a guiding lamp for exploring society. Although these perspectives have in common their basic scientific justification, they differ to varying degrees in terms of the concept they use, the method they use to deal with the phenomenon or the possible solutions they arrive at. It is often the case that the basic assumption of one social science perspective constitutes the basic problems and criticism to the other. Thus, there is no ultimate way of determining truth of any society or social phenomenon. This leads to formation of perspectives with different grounding and they individually try to explore society in their own way.

7.2 LOUIS DUMONT'S LIFE AND WORKS

Louis Dumont, a French Scholar was primarily concerned with the ideology of the caste system. His understanding of caste lays emphasis on attributes of caste that is why; he is put in the category of Attributional approach of caste system. For him, caste is a set of relationship of

economic, political and kinship systems, sub stained by certain 'values', which are mostly religious in nature. Dumont says that caste is not a form of stratification but special forms of inequality, whose essence has to be deciphered by the sociologists. Here Dumont identifies 'hierarchy, as the essential value underlying the caste system, supported by Hinduism

As a study of the caste system in India, Dumont's '*Homo-Hierarchicus*' offers several new perspectives on the study of social structure. The notion of ideology and tradition are intrinsic parts of its paradigm. He has brought the methods of structuralism to bear upon his study of the caste system, the chief elements of its methodology are: Ideology, dialectics transformational relationship and comparison. He seeks the ideology of caste in Indology, and in the assumption of the unity of India civilization.

Defining ideology he writes, "It designates a more or less unified set of ideas and values". Indian civilization to him is a specific ideology whose components are in a binary opposition to that of West: holism against individualism, hierarchy against equality. This opposition (dialectic) is a basis for comparison at the level of global ideology within the specific ideology of the caste system; the opposite is between the principles of purity and pollution. Apart from ideology and structure, the notion of hierarchy has a pivotal place in Dumont's study of caste system. Hierarchy implies opposition between pure and impure and this also determines its dialectics. Hierarchy also implies the relationship of 'encompassing' and being 'encompassed'. In the caste system, the principle of purity encompasses the impure. Thus, Dumont's approach to the study of the caste system in India provoked very substantial debate.

Louis Dumont: His life and Works

Louis Dumont (1911-1998) was grandson of a painter and son of an engineer. He began his academic carrier in the mid 1930's under the guidance of Marcel Mauss, leading sociologist and Sanskritist. World War II interrupted his studies, but not entirely. He was taken as prisoner of war and was detained in a factory on the outskirts of Hamburg. There he studied German. Before long he began to teach himself Sanskrit, and this effort lasted a whole year.

Back home in 1945, at the end of the war, he returned to the Music and Arts etc tradition popularise (ATP), where he worked earlier in a non-academic position. Here he had engaged in a research project on French furniture and undertook the study of a folk festival, the Tarascon, about which he later wrote a monograph, *La Tarasque* (1951). Already in the study, Dumont's eye for ethnographic detail and his holistic approach are in evidence. Around this time, he also carried forward his Interest in India, generated by Mauss teaching, and took lesson in Hindi and Tamil at the Ecol des Langues Orientals and studied the ethnography of South India. Among his patrons were the comparativist Georges Dumezil and the Indologist *Louis Renou*.

Dumont spent the year 1949 and 1950 in Tamil Nadu studying the *Pramala Kallar* who stand somewhere in the middle in the regional caste system. Based on intensive fieldwork and methodical study of literary sources, two important monographs, *one sous-caste de Inde du sud: Organisation sociale et religion des Pramalai Kallar and Hierarchy and marriage alliance in South India* were published in 1957. Hierarchy and marriage alliance was written in English and is dedicated to Claude Levi-Strauss.

Dumont returned home from India in 1951, and was back at ATP centre. A year later he succeeds M.N. Srinivas as Lecturer in Indian Sociology at Oxford University. There he developed a close relationship with Evans-Pritchard and came to appreciate the importance of the social-anthropological perspective (from outside the study under study), so that writing a sociological account meant 'translating the culture studied into the language of ones' own culture. The five years at Oxford were of Critical importance in the formulation of Dumont's methodology for the study of the Indian civilisation.

In 1955, Dumont returned to Paris to take up a research professorship at the *Ecole Pratiques des Hautes Etudes*. In the inaugural lecture over there, he declared that sociology of Indian must lie at the 'confluence of Sociology and Indology. The method was dialectical in the sense that although Indology may provide points of departure, the principles derived from it were to be confronted by what the people actually did. He himself characterised it as a combination of the

views from 'within' and 'without', yielding understanding at a higher level. An English version of this programmatic text was published jointly with David Pocock in 1957 in the first number of *Contribution to Indian Sociology* of which they were number of contributions to *India Sociology* and of which they were the founding editors. Dumont published in these periodicals a number of studies on the themes like village community, caste marriage, kingship, renunciation, and nationalism.

The presence of castes everywhere, he had said in 1955, was a token of the culture unity and distinctiveness of India. From 1951 onwards, Dumont has lectured and written about caste. The fruit of this pedagogic-cum-research endeavour was his magnum opus, *Homo-hierarchicus*. Dumont focussed on the notion of ritual purity derived from both the textual tradition and ethnography.

7.3 LOUIS DUMONT'S MAJOR WORK: HOMO-HIERARCHICUS

Louis Dumont's credentials as an Indologist are of an exceptionally high order. He is a scholar of internal prestige who is equally honoured in India. His main areas of interest in sociology are social anthropology and Indology. He has written on impressive range of subjects such as Hinduism, caste, Kinship, kingship in Ancient India and social political movements in modern India. His recent magnum opus, *Homo Hierarchicus* is a usual work in its conception, design and execution.

The task that Dumont set himself is succinctly announced in the subtitle of the book: an inquiry into the caste system and its implications. The first question here comes in mind is; How does Dumont defines castes? The French sociological tradition leads Dumont to stress the role of ideology in moulding human behaviour and, therefore to seek to bring together Sociology and Indology.

When a sociologist is engaged in analysis of the evolution and growth of social institutions in India, he has to draw heavily on Indological materials considering this close relation between sociology and Indology, Dumont and Pocock observed: "In our opinion, the first condition for a

sound development of a sociology in India is found in the establishment of the proper relation between it and classical Indology. It should be obvious in principle that the sociology of India lies at the point of confluence of sociology and Indology." From this perspective, Dumont, himself, in his *Homo Hierarchicus*, has built up a model of Indian civilization which is based on a non-competitive ritual hierarchical system.

The following discussion of Dumont is an extract from his book *Homo Hierarchicus: The Caste System and its implication* (1966). Dumont, an Indologist, feels that the study of the caste system is useful for the knowledge of India, and it is an important task of general sociology. Dumont based his study of castes on the classical literature, historical examples etc. He expressed his views on Caste system, Varnas, Purity and Impurity, Hierarchy, Power and Territory, Caste Government.

•**System of Caste by Dumont**

Dumont has also talked about 'System' of castes in two different senses, an empirical sense and an ideological one. The set of actual castes which are found together in a definite territory may be spoken of as a geographically circumscribed system of castes. Dumont calls the Caste System as a system of 'Ideas and values' which is a 'formal comprehensible rational system. Dumont holds the view that "if we were to content with the empirical approach the system would be limited to those groups called castes and to the corresponding individuals or collective relationships either within the caste or between members of different castes. He felt that it was a tendency for some years to leave out of consideration the village network and of specialization and interdependence between different castes known as the Jajmani System. The second aspect is ideological and this aspect according to Dumont is the essence of Caste System as he says "one stresses more the ideological aspect the more difficult is to isolate a special domain within the caste society in its entirety, e.g. the "idea of hierarchy", which is important as caste is concerned. In Hindu law, the relationships between father-son have been of interdependence in terms of caste between superior and inferior position.

Dumont proceeded with his ideas very systematically taking the help of the Hindu literature which reflect the Hindu life of the past. He starts with hierarchy to assume a picture of caste system in a linear order i.e. going from the highest to the lowest. In Dumont's word's a transitive non-cyclic order: each caste is lower than those which proceeds, it and higher than those which follows it and they are comprised between two extreme points. He feels this simplest explanation of caste. He found it difficult to rank middle region castes absolutely in relation to the other as it is less convenient. The idea of structure 'was very important at Dumont's times. Sometimes castes were seen merely as opposite to one another, and sometimes castes are divided into sub castes. For this reason, Dumont used the word 'segment' and 'segmentation' to designate the division or subdivision of a group into several groups of the same nature but on a smaller scale.

Dumont started with Caste System by taking the definition of Bougle which defines caste system composed of hereditary groups distinguished from one another and connected together in three ways:

- (i) By gradation of status or hierarchy
- (ii) By detailed rules aimed at ensuring their separation.
- (iii) By division of labour and the interdependent these results from it.

Dumont's analysis is that the above three principles rests on a single principle namely the opposition of pure and the impure. This opposition underlies hierarchy, which means superiority of the pure and inferiority of the impure. This principal underline 'separation', which means pure and the impure must keep separate.

Dumont's concept of Pure and Impure is very popular but he says by giving this concept he is not inventing anything new: this is constant in Hindu life. He makes himself and readers clear that he did not claim that the opposition between pure and impure is the 'foundation' of society. It is very implicit reference to this opposition that the society of castes appear consistent and rational to those who live in it. This concept of purity and Impurity given by Dumont has also been

highlighted in this chapter.

•Concept of Pure and Impure

While considering the concept of pure and impure Dumont had two questions in mind: why is this distinction applied to hereditary groups? And if it accounts for the contrast between Brahmins and Untouchables, can it account equally for the division of society into a large number of groups, themselves sometimes extremely subdivided? He did not answer these questions directly. But the opposite has always been two extreme categories i.e. Brahmins and Untouchables. The Brahmins, assigned with the priestly functions occupy the top rank in the social hierarchy and are considered pure as compared to other castes whereas the untouchable as very impure servants, who are segregated outside the village, they were not allowed to draw water from the wells as the Brahmins also take water from that well. Besides this, they do not have any access to Hindu temple, and suffered from various other disabilities. Dumont said that this situation was somewhat changed since the Gandhian agitation and when India attained Independence, Untouchability was considered illegal. Gandhiji renamed Untouchables as 'Harijan' 'Sons of Hari' that is creatures of God (Vishnu).

•Why Untouchables are separated?

Dumont said "it may be supposed for example, that it is due to the nauseating smell of the skins, they are accustomed to treat? Untouchables are specialized in impure tasks, which lead to the attribution of a massive and permanent impurity to some categories of people. Dumont has also highlighted Temporary and Permanent impurity. In large areas of the world, death, birth and other such events in the personal or family life are considered to harbour a danger which leads to the temporary seclusion of the affected persons for instance, the newly delivered mother was actually excluded from the church for forty days at the end of which she would present herself carrying a lighted candle and would be met at the church porch by the priest. In India persons affected by this kind of event are impure for a prescribed period, and Indian themselves identify this impurity with that of the

Untouchable. Prof P. V. Kane in his work, the History of the Dharma sastra, writes that a man nearest relative and his best friend become untouchable for him for a certain time as a result of these events. According to Harita, the purity is of three kinds, bearing on the family (*Kula*), objects of everyday use (*Artha*) and the body (*Sarira*). For the body, the main thing is the morning attention to hygienic culminating in the daily bath. Even the objects are considered as pure and impure; silk is purer than cotton, gold than silver, than bronze than copper. These objects are not simply polluted by the contact but by the use to which they are put and used by the person. Now a days, a new garment or vessel can be received from anybody. It is believed that person's own bed, garments, wife, child, water pot is pure for his own self and family and for others it is impure.

●Ranking of Castes

Dumont by giving an example shows we are vegetarian which places us above x,y,z, who eat meat; but we allow the remarriage of widow's which places one below A, B, C who forbid it, these two judgements have the capacity to divide the caste into superior and inferior. But still say Dumont, it is difficult to grade all the castes of given area in a fixed hierarchical order.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Note: Write your answers in the space given below.

1)Write a note on purity and pollution.

2)Outline some of the criticisms of Dumont's theory.

●Caste and Subcaste

Caste which appears unified from outside is divided from inside with various sub-castes and there are many further subdivisions. Senart, the Sanskrit scholar realized that it was not caste but subcaste having character attributed to caste. He says one just cannot marry anywhere within caste but usually, only within one's own sub caste, and it is also the sub caste and not the caste which has judicial institutions. According to Prof. Ghurye's statement generally, though it is the caste which is recognized by society at large, it is the sub caste which is regarded by the particular caste and individual.

Another school of thought is opposed to this one. Blunt while insisting on Endogamy in his definition of caste, rejects Senart's conclusion in virtue of two arguments

: **First**, endogamy is less rigid at the level of the sub caste than that of the caste (this is in Uttar Pradesh where intermarriage is sometimes tolerated in certain direction between different sub castes); **Secondly**, one must adapt to the ideas of Hindu society.

●The Theory of the Varnas

Dumont feels one cannot speak of the caste without mentioning the Varnas, to which Hindus frequently attributes the caste themselves. India has the traditional hierarchy of Varnas, 'colour' or estates whereby four categories are distinguished; the highest is that of the Brahmans or priests, below them the Kshatriyas or warriors, then the Vaishyas, in modern usage mainly merchants, and finally the Shudras, the servant or have-nots. There is one more category, the fifth category, the Untouchables, who are outside the classification system Dumont maintains that many of the Indologists confuse the Varna and Caste, mainly because the classical literature is concerned almost entirely with the Varnas. Caste and Varnas are to be understood with relationship of hierarchy and power.

In the last chapter of his book Dumont takes up the problem of change: 'What is the caste system becoming now days. In Dumont's view the only significant change that does seem to have taken place is that the traditional interdependence of castes has been replaced by 'a universe of

impenetrable blocks, self-sufficient, essentially identical and in competition with one another'. Dumont calls this the substantialization of castes. An inventory of sources of change in the caste system lists judicial and political changes, social-religious reform, westernization, growth of modern professions, urbanization, spatial mobility and the growth of market economy. But, despite all these factors making for change, the most ubiquitous and general form that changes have taken in contemporary times is one of a 'mixture' or 'combination', of traditional and modern features.

Dumont concludes by asserting that hierarchy is 'a universal necessity' and that, if it is not formally recognized in a society, and it may assert itself in a pathological form (e.g. racism). It is therefore, one of the greatest importances for western man to endeavour to study, understand a social system in which hierarchy is recognized, and in fact, accorded the status of first principles.

Homo Hierarchicus is a most impressive achievement and shall long remain a basic work for the students of Indian societies. Homo Hierarchicus is a work complete in itself and must be judged as such. This work is different from others as it begins with a cardinal explanatory principle of hierarchy and sets out to build a model. As for himself Dumont believes that his choice of hierarchy as the cardinal explanatory principles was a good one and enabled us to test the consistency of the system.

❖Dumont's Theory

In Dumont's theory, we can identify the following core points that he makes: The Hindu caste system could not be explained in terms of politico-economic factors Caste was not just another form of class or an extreme form of stratification. It should be explained in terms of its underlying structure of ideas and values. i.e. the ideology. The nature of the value system (ideology) and the framework of social organization in the traditional societies were totally different from that of the modern societies of the West. The ideology of the Hindu caste system was that of hierarchy. The structure of hierarchy was explained in terms of the dialectical relationship (unit and opposition) between the "pure" and "impure". Pure was superior to the impure. One of the core features of caste system was the distinction that it made between status and powers. It was the ideology of hierarchy

(that allocated status to different groups in society) that was more important than the material position of a person in the caste system. Priest, at least in principle, was superior to the king.

Criticism: McKim Marriott criticizes 'Homo-Hierarchicus' as containing a speculative sketch, a pair of models, strongly shaped documented mainly with textual ideology of social science and documented mainly with textual and philosophic allusions.

G. Berreman adds that 'hierarchy' is simply a lure: The superior castes conception of social system. Further on the issue of Dumont's separation between power and status Berreman argues that power and status could be two sides of the same coin as well. Further the purity versus impurity opposition highlighted by Dumont is not universal. In certain tribal societies 'status is not anchored in purity but in 'Sacredness'.

At the end, Dumont's projection of caste system as unchanging is also wrong. In reality caste system has changed in various ways down the ages. Also, Dumont seems to characterise Indian society as almost stagnant, since he places much emphasis on the integrative function of caste system.

7.4 LET US SUM UP

This lesson attempted to explain Dumont's contribution to the study of caste. We saw how, to Dumont, hierarchy is the essential value underlying the caste system. His approach to caste was basically Indological and structuralist. To him the hierarchy of caste is religious in nature and is marked by the disjunction between status and power. Dumont's understanding has been traced mainly from ancient text and therefore put him in the category of cognitive-historical and as Indologist.

7.5 GLOSSARY

1. **Hierarchy:** Ordering of society in a rank order from top to bottom, e.g. Caste System.
2. **Pollution:** state of mind and body which is connected with occupation and caste and regarded as unclean.

3. **Purity:** A state of ritual cleanliness associated with caste occupation.

7.6 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTION

- Q1. Discuss contribution of Louis Dumont in understanding Indian society

- Q2. How can we relate Louis Dumont's work as Indological approach to Indian society.

- Q3. Critically evaluate Dumont's analysis on Indian society.

7.7 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Dumont, L; 1970; *Homo-Hierarchicus - the Caste, System and its Implication*, Vikas Publication, Delhi.
2. Gupta, D, 1991, *Social Stratification*, Oxford University Press, Delhi.
3. Singh.Y, 1973. *Modernization of Indian Tradition*, Thompson Press Delhi.
4. Ghurye, G.S.; 1932; *Caste and Race in India*, Popular Prakashan, Bombay.
5. Pramanick, S.K. 2001; *Sociology of G.S. Ghurye*, Rawat Publication, New Delhi.
6. Kapadia, K.M.; 1954; *Professor Ghurye-felicitation* volume, Popular Prakashan, Bombay.
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STRUCTURAL FUNCTIONAL PERSPECTIVE**M.N SRINIVAS****STRUCTURE**

- 8.0 Objectives
- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 M.N. Srinivas: His Life and Works
- 8.3 Religion and Society among the Coorg's of South India
- 8.4 M. N Srinivas: Views on Caste
- 8.5 Let us Sum Up
- 8.6 Glossary
- 8.7 Self-Assessment Questions
- 8.8 Suggested Readings

8.0 OBJECTIVES

This chapter will equip you with the contribution of M.N. Srinivas in the field of Sociology. After reading this chapter you can understand:

- Life of M.N. Srinivas
- Important works of Srinivas
- His central ideas especially structural - functional approach.
- Relationship between religion and society.

8.1 INTRODUCTION

M. N. Srinivas (1916-1999) occupies an eminent place among the first-generation sociologists of India. He belongs to the galaxy of sociologists such as G.S. Ghurye, R. K. Mukerjee, N.K. Bose and D.P. Mukerji. He considers village as the microcosm of Indian Society and civilization. It was "Religion and society among the Coorg's of south India in 1952 that establishes Srinivas a leading position in Indianist studies. The strength of the work lies in its being firmly grounded in a clearly defined theoretical framework i.e. guided by Prof. Radcliffe Brown. The imprints of structural-functionalism are clearly reflected in the work. Religion and society is a very lucid exposition of the complex interrelationship between ritual and the social order in Coorg society. Religion is here reduced to ritual and is sought to be understood in terms of its functionalism, the maintenance of the social order.

He also wrote about the spread of Hinduism, categorizing it for analytical purpose into local regional, peninsular and all-India varieties. He stressed that these distinctions could be seen only when the cohesive role of all -India Sanskritic Hinduism and its central values was recognized. Related to this was the notion of Sanskritization which Srinivas employed to describe the process of penetration of Sanskritic values into the remotest part of India.

Srinivas's interest in caste, which he called the structural basis of Hinduism turn to be stronger than his interest in Hinduism in its totality. His idea of dominant castes namely Coorg and okkalyas (in Rampura) wielded considerable power and share social attributes like numerical pre-ponderance, economic strength, ritual status etc. Through all his works, Srinivas tried to emphasize the "field view" as against the book view of understanding Indian society.

8.2 M.N. SRINIVAS: HIS LIFE AND WORKS

Srinivas's lectures and writings have influenced multiple generations of sociologists and social anthropologists. His observations and forecasts about the trajectory of Indian society appear to have gained new relevance several years after they were delivered in letter and word. Srinivas's in-depth

and precise study of material has resulted in generalisations that apply in many facets of life even in this age of uncertainty and change. We begin this lesson with an understanding of the socio-cultural background which influenced the ideas of M N Srinivas and then examine some of his important ideas. Thereafter, we will list some of his important works. M.N. Srinivas was one of the founders of modern sociology and social anthropology in India. The corpus of his writing is quite large. Apart from writing and editing about twenty books he wrote as many as about a hundred and fifty papers articles notes etc. during his long academic career spanning nearly sixty years.

Srinivas was born on 16 November 1916 in a traditional Brahmin family in the city of Mysore. His father Narasimhachar was minor official in the government. The initial of 'M' and 'N' in his name stand for Mysore and Narasimhachar respectively. His native place was Arakere, a village about 20 miles by road from Mysore and about 3 miles from Rampura (real name was Kodagahalli) which shot into prominence following 'Srinivas' anthropological writings.

Having passed the B.A examination, Srinivas decided to go to Bombay to enrol in the Masters course in sociology and to work for a law degree in the evenings. The Department of Sociology at the Bombay University was the first postgraduate department of sociology to be set up in the country and had earned a high reputation within a short period of time due to the distinction of its founder, Patrick Geddes and his successor as head of the department, G. S. Ghurye.

In those days a students could do his Masters either by taking an examination at the end of two years attendance at lectures or by writing a dissertation. In view of Srinivas Honours degree in sociology, Ghurye asked him to submit a dissertation. Srinivas completed his dissertation on 'Marriage and Family among the Kannada caste in Mysore state, drawing upon the available ethnographic literature, folklore, fiction, questionnaire and a short period of field work. The dissertation was completed in 1938, and published in 1942 under the title, Marriage and Family in Mysore. Later, the Department of Sociology awarded a research fellowship to Srinivas in June 1940 to carry out a field study of the Coorgs of south India for his doctoral degree Later he submitted his thesis, entitled

Coorgs: A Socio-Ethnic study, in December 1944. When his research fellowship exhibited in June 1942 he was appointed as a research assistant in the same department, a post he held till June 1944.

After completing his doctorate, Srinivas considered the idea of pursuing higher studies abroad. With financial Support from his family, he went to Oxford in May 1945. Later he received a Carnegie research grant for two years.

Srinivas's initial encounter with his teacher A. R. Radcliffe Brown at Oxford was not happy. The main reason for this was that Radcliffe-Brown did not appreciate his idea of studying patterns of culture derived from Ruth Benedict. Instead, R. Brown advised him to re-examine the relation between religion and society among the Coorg's on the basis of the material he had collected earlier. Srinivas readily accepted the suggestion and commented that "I became an enthusiastic convert to functionalism. I have the feeling that I have at last found a theoretical framework which was satisfactory but like all new converts I was fanatic".

Srinivas had completed the major part of his dissertation by the middle of 1946 when Radcliffe Brown retired. Srinivas then worked for a while under E.E Evans Pritchard. He was awarded the D.Phil. degree in July 1947. Evans-Pritchard influence has the effect of steering Srinivas away from Radcliffe-Brownian functionalism and towards a more balanced view of social anthropology.

Later in November 1947, he was appointed as lecturer in Indian sociology being created at Oxford and he was further allowed to devote the first year to field work, he spent almost the whole of 1948 in doing field work in a village in his native Mysore State. Before leaving Oxford, Srinivas had applied for a post in the Anthropological survey of India. But later, on 15 June 1951 he got an opportunity at Baroda University and which he availed immediately.

When Srinivas joined Baroda University his book 'Religion and society among the Coorg's of South India' was in the press. Soon after Srinivas came to Baroda, the result of his field work in Rampura began to appear. He published an article "The social structure of a Mysore village" in the economic Weekly (1951) and later in a book entitled 'India's Village' (1955). This established Srinivas as a

pioneer of village studies in India.

Srinivas was under the influence of structural functional anthropology during his initial years in Baroda. However, his focus shifted to social change and was reflected through his work - "A note on sanskritization and Westernization (1956) and 'caste in Modern India (1957). He also joined the University of Delhi (1959) Institute for Social and Economic, Bangalore (1972) and later retired in January 1979.

Important Works:

- Marriage and Family in Mysore (1942), New Book Company, Bombay.
- Religions and society among the Coorg's of South India (1952); Asia Publishing House Bombay.
- Caste in Modern India and other Essay; Asia Publishing House, Bombay Social change in Modern India (1966); University of California press, Berkeley.
- The Remembered village (1976); Oxford University Press, New Delhi India: Social Structure (1980); Hindustan Publishing corporation, Delhi.
- The Dominant Caste and other Essay (1987); Oxford University Press Delhi.
- On living in a Revolution and other Essays (1992), Oxford University Press, Delhi.

8.3 RELIGION AND SOCIETY AMONG THE COORG'S OF SOUTH INDIA

It is recognized that religion is a binding force amongst individuals and it would seem that the etymology of the word indicates this. The scientific problem is how religion does this, how in their words, it functions. The work of Prof Srinivas is an important contribution at this investigation.

In an investigation into the social function of religion in a particular society the first thing required is to examine the relation of the religion to the social structure. In this respect the religion of the Coorgs is of very special interest and value. We say that there are three different structural systems in which the individual Coorg is involved, and each of these has its own system of religions

behaviour and obligations. In the first place the Coorg individuals are a member of a domestic group, the '*okka*' or patrilineal joint family. His closest ties are with this group and its members, and the well-being of this group is something that is for him of supreme importance. Each such group has its own religious cult. There are recurrent occasions on which ritual performances are called for. Any event which affects the solidarity or well-being of the group is an occasion of ritual such as in birth, death and marriages. The ritual of '*Sammanda*' is crucial to signify '*okka*'. It is used both to indicate the rights of membership in an *okka* as well as the ritual in which such rights are conferred or withdrawn. At an ordinary marriage for instance, the *Sammanda* ritual only confers rights on the bride in the groom's *okka*, but this acquisition of right in another *okka* implies that the bride loses most by her right in her natal *okka*. Through examples Srinivas has helped us to see the social function of these rituals as expressing and maintaining the solidarity and continuity of the structural system i.e. *okka* or patrilineal joint family. Further he has sought to reveal the meaning of the ritual idiom of the Coorg domestic cult. In any system of ritual each ritual action has its meaning and the totality of such meaning constituent the idiom of that system. For example; the religious meaning to the Coorgs of the lamp hanging in the hall of the house or performance of '*murta*' of '*sprinkling*' of rice on a person or thing etc. has a meaning and function.

Besides being a member of a joint family (*okka*), the Coorg individuals is a member of a village community which includes not only persons of his own caste but also members of other castes, the village community has its own religious cult, with its God or temple or shrine. The village deities when properly propitiated protect the village and its inhabitants from small and other supernatural evils and afford blessing such as good health and abundant crops. Thus, the cult of the various deities is a collective action of the community. For example, the festivals of *Kundat Bhadrakali* of *Kuklur* in South Coorg may be regarded as typical of the festivals of village deities. These festivals last for several days involve very elaborate and complicated ritual and imply the cooperation of several castes, and frequently of two or three village. The most common village deities in Coorg are *Bhagavati* (*Povvedi*) and *Ayyappa* (or *Shasta*).

In this regard three other features of social structure have to be considered in connection with village cult.

1. Though the whole village community takes part in the ceremonies, different caste groups have different parts to play and are thus differentiated. Some for example take part in the animal sacrifice, while others have nothing to do with it thus a caste group within the village is able, within the cult, to establish its own unity and its separation from other groups.
2. Though each village community has its own unity as exhibited in the cult performance, there is co-operation between different village and members of one may take part in the ceremonies of another. Thus, the Coorg village are groups within a single Coorg religions community. It is therefore not only the solidarity of the village that is exhibited in the village cult but also the religions solidarity and unity of the people of Coorg.
3. There is the fact that the local deities of the villages have been assimilated to the gods and goddesses of the Hindu pantheon, as when a particular deity is identified with Shiva or Parvati. In this way the Coorg religious community has become incorporated as a part of that wider Hindu religion's community.

At the end, the individual in Coorg belong to a joint family, a particular village and also belong to a particular social group; Caste. Thus, the study focuses on the interrelationship of religion and social structure.

- **Book-View vs. Field-View**

Srinivas was keen to differentiate between a book-view of society (based on religious literature and an Indological perspective) and a field-view of society in the Indian context (derived from in-depth fieldwork and sociological approach). Books have remained an indispensable part of people's lives in India. They provided norms and laid out the normative code of behaviour. In urban areas, norms and normative code of behaviour were imposed by rulers. In rural areas, however, dominant castes or councils of individual castes enforced norms and normative code of behaviour. Noticeable

cultural diversity exists not only between regions, but also across castes and ethnic groups. He noticed a significant gap between the book-view of society and the field-view of society. In reality, the disjunction between the two provided a unique viewpoint on understanding how caste regulates social relations across time. While Srinivas was attempting to establish the significance of field-view for the study of Indian society and culture, Dumont's *Homo Hierarchicus* (1970) introduced the book view in academic circles. The impact was so much that for many sociologists, book-view gained more importance than field-view.

- **Community Development and Nation-Building**

The westernized elite in India uphold western concepts and values. These are used to understand the state of affairs in our own country. Focusing on nation building in Independent India Srinivas held social scientists in the country for ignoring the complexity of political and social stability consistency in drawing conclusions about the country as a whole. He maintained that social scientists' conclusions were drawn on the basis of on the basis of inadequate ambiguous data. They did not celebrate the success in nation-building given the facts of the country's vastness and diversity. He suggests the importance of westernized elite for their commitment towards reforming society. They also strive towards parliamentary democracy as the form of government for the country. In this way, they contribute towards nation-building. Srinivas outlines fundamental elements in process of nation-building in India, including:

- i. protective discrimination for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and other Backward Classes, which aims to ensure that opportunities for growth and development reach the socially and ritually underprivileged;
- ii. democracy as an information system in which the needs and necessities of people living in different regions, the effects of administrative action in the implementation of policies are brought to the notice of those in power. A free but responsible press is essential to the effective functioning of democracy;
- iii. political education and decentralization not only in the political realm but also in

the fields of administration and industry;

iv. a policy of pluralism in matters of religion, language, and culture;

v. sub-nationalism in the form of ethnicity communalism, linguistic consciousness, and regionalism that brings together people of hereditary groups, many of which operate as pressure groups at regional and state levels because of which their leaders are able to secure political power and economic benefits. The threat of sub nationalism and overwhelming nationalism is perpetual; and

•secularism ensuring that members of each religion are allowed to profess, practice and propagate their faith on the one hand and that no individual will be discriminated against on the basis of religion (Mathur, 2020).

8.4 M.N SRINIVAS: VIEWS ON CASTE

Before we proceed to elaborate upon the contribution made by Srinivas to the study of caste attributes, one has to keep in mind one important fact. All these scholars who we have already considered and will consider further are trying to explain the same social institution - the caste system. The criteria used for explaining are also the same - the attributes of a caste. There is however a difference between the works of these scholars. The basic of this difference lies in the nature of emphasis. What we mean is that, while Hutton and Ghurye simply tell us what the various attributes of castes are and how these affect relationship between castes. Srinivas and Dumont also look at these affect relationships between castes, but with a different emphasis. For them it is not just the attributes of castes that have significance but, the structure of relations that arises between castes on the basis of these attributes, as well. The meaning of this will become clear to you as you go through the following sections.

Srinivas sees caste as a segmentary system. Every caste for him is divided into sub castes which are:

1. The unit of endogamy.

2. Whose members follow a common occupation
3. The units of social and ritual life.
4. Whose members share a common culture.
5. Whose members are governed by the same authoritative body i.e the Panchayat.

Besides these factors of the sub caste, for Srinivas, certain other attributes are very important. These are:

i) **Hierarchy:** For Srinivas, hierarchy is the core or the essence of the caste system. It refers to the arrangements of hereditary groups in a rank order. He points out that it is status of the top-most or Brahmins and the bottom-most, or untouchables, which is the clearest in terms of rank. The middle regions of hierarchy are the most flexible as regards who may be defined as members of the middle ranks. Srinivas in fact says that there is dispute about the mutual position in the hierarchy. What is meant is that there may be four castes A, B, C and D placed in a hierarchy. One of these may not be ready to accept the place given to it, and seek an alternate rank or position. Further there is no guarantee that the new position sought will be granted to a caste. For example, in South India, a group of smiths have claimed twice born status. They call themselves the Visvakarma Brahmins, but other castes resent this and even the Harijan do not accept drinking water from them.

Since the rank or status of a caste is closely related to its attributes, this desire to change one's position in the hierarchy means that a change must also be brought about in the nature of attributes. This attempt becomes the basis of an important social process called 'Sanskritization' which we will consider a little later.

ii) **Occupational Association:** Srinivas sees a close relationship between a caste and its occupation. He says that caste is nothing more than the "systematisation of occupational differentiation". Castes are in fact known by their occupations and many derive their name from the occupation followed. (e.g. 'Lohar', 'Sonar', 'Kumhar', 'Chamar', 'Teli'

etc.) He also stresses that occupation is placed in a hierarchy of high and low.

- iii) **Restrictions on Communality Dress, Speech and Custom:** These are also found among castes. There is a dietetic hierarchy and restrictions on acceptance of food.
- iv) **Pollution:** The distance between castes is maintained by the principles of pollution. Srinivas too argues that the castes must not come into contact with anything that is polluted pollution, whether an object or a being. Any contact with polluted pollution renders a caste impure and demands that the polluted caste undergo purification rites. If pollution is serious such as when a high caste person has sexual relations with an untouchable, the person involved may be removed from his/her caste.
- v) **Caste Panchayats and Assemblies:** Besides the above-mentioned attributes of a caste, every caste is subject to the control of an order maintaining body or a Panchayat. Elder of each caste in a village together maintain the social order by exercising their authority collectively. Further, every caste member is answerable to the authority of its caste assembly. The authority of a caste assembly may extend beyond village boundaries to include in its jurisdiction of caste in other villages.

From the above we can see that the attributes of a caste definitely determined the nature of intercaste relations. It is these caste attributes or customs that also determine the rank of a caste. This becomes most obvious in Srinivas work on caste mobility or Sanskritisation.

•Sanskritisation

Let us now briefly read about it. We have already seen how every caste is assigned a position in the caste rank order on the basis of the purity or impurity of its attributes. In his study of a Mysore village, Srinivas found that at some time or the other, every caste tries to raise its rank in the hierarchy by giving up its attributes and trying to adopt those of castes above them. This process of attempting to change one's rank by giving up attributes that defines a caste as low and adopting attributes that are indicative of higher status has been called Sanskritisation. This process essentially involves a change of one's dietary habits - from non-vegetarianism to vegetarianism, and a change in

one's occupation habits, from an unclean to a clean occupation

We began this section by mentioning how for Srinivas, more important than the attributes was the structure of relations that arises around castes. What this means is that the attributes of a caste become the basis of interaction between castes. The creation of pattern of interaction and interrelations is best expressed in Srinivas use of the concept of the 'dominant caste'. Let us read something about this.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Note: Write your answers in the space given below.

1.Explain Srinivas's structural-functional perspective briefly in five lines.

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2.Briefly discuss the Srinivas views on caste.

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•Dominant Caste

To the already existing general attributes of castes, three other important one' are added. These are:

- i) numerical strength**
- ii) economic power through ownership of land; and**
- iii) political power**

A dominant caste accordingly is any caste that has all three of the above attributes in a village community. The interesting aspect of this notion is that the ritual ranking of a caste no longer remains the major basis for its position in the social hierarchy. Even if a caste stands low in the social hierarchy because of being ranked low, it can become the dominant ruling caste or group in a

village if it is numerically large, owns land and has political influence over village matters. There is no doubt that a caste with relatively higher ritual rank would probably find it easier to become dominant. But this is not the case always.

We take an example from village Rampura in Mysore to illustrate the above. In this village there are a number of castes including Brahmins, Peasants and Untouchables. The peasants are ritually ranked below the Brahmins, but they own

land and numerically preponderant and have political influence over village affairs. Consequently, we find that despite their low ritual rank, the peasants are the dominant caste in the village. All the other castes of the village stand in a relationship of service to the dominant caste i.e. they are at the back and call of the dominant caste. Another example to illustrate this is as given below.

In the village of Khalapur in North-Western Uttar Pradesh, in the 1950 there were thirty-one castes. The Rajput (kshatriya rank) of Khalapur was the dominant caste as Rajput had numerical strength and composed forty-two per cent of the village population, they have economic power since they owned and controlled ninety percent of the village land; and political power since all the lower castes had to do their bidding. The Brahmin on the other hand was not dominant because they had none of the characteristics of dominance. The villages believe that Khalapur belonged to the Rajputs even though they ranked below the Brahman in terms of their ritual status. Thus, to Srinivas economic and political factors go hand in hand. It is the combination of attributes which is used by a caste in its attempt to Sanskritise itself and improves its social rank.

Criticism

The life mission of Srinivas has been to understand India society. He though talks about economic and technological development but in the study of these areas side tracks lower-segments of society. In his zeal for promoting Sanskritization, he has marginalized and alienated religious minorities. For him, Indian traditions are those, which are manifested in caste and village. His traditions are Hinduized traditions and in no sense secular ones. This construction of Sanskritization and dominant

caste put him closer to Hindutva ideology of cultural nationalism. One can say that his understanding was more elitist or upper caste view.

8.5 LET US SUM UP

M.N Srinivas occupies an eminent place among the first-generation sociologists of India. His focus on 'field view' over the 'book-view' was a remarkable step in understanding the actuality of Indian society. His field work among the Coorgs reflects his approach as structural functionalism and represents the exposition of the complex interrelationship between ritual and social order in Coorg society. It also deals with the crucial notion of purity and pollution as also with the process of incorporation of non-Hindu communities in the Hindu social order. This was reflected through the notion of 'Sanskritization' which he used to describe the process of the penetration of Sanskrit values into the remotest part of India.

8.6 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q.1. Evaluate M.N Srinivas as structural- functionalist.

Q2. Discuss in brief the work of Srinivas.

Q3. Discuss Srinivas's contribution to understanding of caste.

8.7 GLOSSARY

1. **Social structures:** Social structures are relatively stable patterns of social behavior that shape our lives. Examples of social structures include families, religious organizations, and the community.
2. **Social functions:** Each social structure has social functions, or consequences, for the operation of society as a whole. For example, education has several important functions in a society, such as socialization, learning and social placement.
3. **Social change:** Structural functionalism views social change as an adaptive response to tension within the social system.
4. **Macro level:** Structural functionalism looks at society from a macro level, meaning it's looking at society as a whole and not focused on the individuals.

8.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Srinvas, M.N. 1952; Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India, Clarendon Press.
2. Dube, S.C. 1955; Indian village, R & KP London.
3. Dube, S.C. 1958; India's Changing villages, R & KP London.

STRUCTURAL FUNCTIONAL PERSPECTIVE: S.C DUBE**STRUCTURE**

- 9.0 Objectives
- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 S.C. Dube: His Life and Works
- 9.3 Indian Village: Structure, Function and Change
- 9.4 Let us Sum Up
- 9.5 Glossary
- 9.6 Self-Assessment Questions
- 9.7 Suggested Readings

9.0 OBJECTIVES

This chapter will equip you with the contribution of S.C Dube in the field of Sociology. After reading this chapter you can understand:

- It familiarizes you with Life of S.C. Dube.
- It gives understanding of Indian Villages.

9.1 INTRODUCTION

S.C. Dube is a doyen in the field of Sociology and social anthropology. His application of the structural functional approach or studying the Indian village community brought him in repute. Although, he recognized semi-autonomous character of the Indian village, yet does not regard it as "static, timeless and changeless" and this is the beauty of his work. He writes it is difficult to regard any one village as typical or representative of rural India as a whole; it cannot even be representative of its cultural area. His study of Shamirpet provides description of social, economic and ritual structure, family level of living etc. It is no doubt a descriptive study of the village community but the understanding one gets is that how various parts of structure contributes in the functioning of village and also how the village is under a multiplicity of influences.

Commenting on the personality of S.C. Dube, Yogesh Atal writes "Professor Dube has constantly been on the move both geographically and intellectually. Rather than harping on the same theme and concentrating on a narrow specialty, he chose the challenging task of exploring new territories and extending the frontier of knowledge. He has all though been an ardent advocate of interdisciplinary orientation and a promoter of research interests on a wide range of topics of contemporary relevance. This speaks of his multi-dimensional personality who had a vision of looking things from different perspective. His inclination towards social change placed him and his work at the apex of academic discussions.

9.2 S.C. Dube: His Life and Works

Among the trail-blazers of Indian sociology and anthropology, Professor Dube occupies a place of prominence. Arriving on the academic scene in the mid- 1940s, he quickly drew the attention of the profession. Since then he has ceaselessly participated in the renaissance of Indian society and culture.

After earning B.A. Honours in political science, Professor Dube got his first teaching assignment in Hislop College, affiliated to Nagpur University. At this University he also obtained the Ph.D. degree

for his study of the Kumar from Nagpur he soon moved to Lucknow, where anthropology and sociology were struggling to gain recognition as independent disciplines. Professor D. N. Majumdar was on the economics faculty, recruited to teach "Primitive Economics". Two prominent professors of economics, Radhakamal Mukerjee and D.P Mukerji, who has moved away from mainstream economics to impart a broad sociological perspective to their students, supported Dr. Majumdar's proposal for a separate department.

In the academic milieu of Lucknow, and in the company of three pioneers- Radhakamal, D. P and Majumdar Professor Dube's pursuit of anthropology was consolidated. He shared in the teaching of anthropology courses. Recognition of his talent and work resulted in his move to Osmania University, Hyderabad, where the teaching of anthropology within the sociology department had been started with the involvement of Professor Christoph Von Furer-Haimendorf, who later went to school of Oriental and African Studies of the University of London.

Not only did Professor Dube move geographically from Lucknow to Hyderabad, he also made a transition academically from anthropology to sociology and from tribal studies to village studies. He organized an interdisciplinary team to study an Indian village in its entirety, with a holistic perspective. The village of Shamirpet, near Hyderabad in the Telangana area, became internationally known through his *India Village*, which he wrote while he was Visiting Lecturer at the School of Oriental and African Studies in the early 1950s. *Indian Village* was published by Routledge and Kegan Paul in their International Library of Sociology and Social Reconstruction. This book was one of the three major publications on rural India that appeared almost simultaneously in 1955 - a major turning point in Indian sociology and anthropology. The other two books were collections of essays: *India's Villages* edited by M.N. Srinivas for the West Bengal Government Press (earlier serialized in the *Economic Weekly* of Bombay) and *Village India* edited by McKim Marriott and published by the University of Chicago Press. Professor Dube was soon involved in yet another exercise of team research in the village of Rankhandi and Jhaberan in Western Uttar Pradesh, popularly known as the Cornell-India Project. Cornell University invited him for a year as Visiting Professor of

Anthropology and Far Eastern studies. India's *Changing Villages* (1958) belongs to this period. It analysed the impact of the Community Development Programme and heralded a new era in the study of directed change. Upon his return from Cornell, professor Dube joined the Nagpur station of the Anthropological Survey of India for short time. In 1957, at the relatively young age of 35, he moved to the University of Sagar as its first professor of Anthropology.

Since its publication in 1955 *Indian Village* has had fourteen hardcover printing in England i.e. one in the United States and other in India. It has also appeared in paperback editions-twice in the United States and once in India. Similarly, *Indians Changing Villages* has received world-wide attention and continues to be a standard reference for community development workers and senior administrative officials. Between 1955 and 1975 these two books by Professor Dube found the largest number of mentions in the International Social Science Cumulative Index from among the writing of Indian scholars.

After only three years at Sagar, professor Dube was invited to join the Central Institute for Research and Training in Community Development at Mussoorie. Mainly through his efforts it soon became the National Institute of Community Development (NICD), with Professor Dube as its Principal. (It was later moved to Hyderabad). His four-year sojourn at the Institute helped mobilize several young scholars to do research on village India and on processes of social and cultural change. These scholars came from different social science background and from various institutions of higher learning throughout India. Professor Dube thus played the role of a catalyst and encouraged people to explore new territories. On his return to academics, after close 'participant observation' of the working of bureaucracy and of the processes of policy-making, he drastically revised the existing course at Sagar introduced new, unconventional courses on communication, planned change and modernization; and renamed the department, as the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, such measures were later taken by many other universities in the country.

In 1972 Professor Dube assumed the Directorship of the prestigious Indian Institute of Advanced

Study at Shimla. There he organized several national seminars and the first UNESCO sponsored regional Conference of Teaching and Research in Social Sciences in Asia (1973). He was able to bring to the Institute a number of scholars from various disciplines as Fellows to work full-time on their cherished projects. During his tenure the Institute published a record number of books, all bearing the imprint of his personality.

His departure for Shimla was a farewell to Sagar. After his tenure at the Indian Institute of Advanced Study, he became the founding Director of the GB Pant Institute of Social Research in Allahabad. He left it soon to become the Vice-Chancellor of Jammu University for a period of three years, after which he accepted the National Fellowship offered by the Indian Council of Social Research (ICSSR) with his base in New Delhi at the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA). He also participated in a United Nation University project, "*Socio-cultural Development Alternatives in a Changing World*", during 1978-1982. For this project he wrote *Modernization and development and a search for alternative Paradigms* (Zed Books, London, 1988). This book is, some ways, a sequel to his *Explanation and Management of Change* (tata McGraw-Hill, 1971), which consists of his national lectures delivered in selected Indian universities at the invitation of the University Grants Commission.

In 1980 he was invited as a consultant at the United Nations Asia-Pacific Development Centre (UNAPDC), Kuala Lumpur, to critically review past development strategies. During this period, he finalized the U.N. University monograph on modernization and development and did another book, *Development Perspectives for the 1980s* (UNAPDC and Abhinav, New Delhi). His last full-time assignment was as Chairman of the Higher Education Grants Commission of Madhya Pradesh.

There is other publication of Professor as well. Under the title *Manav Aur Sanskriti*, he published in 1960 a book in Hindi, meant to be an introduction to cultural anthropology. He also wrote a sociology textbook for higher secondary school students at the request of the National Council for Education Research and Training (NCERT), and *Indian Society* (1990) for the National Book Trust,

India. Several articles, in English and in Hindi, on a wide variety of topics and for varied audiences, are to his credit. He also spoke on several occasions on radio and television on topics of contemporary interest. Some of his articles on the theme of *Tradition and Development* were published in book form by Vikas in 1990.

Professor Dube has constantly been on the move-both geographically and intellectually. Rather harping on the same theme and concentrating on a narrow specialty, he chose the challenging task of exploring new territories and extending the frontiers of knowledge. He has all though been an ardent advocate of interdisciplinary orientation and a promoter of research interests on a wide range of topics of contemporary relevance. He did not believe in creating a school of his own and building a cadre of faithful followers. He encouraged his students to participate in an adventure of ideas and to try fresh initiatives rather than walk on trodden paths.

His works:

Books in English

- 1954:** The Kamar. Lucknow: University Publisher.
- 1955:** Indian Village. London: Routledge & KeganPaul, Ithaca, Cornell University Press.
- 1958:** India's Changing Village: Human factors in Community Development. London : Routledge & Kegan Paul, Ithaca, Cornell University press.
- 1968:** Institution Building for Community Development (ed.) Hawaii: East-West Centre Press.
- 1974:** Contemporary India and it Modernization, Vik.as Publisher House, Delhi.
- 1990:** Tradition and development, Vikas Publish House, Delhi
- 1992:** Understanding change, Vikas Publishing House, Delhi.

Books in Hindi:

- 1960:** Manav Aur Sanskriti. Delhi: Rajmahal Prakashan.
- 1962:** General Editor of Bhartiya Samaj Parichay mala. Delhi: Rajmahal Prakashan. Besides these books, Professor Dube contributed nearly two dozen papers

in several books, edited by national and international anthropologists, and several research articles renowned journals of the country and abroad.

Contribution in various fields:

Work on Tribal Society:

Dube's first book, *The Kamar-a Scheduled* (1951), deals with a total study of tribe of Madhya Pradesh. This book is a full-length monograph on this tribe of middle India. The book is published version of his Ph.D. thesis.

Contribution in Village Study:

Dube's another book, *Indian Village* (1955) deals with a total study of village Shamirpet in the region of Telangana of Andhra Pradesh State. The book is based on data collected from the village Shamirpet by five research investigators. The author was further assisted by five other faculty units which did social work within their special areas of interests and technical competence. This interdisciplinary collaboration was sponsored and financed by the Social Service Extension Project of Osmania University in 1951-52 which Dube directed.

The village Shamirpet located at a distance of nearly 25 miles from Hyderabad has a population of 2494 including 340 Muslims and 19 ethnic groups belonging to Hindus. In the light of the field data, an integrated picture of the village has been presented. In the book, historical, geographical and sociological perspectives have been adequately taken care of, Morris E. Opler, the writer of forward of the book, introduced it as a solid study which would doubtlessly take its place among the standard community studies made in various parts of the world. She further observes that **in** a number of ways this volume is especially valuable and challenging and is tonic to the present-day research into Indian village life.

This book is the first for provide convincing and reasonably adequate introducing to the historical, geographical and political setting as well as to the social, economic, religious practices of a village in India. If Robert Redfield is credited for making the first village study in 1930 in Mexico, it was for Dube to described a Deccan village in India more or less on the same lines in 1955. Many of his conclusions could provide the first insight in the

complex web of Indian village life. He observes:

No village in India is completely autonomous and independent, for it is always one unit in a wider social system and is a part of an organised political society. An individual is not the member of a village community alone, he also belongs to a caste, religious group or a tribe with a wider territorial spread and comprises several villages. These units have their own organisation, authority and sanctions.

Although it is one of the earliest monographs on a village, it presents a comprehensive picture of the functioning of village institutions. Dube notes that the economic system of rural India is founded mainly on caste's functional specialization, interdependence and occupational mobility. He also notes that the elements of classical Hinduism of an all-India spread are mingled with the regional religious beliefs and practices of Hindus of Deccan Plateau. Three major types of religious services and festivals are observed in the village. They are: (1) family ceremonies, (2) village familial and communal festivals. The Muslims and Hindus interact with each other during festivals.

In this book Dube also gives a short account of world view, intergroup relations, inter caste attitude and stereotype and he also goes on to discuss the three most significant stages of life, namely, childhood, youth and old age in a generalised biography.

Contribution in Political Anthropology

In addition to this full-length book, Dube has written a few papers on the village studies among whom mention may be made of one the ranking of castes in Telangana village published in the book, *Rural Profiles of India* edited by late professor D. N. Majumdar (1955). To Dube, the fundamental principles of caste ranking are a concept of ritual purity and pollution. The caste ranking in Shamirpet is also determined by traditions and myths since caste is based on an ascribed system of status. He also established that the occupations allowed and practised daily rituals, hierarchy of food eaten, occupation allowed and practices and observance of rules connected with life cycle rituals also determined ranks. Dube makes repeated emphasis that the main criterion used for caste ranking in

village are rituals and not economic.

Dube in his paper entitled, 'Dominant Case and Village Leadership' read at a seminar on 'Trends of Change in Village India', organised by Central Institute of Study and Research in Community Development, Mussoorie in 1961, has added to the concepts and methods of study of pattern of rural leadership in India. He finds the political power concentrated in few individuals rather than diffused in caste. In each village, there are some dominant individuals, who have decisive say in political participation of the members of a village. They play significant role in settling dispute, guiding the youth force for maintaining unity in the village, organising the village for common celebration offestivals. Their roles at the time of election of Gram Panchayat, M.L.A and M.P. can also observe.

Dube in his paper, "The Restive Students: Strands and Themes in Contemporary Youth Culture' (Akasvani, Vol. 35, No. 32, 1972), objects to the use of the term India students or Contemporary Youth as an undifferentiated mass. In the light of the differences in their background, orientation, and outlook, he identified four subcultures of the contemporary youths. These are: (1) the Indian counterpart of the Hippies, (2) the models coming from the Westernized and alienated families, (3) youths of the medium to low privileged strata of society, and (4) by far the largest group consists of first generation of literates and those whose parents has not had the benefit of higher education.

Contribution in Community Development Programme: -

His book, *India's changing Village: Human factors in community development* (1958) deals with the changes brought about in Indian villages by initiation of CDPs in India. The book discusses the human factors responsible in bringing changes in villages of India through CDP.

9.3 INDIAN VILLAGE: STRUCTURE, FUNCTION CHANGE

S. C. Dube has, in his book, given a descriptive study of the village of Shamirpet in the State of Andhra. It is an outcome of the Social Service Extension Project sponsored by the Department of Sociology and Anthropology. His aim, in this book, has been to give a clear an intimate picture of

some aspects of life in an Indian village and has basically used structural functional approach. The details are as follows

I. THE SETTING

Shamirpet is a village situated at a distance of about twenty-five miles from the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secundrabad, on the road that links the capital city of Hyderabad with Karimnagar. According to Dube, "No village in India can be singled out as being typical of the country as a whole, but Shamirpet possesses most of the characteristics which are common to the rural communities in middle and peninsular India.

- (i) **The people:** According to the census in 1951, the total population of Shamirpet, which include the two neighbouring hamlets of *Baduguda* and *Upparapalli*, was 2, 494, with a total of 508 houses. This includes two sections - Hindus and Muslims. The Hindu includes 1,434 Clean Castes and 680 Untouchables or Scheduled Caste persons. The Muslims are 340 in number. The predominant language in Shamirpet is Telugu. The Muslims speaks Urdu. Thus, the major divisions in the population of the village may be distinguished on the grounds of religious and language. The Hindus can be classed under three broad divisions: 1. Cultivators; which include the Reddi, the Muttarasi, and their sub-division 2. Occupational castes with traditional crafts and professions regarded as clean and respectable. These include the Brahrnin (priest), the *Kimti* (traders), the *Kummari* (potters) and the *Galls* (shepherds) and the five section of the Panch Brahman group of artisan castes, such as the *Wadha* (carpenters), the *Kammari* (blacksmiths), the *Ausula* (goldsmiths), the *Kase* (workers in bell-metal) and the *Kanchari* (sculptors). 3. Depression classes, subsist by humble and slowly callings. These include the Mala and the Madiga of which the Malas are considered as superior. In point of dress the Hindus and Muslims differ widely. The women are extremely fond of ornaments.
- (ii) **The Village:** Shamirpet cannot claim to be a village of any great age. The village itself is not built according to a definite plan. There is a school, a dispensary, a post office

and a police station in the village.

- (iii) **The house:** The dwellings in Shamirpet can be classified into three main groups: the Bhawanti, the *Penkutillu* and the *Gudse*. The *Bhawanti* is a large house with stone walls and tiled roofs, its own compound and having five to six rooms. The *Penkutillu* is smaller and less ostentatious and is built by average cultivators with small holdings, who are neither rich nor poor. The *Gudes* are the commonest type of dwellings found in Telangana and are indeed the most numerous in Shamirpet. It is a hut, small and circular, made from sheets of weed-matting about 20 ft. in diameter and only six feet high.
- (iv) **The neighbourhood of Shamirpet:** The surrounding of Shamirpet is quite densely populated. Three miles to the North is another village *Aliyabad*. People living in different villages have very few occasions on which to meet each other as a whole.

II. SOCIAL STRUCTURE

1. **Caste in the village community:** The Hindus and the Muslims constitute two distinct sections in the population of Shamirpet. All the Muslims belong to the Sunni Division. The Hindu social system presents a division of society into castes. Of these the Brahmins, the Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas constitute the first three caste groups. The fourth group is composed of numerous occupational castes that are relatively clean and are not classed as untouchables. Finally, in the Fifth major group we can place all the untouchable castes. Besides, there is the Panch Brahma group which comprises of five divisions. The Wadla, the Kammari, the Ausula, the Kase and the Kanchari. Of these only the first three sections are found in Shamirpet. Among Hindus the Brahmins hold the highest place. The Komtis rank next to the Brahmins. The Reddi sections of the Kapu group, the Kummari and the Golla castes are of equal caste status. All the castes are endogamous. Each caste is subdivided into endogamous divisions which for all practical purposes are themselves independent castes. Each independent endogamous division is divided into exogamous

gotram; these in turn may be further sub-divided into numerous vansham. The main function of these divisions is the regulation of martial unions.

2. **Internal organisation-Authority and machinery of Justice:** In the internal organization of Shamirpet two different units can be clearly delineated. The socio-religious organization of the village with independent set of office-bearers and functionaries is quite distinct from the administrative organization of government and semi-government officials. The Deshmukh is the hereditary headman of the village. The panchayat or village council consists of the headmen of all the major communities living within the village and in addition several other rich and influential persons. The panchayat performs several important functions such as hearing and deciding minor disputes, fixing the details of ceremonies, reporting epidemics and fixing communal contributions etc. The Deshmukh is the head of the government village officials. The patwari occupies a pivotal position. The sub-inspector of police with head constables, masters and constables under him enjoys wide powers. Besides there are fourteen classes of village manuals: (i) *Kawalkar*, (ii) *Talari*, (iii) *Majkuri*, (iv) *Neerudi*, (v) *Begari* (vi) *Yetti*, (vii) *Wadla*, (viii) *Kammari*, (ix) *Kummari*, (x) *Sakali*, (xi) *mangali*, (xii) *Austula*, (xiii) *Dappu*, (xiv) *Kummu*. These perform routine duties in the everyday life in the village. The division of work among them is based upon traditional occupations. The payment is nominal.
3. **Inter-caste and inter-village organization:** The village is the smallest but most significant territorial unit. Persons belonging to different castes are united by common values and obligations. The caste social organisation cuts across the narrow boundaries of the village and extends to a wider area. Two types of inter-village organizations deserve to be noted. They are: councils of the different castes and inter-village councils. While all villages and nearly all castes have their own panchayats, inter-village panchayats are found time to time when they are demanded by a special situation.

III.ECONOMIC STRUCTURE

1. **Caste in village Economy:** The economics of rural India is founded mainly on the functional specialisation and inter-dependence among castes. According to Prof. Dube, a closer scrutiny of the economic system and its consequent bond of mutual obligation and expectation reveal four major types of economic dealings and obligations within the caste networks into which the community is organized. These are (i) Obligations to render to the agriculturists occupational services having a direct bearing on their agricultural activities. (ii) Obligations to render some occupational services, to the agriculturists as well as to many no-agriculturists, having a bearing on their socio-religious life. (iii) Obligations to render some occupational services to other occupational services in return for their traditional services (iv) Occupational services rendered with an expectation of cash payment in return for the work".

The main economic functions and activities of the major caste groups in the village are traditionally specified. The Brahmin is the local priest as well as an astrologer. The Komtis are traders. The Kummari are the potters. The Golla are shepherds. The Sale is the weavers. The Gaondla sell fermented palm juice at their shops. The Panch Brahman Groups performs various functions such as the Wadla are carpenters, the Kammari are blacksmiths and some others are goldsmiths, workers in bell metal and carvers of images. The sakali and Mangali are the barber and washermen respectively. There is only one family of Katike Hindu butchers in the village. The solitary family of the Darzi (tailor) with an old sewing machine is obviously a new addition. The Erkalas earn their livelihood through a variety of means such as hunting, begging, singing, fortune telling making and rearing pigs. The Madigas are affiliated to the household of the substantial agriculturists in the village. They perform all types of jobs.

2. **Agriculture.** The settled area of Shamirpet, including the two neighbouring hamlets is spread over an area of 58 acres. Out of this Shamirpet proper occupies 31.4 acres. The

total land area of the village according to government records is 5, 777 acres. Out of these 2,012 acres are uncultivable; 1,628 acres being covered: 3,339.5 acres are classed as 'dry land' for this area extra irrigation is available. An analysis of the pattern of land-ownership in the village reveals the following: (i) a fourth of the land is owned by 1 family having 800 acres. (ii) One-fourth of the land is owned by 20 families having 40 acres each (iv) One-fourth of the land is owned by 160 families having 5 acres each. The headman of the village is biggest single land owner 40% of the land is held by Reddis; the rest being shared by other castes specially the Brahmins, the Komits, the toddy-tappers and the shepherds, as well as the Muslims. Seceding member of a family gets a share of the family exercise control over it. Analysis of the family budgets of the agriculturists in the village revealed that 10% of them were surplus, 24% were balanced and the rest were deficit budgets. Agricultural wages differ from Rs. 28 to Rs. 120 per year which may be paid in cash or kind.

3. **The agricultural Year.** The agriculturists in Shamirpet follow the local almanac. They go to Brahmin to fix an auspicious day for planting vegetables and creepers in their backyards. Kharif crops such as maize and millet are sown in the second half of June. The harvesting of the Kharif crops has to be completed by October. The Rabi crops, i.e. gram, castor, chillies, mustard, tobacco, till (sesame), or oil seeds are sown in winter. They take three to four months to ripen. After the harvesting of these crops the annual cycle of agricultural activities comes very near to completion.
4. **Cattle and domestic animals.** Agriculture in the village still largely follows the age-old pattern of bullock-drawn wooden ploughs which are being used in the fields. The shepherds keep large herds of goats and sheep. Cows and she-buffaloes are kept for milk by the agriculturists. Pigs are kept only by the Erkalas. Some people may also keep a few goats. Poultry is kept by all sections of the village populations except the Brahmins and the Komatis.

5. **Other economic pursuits.** Hunting is done regularly by a very limited number of people. Similarly, fishing is done by very few people, mostly by some young Muslim men. Children and women engage in collecting fruits, honey, medicinal herbs, roots, tubers and barks. Only a limited quantity of fuel is collected from the surrounding forests. Different of coloured earths are collected for domestic purposes.
6. **Non-agricultural occupations.** These include the potter, the carpenter, the blacksmith, the barber, the washer man, and the menial servant, the Madiga. The economy of the village is only partially self-sufficient. The traders, both Komtis and Muslims, but their goods wholesale from the city and retail them in their shops in the village. People frequently visit the valley bazars also.

IV.RELIGIOUS STRUCTURE

1. **The character of religion:** The rural religions include folklore and myths, religious teachings of saint-poets, and contacts with persons having knowledge of scriptures and popular religious books, animism, polytheism and even monotheism also, beliefs in spirits, ghosts, demons, witches and magic. In the words of Prof. S.C. Dube, "The complex of all these diverse factors constitutes the picture of the supernatural world as it is understood by the people in the countryside," Shamirpet is predominantly a Hindu village. The Muslims are Sunni. The members of both these religions carry out their religious and ritual practices.

Besides, several cultist rituals and worships of purely local nature are shared by both the communities. The distinctions between the religious practices of the Hindu and the Muslims are obvious and clear.
2. **Beliefs in gods and deities:** The Muslims believe in one God and follow the way of life laid down for them by the Prophet. The Hindu concept of Trinity, comprising, three manifestations of divinity - Brahma, the creator, Vishnu, the sustainer, and Shiva, the destroyer has all-India spirit. The people of Shamirpet worship all the major gods of the

Hindu pantheon. The Godavari is worshipped by the Hindu. The local gods and goddess include: 1. Pochamma - goddess of smallpox 2. Mutyalamma, goddesses of chickenpox 3. Balamma, goddess of fertility whose wrath causes sterility in women 4. Mahakalamma, goddess of cholera 5. Durgamma, goddess presiding over the destinies and welfare of the village 6. Maisamma, goddess protecting the village boundaries. All the characteristics of Hinduism having all-India spread are in evidence in the religion of the people of Shamirpet.

3. The religious year: Three major types of religious ceremonies and festivals are observed in the community: family ceremonies, village ceremonies, and caste ceremonies. The Muslim section of the village population has its own family festivals and some communal ceremonies. They participate with their Hindu neighbours in the conservation of common village ritual. The Hindu festivals include Ugadi (Telugu New Year's Day), Ram Navami (Birthday of Rama), ToliEkadashi, Nagulapanchami, Rakhi purnima, Krishna Asthami, Chauthi, Peitramasa, Dusshera, Deepawali, Til Sankranti, Shivaratri, Holi etc. Some other important festivals accepted Somwar, Ananta Chaturdashi, Kartika Purnima, Basabta Panchami and Ratha Saptami. Ceremonies organized by the village as a whole are: the Pochamma Festival, Batkamma festival and the Maisamma festival. The Muslim observes seven important festivals. They are Moharram, Meelad Sharif, Gairwin Sharif, Shabe Miraj, Shabe Barat, Ramzan and Id-ul-Zuha. These festivals follow the Muslim calendar, and unlike the Hindu festivals, always occur in the same season but, their specific time varies from year to year. Besides the three-village pointed out earlier there is the fair of Jala Miyan attended by everyone in the village.

4. Ritual of the life cycle. The basic pattern of ceremonies connected with the life cycle is the same in all section of the Hindus in the village community; but in the minor details of the ritual there is considerable difference in the practices of different castes. The practices of the Muslims and the Hindus concerning birth, pre- puberty rites,

marriage death etc. differ considerably, and are governed by their respective religions.

5. **Religious in disease and difficulty.** Most of the common diseases are interpreted as a fault in the physical system', and are treated with herbal medicines or modern drugs obtained from the dispensary. But persistent headaches, intermittent fevers, continued stomach disorders, rickets and other wasting diseases among children, menstrual troubles, repeated abortions, etc., are attributed to supernatural forces. The major factors that cause difficulties, distresses and deaths are (i) The wrath of ancestor-spirits (ii) Unfavourable stars (iii) Ghosts are spirits (iv) The wrath of Gods (v) Black magic and witchcraft.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Note: Write your answers in the space given below

1. Discuss the village structure of S.C Dube.

2. How S.C Dube analyse the caste system.

THE WEB OF FAMILY TIES

1. **The structure of the family:** The patrilineal and patrilocal elementary or joint family is the normal type of family unit met within this part of rural India. The joint family is approved by

social tradition. The ideal joint family includes paternal grandparents, parent's brother and their wives, nephews, nieces, sons and their wives, grand-children, unmarried sisters and unmarried daughters. The family term used in the community denotes: (i) the elementary family or the 'houses' (ii) the extended family unit or (iii) a still larger group comprising the near kin on the paternal side.

There is great variation in the family ideals and ethics of the different social levels. The population of the village may be broadly classified into three levels - (i) Upper Level: comprising the twice born castes of Brahmins and Komits; rich Redis and Muslim and others who have had urban contacts or education in the city. (ii) Intermediate Level: all ordinary agriculturists; clean occupational castes and Muslim tradesmen constitute this group, which is by far the largest in the village. (iii) Lower level: all the poorer sections of the population, such as the untouchable Malas and Madigas, and semi-tribal Vaddars and Erkalas, as well poor Muslim, can be replaced in this category. There is unanimity in all three levels that the structure of the family is founded on its recognition of the four basic principles. These are: (i) Respect for age. (ii) Respect for position in the scale of kinship. (iii) Superiority of the male, (iv) Necessity of keeping certain family matters confined to the responsible members of the family, or at most, within the family.

2. **Inter-personal relations within the family.** The husband is an authoritarian figure whose will should always dominate the domestic scene. Both husband and wife watch each other's activity closely. In a joint family the daughter-in-law does not have any independence unless she becomes the mother of two or three children. The wife does not dominate the domestic scene, but if she is tactful, she can manipulate things in such a way that her husband will rarely go against her wishes. In general, the attitude of the children towards their parents is one of respect and obedience. The nature of the parent-child relationship changes with the age and status of the children. Traditional opinion regards a son as an asset; a daughter, a liability. As a rule, infants are treated with affection. After five or six

years of age the parents start disciplining the child. Tradition lays down fairly strict norms regarding the treatment of aged, dependent parents. The daughter-in-laws gets a cordial reception at first and stricter watch later on. The mother-in-laws-daughter-in-law relationship is not very cordial. The daughter-in-law must maintain sufficient distance from her husband's father and his elder brothers. Social ideals demand that there should be solidarity between siblings especially between brothers. The older siblings can claim some 'authority' over the younger ones. Affinal relatives do not maintain close contacts. Outside the family circle the relations between a person and his or her mother's brother are of special significance. Among Muslims, besides cross-cousin marriage, marriage between parallel cousins is permitted and indeed encouraged.

THE LEVELS OF LIVING

1. **Status differentiation in the community.** According to Prof. S.C. Dube, "Six major factors contribute towards status differentiation in the village community of Shamirpet. They are: (i) Religion and Caste (ii) Landownership (iii) Wealth (iv) position in government services and village organization, (v) Age, (vi) Distinctive personality traits.
2. **Standard of living- Four levels:** In Shamirpet, four levels denoting different standards of living are vaguely recognized by the villagers. They are: (i) Rich, (ii) well-to-do (iii) Average (iv) Poor. Their average in local population is: Rich 4%, well-to-do 22%, average 34% and poor 40%.
3. **Division of Labour.** Division of labour in the community is governed by a variety of factors like sex, caste and quality of its good, those who can afford eat three times, and others eat only twice daily. According to the seasons, there are variations in the type of food and also in the time when the principal meals are eaten.

LIVING TOGETHER:

1. **Inter-personal Relations:** The people of Shamirpet, exercise considerable reserve in their

initial dealings with outsiders. It is not uncommon for people to analyse and describe the personality traits of other inhabitants of the village as well as outsiders coming into the settlement. Subjects coming under the critical eye of society are: (i) breaches of traditional norms, (ii) display and exhibitionism, (iii) sexuality, (iv) efforts to rise in the power hierarchy, (v) conspicuous success, and (vi) originality and 'too many new ideas'. Anger is freely expressed. Concepts of 'manliness' and 'defending the honour' play a significant part in governing inter-personal relations within the community. Inter-caste attitude find expression in several stereotypes which are a part of the thought patterns of the people, and as visible in quarrels and outburst of anger. Adverse comments are frequently heard from the educated and uneducated people against each other. The uneducated specially have some stereotypes regarding the educated; and the latter often express derogatory opinions about the illiterate members of the community. The general pattern of comment regarding urban and urbanized people is the same as that of the comment of the uneducated about the educated. The people with urban contacts, regard the village folk as rustic and crude, and consider themselves as more forward and civilized. They are gradually coming to the fore in village leadership.

2. **Childhood, youth and old age:** Apart from the family and the caste, people spend most of their time in their respective age-groups, and through this process of growing up together, common play and participation in youth activity, the people tend to have a common value-orientation and certain common basic attitude towards life. For the first two or three months of a child's life the mother remains almost in solo charge of it. After this stage of early infancy, during the pre-walking stage the pattern of treatment accorded to the child is somewhat different. With some modifications this continues even during the early childhood, up to the age of about three. After five the children form their respective age groups. Most children's games involve competition in the sake of skills and stamina. Adolescence brings about a significant change in the life of both boys and girls. By this

age girls are expected to become proficient in all the major domestic tasks. After marriage the young men and women have to give considerable attention to their economic pursuits and crafts, and as such they have relatively little left for group activity. Middle-aged people have their own groups. These are informal conversational gatherings; but their membership and attendance are nearly fixed. Groups of men and women meet separately.

3. **Co-operation and conflict:** Within the village community there is an appreciable degree of inter-caste and inter-family cooperation. Emergency aid is rushed to friend and foe alike. In Inter-village quarrels as well as on all such occasions that demands vindicating the honour of the village, the residents of the settlement often act with spirited union. Shamirpet, however like any other village, has its due quota of conflicts, factories, rivalries, court cases and fighting. Living together is very much governed by rules governing caste behaviour.

V. THE CHANGING SCENE

In the pre and early Jagir period in Shamirpet, the contacts between the village people and State administration were on a very limited scale, and were confined mostly to payment of land revenue and settlement of land disputes. In the second half of the Jagir period these administrative contacts increased very considerably. The State administrative initiated some of its welfare and nation-building activities in the countryside. In the dress and ornaments of the village people there has been very noticeable change. To the list of articles of daily requirement there have been several significant additions. In the food habits of the people there has not been much change. Side by side with the traditional recreations of gossip, loafing and playing indigenous games, several new varieties of entertainments are now available to the village people. Changes in tool and technical processes are also important. Communications too have now improved. The opening of small dispensary in the village and the availability of excellent facilities of modern medical treatment in the city have considerably changed the attitude of the people towards then and their treatment in the city have

considerably changed the attitude of the people towards them and their treatment. The social structure of the community is basically the same, although with every administrative or political change in the village there were several organizational changes. In the organization of the family the changed conditions and changing attitudes of the people have brought about some significant variations. The caste system in the community presents only slight variations in some directions. Traditionally, the membership of the village council is hereditary and should be inherited by the eldest male child on the death of the father. At present government officials residing within the village discretely pull the strings and exert pressure on the council to secure favourable judgement in certain cases in which for some reason they happen to be interested. In place of their traditional occupation people have started accepting other vocations. The Police Action undertaken by the Indian Union in 1948 changed the fortune and status of the State of Hyderabad. The first definite change is that Muslims who occupied a privileged position during the former regime now no longer do so; the second noticeable change is that under the administration, forced labour and forced extraction of hospitality by government officials have been prohibited. Thirdly, the abolition of feudal estates has been a big step in the direction of land reform. Fourthly, the government has intensified its welfare and nation-building activities. Finally, there has been considerable activity in the rural areas by the political parties, culminating in the first general election of December 1951. The reason for change must be sought in a multiplicity of factors. So far State compulsion has been instrumental in bringing about little social and cultural change in the village community. The factors of utility, convenience and availability have played a more important role in bringing several new elements into the life of the community. Adoption of several new tools and instruments for occupational works, as well as of several other items of Western technology, such as buses, railways, razors and electric torches introduced in the comparatively recent times is due to their efficiency and utility. Influence of the city has brought about adjustment and modification in several spheres, but the need of balancing different extremes in the organization of the community have so far prevented any drastic structural change in village communities. Viewing the country broadly we find three major trends : (i) the regional culture,

founded on the traditions, customs and life-ways of the culture-area; (ii) the national culture, comprising some all-India traits inspired by the national renaissance, cemented by the struggle for self-government as well as by social and economic reform, and sustained by the will to find a rightful place in the community of nations; the elements in this category being partly revivalists and partly conscious innovation; and (iii) adoption of traits and elements from Western technology and culture.

Traditional social institutions and culture

Traditions and life-ways are idealized: they originated long, long ago when man first appeared on the earth and the salvation of people lies in their faithful observation of these divinely ordained ways. The focus is local and regional, confined to family, kin, caste and some neighbouring village. The fundamental drive in the thought and activities of the group seems to be towards the goal of the adjustment of the individual to the universe. In interpersonal as well as inter and intra-group relations, the people tend to view everything as hierarchically structured. The fundamental concepts of the rights and equality of men mean little to these people, whose visions are thus bounded by their own observation of the world.

9.4 LET US SUM UP

The work by Prof S. C Dube effects how the various social structures like - social, economic, ritual, political helps in shaping the village. Further the elements of various social structures are interlinked at the individual level as well at the higher order to bring about solidarity and consensus among the villagers. Attempt has also been made to understand the factors which led to the changing scenario of village Shamirpet.

9.5 GLOSSARY

- 1. Social structures:** Social structures are relatively stable patterns of social behavior that shape our lives. Examples of social structures include families,

religious organizations, and the community.

2. **Social functions:** Each social structure has social functions, or consequences, for the operation of society as a whole. For example, education has several important functions in a society, such as socialization, learning and social placement.
3. **Social change:** Structural functionalism views social change as an adaptive response to tension within the social system.

9.6 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q.1. Discuss the work “Indian Villages”.

Q.2. S.C. Dube's contribution in undertaking Indian Society.

Q.3. Evaluate S.C. Dube as structural- functionalist.

9.7 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Srinvas, M.N. 1952; Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India, Clarendon Press.
2. Dube, S.C. 1955; Indian village, R & KP London.
3. Dube, S.C. 1958; India's Changing villages, R & KP London.

MARXIAN PERSPECTIVE: D.P MUKHERJEE**STRUCTURE**

- 10.0 Objectives
- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 D. P. Mukerjee: Life sketch and works
- 10.3 D. P Mukherjee: Central Ideas
- 10.4 Let us Sum Up
- 10.5 Glossary
- 10.6 Self-Assessment Questions
- 10.7 Suggested Readings

10.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Understand the life and works of D.P Mukherjee.
- Mukherjee central ideas about society.

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Dhurjati Prasad Mukerjee (1894-1962), popularly called as D.P. was one of the founding fathers of Sociology in India. He was born in West Bengal but worked all through his life in Lucknow. He took his degrees in history and economic from Calcutta University. He was a Marxist but preferred to call himself a Marxologist, i.e. a social scientist of Marxism. He analysed Indian society from the Marxian perspective of dialectical materialism. He argued that there is dialectical relation between India's tradition and modernity, British colonialism and nationalism and individualism and collectively, i.e. Sangha. His concept of dialectics was anchored in liberal humanism. He argued all through his works that traditions are central to the understanding of Indian Society. The relation between modernization which came to India during the British period and traditions is dialectical. It is from this perspective of dialect that,

D.P argued, we shall have to define traditions. The encounter of tradition with modernization created certain cultural contradictions, adaptations and in some cases situations of conflict also. Describing the consequences of the tradition-modernity encounter, Yogendra Singh writes,

In D.P. Mukerjee's writing we find some systematic concern with the analysis of Indian social processes from a dialectical frame of reference. He mainly focuses upon the encounter of the tradition with that of the West which, on the one hand, unleashed many forces of cultural contradiction and, on the other, gave rise to a new middle class. The rise of these forces, according to him, generates a dialectical process of conflict and synthesis which must be given a push by bringing into play the conserved energies of the class structure of Indian society.

The encounter between tradition and modernity, therefore, ends up in two consequences: Conflict and synthesis Indian society as D.P. envisages is the result of the interaction between tradition and modernity. It is dialectics which helps us to analyse the Indian society.

This will also help you in understanding D.P. Mukerjee and A.R Desai as Marxist who wrote on Indian society in terms of dialectical relationship between tradition and modernity.

10.2 DHURJATI PRASAD MUKERJI (1894-1962): LIFESKETCH AND WORKS

D.P Mukerjee (1894-1962) was a Marxist who analysed Indian history in terms of a dialectical process. Tradition and modernity, colonialism and nationalism, individualism and collectivism could be seen as dialectically interacting with each other. The next subsection will give you a biographical sketch of D. P. Mukerjee. This will help you to understand his central ideas in their proper perspective.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Dhurjati Prasad Mukerjee was popularly known as "D. P" He was born in a middle-class Brahmin family of Bengal in 1894. It was during this period that the literary influence of Rabindranath Tagore, Bankim Chandra and Sarta Chandra Chatterjee was at its peak. There was a renaissance of Bengali literature at this time.

D.P. Mukerjee did his graduation from Bangbasi College, Bengal. First, he was a student of history which included economics at that time, and then he took a degree in economics. He was a man of letters in Bengali and wrote some fiction also but he did not pursue this line for long. He did not confine to the boundaries of a particular discipline. It was perhaps for this reason that he became a sociologist. He attained not only national but international fame as a sociologist.

In 1922 he joined the Lucknow University as a Lecturer in Economic and Sociology. He was in his own words a Marxologist. His roots in middle class Brahmin family led him instinctively to blend Marxism with Indian tradition. D.P. Mukerji always thought that ideas of Karl Marx were relevant in India when adapted to conditions of Indian history and tradition. He therefore, always emphasised the study of social processes and social movements.

He was born in the golden age of criticism and reflected this age in the true senses in

his own work. To every subject he brought critical criteria from as many fields as possible. He had the ability of looking at every problem from a new angle. He was an art critic, music critic, a drama critic and a critic of life. In him we find a blend of Anglo-Bengalese culture which gave rise to much of prose and poetry in English literature.

D.P. Mukerjee was a man of aesthetic sensibilities. He was interested in style, even in the style of his dress. He was a slim man who disliked gaining even an extra pound of weight. In thinking also, he hated padding or writing anything superfluous or irrelevant. His style of writing was sharp, spare and incisive. He was so sophisticated man who rarely revealed his emotions. For him, emotions should not be exhibited but should be fused with the intellectual process.

He loved to be a teacher and was very popular amongst his students. He encouraged dialogue and interchange of ideas with his students. Thus, he was a co- student, a co-inquirer who never stopped learning. He was such an influence on his students that he lives in the minds of his students even today.

For sometimes D.P. Mukerjee became the Director of information when the congress assumed office in U.P. His influence brought the spirit of an intellectual approach to public relations. He was also part of the foundation of the Bureau of Economics and Statistics. He returned back to the Lucknow University when congress relinquished office on the war issue at the beginning of the Second World War, in 1939. In 1947 he was employed as a member of U.P Labour Inquiry Committee. It was in 1951 that he was made a professor. This was a late recognition but D.P. never felt bitter about it.

A year before his retirement at Lucknow, in 1953 he was invited to head the Department of Economics at Aligarh. He stayed there for five years. He went to

Hague as a visiting professor of sociology at the International Institute of Social Studies. He was a founder member of the Indian Sociological Association and one of the members of its Managing Committee and its Editorial Board. He also represented the association of the International Sociological Association of which he became the Vice President.

He wrote several books and articles in diverse fields. After Independence he watched political movements with great interest but was not a politician in any sense. He was influenced by two national leaders, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai and Jawaharlal Nehru. He used to correspond with Nehru. As an intellectual he did not have a cloistered mind. He brought refinement to his subject. He was influenced by many but till the end he remained himself, a scholar who influenced many others. He died of throat cancer in 1962. But as started earlier, he survives through his students (Rau, Chalapathi M. in Unithan, T.K.N & Et. al (ed.) 1965. Towards Sociology of Culture in India, Prentice-Hall of India Pvt. Ltd.: New Delhi).

10.3 CENTRAL IDEAS OF D.P MUKHERJEE

Marxism, according to D.P. Mukerjee helped one to understand the historical developments well but it could not offer a satisfactory solution to human problems. That solution was to be found in the regeneration and reinterpretation of India's national culture. He was opposed to the positivism of modern social sciences which reduced individuals into biological or psychological units. The industrial culture of the West has returned individuals into self-seeking agents; the society in the West had become ethnocentric. By emphasising individualisation i.e. recognition of the role and rights of the individual, positivism had uprooted the social anchors of humanity.

A) Role of tradition in Indian society

Mukerji held that tradition was the mainspring of culture. The individuals drew their

nourishment from the tradition. They did not lose a sense of purposes or direction. But tradition often became deadweight, as in India. Also, people made a fetish of it, that is, they idealised it and worshipped it. Cultural stagnation was found to result on account of the people's uncritical attitude towards it. Therefore, individuation must also be encouraged. The individuals can recreate culture by infusing it with new vigour. The individual is to neither totally free nor non-free. For the evolution of a healthy personality, there must be a balance between individuation and association. Association is the bond of the individual with society. Individual's freedom must not be anarchy but a creative expression of the tradition.

B) Integrated development of personality

Mukerji did not commend to Indians the positivistic construction of personality. The Western personality made a fetish of achievement. Science and Technology had been harnessed to great improvement in the living conditions of masses. Man's capacity to control nature and use it to his advantage was the notable achievements of the modern age. However, the Western approach could not lead to an integrated development. For an integrated development of personality there was need for a balance between technological development and human freedom. Even a socialist society such as Soviet Russia had failed to evolve a balanced personality. There, the individuals had been dominated by the state of the political party.

D.P. Mukerji's dialecticism was rooted in humanism which cut across narrow ethnic or national considerations. In the West, the individuals had become either aggressive or docile. The Western Progress was devoid of humanism. The Renaissance and Industrial Revolution had freed individuals from the grip of stagnant medieval tradition but at the same time reduced the humanist content of progress. The modern nationalism is essentially nurtured in the positivistic aspects of the West. It could not

be an appropriate model for India. Besides, India's middle classes were a product of Western impact on India. They were uprooted from their own indigenous tradition. They had lost contact with the masses. India could become a modern nation if the middle classes re-established their links with the masses. Only then a genuine development was possible. Growth was mere quantitative achievement; development was a qualitative term denoting value-based progress.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1) Briefly describe D. P. Mukerjee's central idea of Sociology.

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2) In what way was Mukerjee's approach to Marxism different from Karl Marx.

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3) Give the names of the two of D. P. Mukerjee's major works in sociology.

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C) Unity in the diversities of Indian culture

D.P. Mukerji was interested in depicting Hindu-Muslim relations. His search for truth led him to discover humanistic and spiritual unity in the diversities of Indian culture. He was examining many of the areas within the broad framework of Hindu-Muslim interaction. There were three areas of interaction which were worthy of note.

Politically, the Islamic kings ruled over the Hindu subjects from 11th to 17th centuries A.D in North India. But the alliances between Muslim rulers and Hindu rajas were often witnessed. Hence, there was a sense of partnership between Muslim rulers and Hindu subjects; this was more evident during the Mughal rule. In economic relations, during the Islamic rule while the jagirdars (military chiefs) were Muslims, most of the zamindars were Hindus. These two groups shared many interests in common. Thus, together these two classes formed an alliance. Culturally, in literature, music, costumes, cultivation of fine arts etc. there were reciprocal influences. Both Sufism and Bhaktism in the north encouraged mutual interactions. However, the Muslims and Hindu differed in their world view.

Mukerji noted that the Hindu mind thought in terms of cycles: the good and the bad succeed each other. The Hindu has a fatalistic view. Further, the Hindu world view was the product of a distinctive territory, a subcontinent. Islam by contrast was a multi-ethnic, multi-national religion. Hindu approach to nationhood was idealistic, Islamic approach was pragmatic. For the Hindu freedom was a "birth right"; for the Muslim, it was an opportunity. The Muslim views it as non-cyclic and non-fatalistic. Hence, it favoured direct action to make the best use of political crisis or opportunity.

D) D.P. Mukerji as an economist

D.P. Mukerji was by training an economist. His approach to economics was, however, distinct from that of the other economists. He viewed the economic development in India in terms of historical and cultural specificities. The economic forces in India were influenced by social values. During ancient times, the king and the members of royal court did not own the lands. The powers conferred on the king were limited to fiscal obligation; that is to say, the tillers of land had to give a portion of their produced to the treasury as tax or revenue in return for the royal protection.

The ownership of the land was mainly vested in the village councils. During the heyday of Buddhism, the Sangha (monastic organisation) often managed extensive lands, which were granted to them by kings. Although the individual monks (Bhikshus) could not possess or own property, the Sangha owned properties. One-sixth of the agricultural produced collected as tax by the Sangha was utilised for the cultivation of learning and pursuit of ethical and spiritual goals.

Just as village lands were controlled by kin and caste groups, which are internally autonomous, even trade and banking in India were managed by kinship and caste networks in pre-modern times. The guilds which carried on regional trade were usually based on castes. Commercial banking was also controlled by castes. There were important money lending Hindu families in the West coast whose influence was widespread especially during Mughal rule, Mukerji did not treat the merchants as mere parasites; on the contrary, he regarded them as those who established trade networks between urban centres and rural hinterland. But during the colonial rule they began exploiting as they shed their earlier cultural constraints. The Indian merchant princes often travelled to foreign countries to display their wares; thereby they linked India to the outside world not only through trade but through the spread of culture.

The British rule in India brought about widespread changes in Indian economy. The urban-industrial economy introduced by the British set aside not only the older institutional networks but also the traditional classes. This called for a new social adaptation. In the new set-up the educated middle classes of the India's urban centres became the focal point of the society. However, these middle classes were dominated by Western life style and thinking. The future of India would be secure if the middle classes reached out to the masses and established an active partnership with them in

nation-building.

Important Works:

Some of the important sociological works of D.P. Mukerji

are: Basic Concept in Sociology (1932)

Personality and the Sociology (1924)

Modern Indian Culture (1942)

Problems of Indian Youths (1942)

Diversities (1958)

Out of these books, Modern Indian Culture (1942) and Diversities (1958) is his best-known works. His versatility can be seen from his other contributions too, such as, his books on:

Tagore: A Study (1943)

On Indian History 1943)

Introduction to Indian Music (1943)

10.4 LET US SUM UP

The work of D.P Mukerjee is quite significant in building Sociology of India. He was deeply influenced by Marxian thought as is evident in his emphasis on economic factors in the process of cultural change. We find how he looks at the impact of the West on the Indian society as a phase in the social process of cultural assimilation and synthesis. In his view, Indian culture has grown by a series of responses to the successive challenges of so many races and cultures, which has resulted in a synthesis. His analysis of the cultural challenges of colonialism and the rise of new middle class, his emphasis upon Indian tradition is undertaking a dialectical analysis of the process of change.

This chapter focuses upon the work of A. R. Desai and shows how Marxist approach

can be utilized in understanding Indian reality. The crucial work on Social Background of Indian nationalism clearly reflects on the economic interpretation of Indian society. It shows how changes in means of production led to the social transformation in the society. Use of historical materialism for understanding transformation in Indian society is the beauty of the work. Attempt has been made how the national consciousness emerged through qualitative changes in Indian Society.

10.5 GLOSSARY

1. **Class struggle:** The Marxist approach to Indian sociology emphasizes the relationship between class and other aspects of society, such as politics, culture, religion, and the state. It also highlights the significance of class struggle in shaping the nationalist movement.
2. **Means of production:** The Marxist approach focuses on the means of production, the techno-economic division of labor, and social relations of production.
3. **Dialectical materialism:** The Marxist approach is guided by the principle of dialectical materialism, which views the relations between classes in terms of social relations of production and forces of production.
4. **Mode of production:** The mode of production in society determines the relations of production, which in turn determines the relationship between classes.
5. **Socialist reform:** Marxist sociology suggests that socialist reform comes from analyzing unjust systems of power and oppression, rather than a class revolution.

10.6 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q1. Discuss D. P. Mukerjee as Marxist.

Q2. Discuss the contribution of D. P. Mukerjee on Indian Tradition.

Q3. Discuss the contribution of D. P. Mukerjee and Indian diversity.

10.7 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Mukerji, D.P; 1958. *Diversities*, Manak Publication, New Delhi.
2. Omen, T.K and P. N. Mukerjee; 1986, *Indian Sociology Reflection and Introspection*, Popular Prakashan, Bombay.
3. Singh, Y.; 1973, *Modernization of Indian Tradition*, Thompson press, New Delhi.
4. Singh, Y; 1986; *Indian Sociology- Social conditioning and emerging concerns*, Vistaar publication, New Delhi.

MARXIAN PERSPECTIVE: A.R DESAI**STRUCTURE**

- 11.0 Objectives
- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 A.R Desai: Central Ideas
- 11.3 Relevance of Marxist Approach to the study of Indian Society
- 11.4 Let us Sum Up
- 11.5 Glossary
- 11.6 Self-Assessment Questions
- 11.7 Suggested Readings

11.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- A.R Desai life works.
- A.R Desai, Marxian Approach of society.
- A.R Desai central ideas in sociology

11.1 INTRODUCTION

The use of the conflict model is a popular branch in sociological theory. In India, A. R. Desai adopts doctrinaire. Marxist and makes plea for the application of the Marxist model for the analysis of Indian social phenomenon. To him the Marxist approach to understand any society and change therein, distinguish itself by emphasizing the need to initiate any investigation of social phenomenon in the context of basic, almost life giving, activity carried on by human beings viz. production through instruments of production, to extract and fabricate products from the nature so essential for the survival and persistence of human species.

Being Marxist, Desai rejects any interpretation of tradition with reference to religion, rituals and festivities. Quiet like other Marxists, he employs production relations for the explanation of traditional social background of India nationalism in his classical work. The book is an excellent effort to trace the emergence of Indian nationalism from dialectical perspective. According to him, Indian nationalism is the result of the material conditions created by the British Colonialism. Thus, the dialectical history of India presented by him shows that traditions have their roots in India's economy and production relations.

To Y. Singh, the important limitation of the dialectical approach for studies of social change in India is the lack of substantial empirical data in support of its major assertions, which are often historiographic and can easily be challenged. In theoretical terms however, this approach can be most viable for analysis of the process of change and conflict in India provided it is founded upon a sound tradition of scientific research. Let us analysis here, in detail, the work of A. R Desai i.e. "Social background of India nationalism".

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Akshay Ramanlal Desai was born on April 16, 2015 in Nadiad in Gujarat. His father, Ramanlal Vasantlal Desai was a civil servant in the princely state of Baroda in 1920s and 1930s. He was a well-known litterateur, who inspired the youth in the 1930s. The travels with this father across the

state of Baroda left a deep impression on his sensitive mind. Ramanlal Desai, apart from being an officer of the Baroda state, was also a well-known litterateur who wrote many novels depicting the lives of the peasantry which influenced and inspired the youth towards social transformation. The exploitation of the peasants due to excessive rent, a searing critique of colonialism and the role of citizens in the making of a new India were all themes that occurred repeatedly in his novels. He also had a great admiration for Gandhi and some leaning towards Fabian socialism. The young Akshay Desai absorbed all these influences. From his father he imbibed the idea of taking an active interest in the world around with the intention of intervening to transform it. This was to stay with him till his end. He was also exposed to a range of literary and musical giants in his childhood through his father. His deep political consciousness came from a family milieu that was highly sensitive to social oppression. In 1947, he got married to Neera Desai who played a pioneering role in the growth of Women's Studies in India. Their son Mihir Desai is a leading human rights lawyer and practises in Mumbai. He began his teaching career as a lecturer in Siddharth College in Bombay 1946 and joined the Department of Sociology, University of Bombay in 1951, became Professor and Head of the Department in 1969 and resigned from the Department in 1976.

Desai was appointed a Senior Fellow and a National Fellow in the Indian Council of Social Science Research from 1973-75 and 1981-85 respectively. He was President of the Indian Sociological Society in 1980-81 and Gujarat Sociological Society in 1988-90. He was the only Indian sociologist who was active in politics and was also a member of different non-mainstream left political parties at different points of time, even though during his early days in the 1930s he was a member of the Communist Party of India for a brief period. He was a committed Marxist since his early undergraduate student days and remained one till his death in 1994. He gravitated to radical politics in his undergraduate student days. The 1930s was also the decade when a left alternative to the mainstream nationalism represented by the Congress was also emerging. There were ideological conflicts between the relatively more left oriented sections within the Congress and that of the right oriented sections. However, the alternative which was the left and distinct from the Congress was

also clearly emerging, posing a challenge to the Congress.

The kisan movement had started in Gujarat in the 1930s. Baroda was an important centre for radical and left politics including the activists of the nascent Communist Party. It is said that Akshay Desai was suspended for his activities from his college in Baroda. He moved to Surat and then to Bombay to pursue his studies and his activities. Bombay was the nerve centre of trade union activism and also the burgeoning communist activity. What is interesting about this entire period was that there were many currents of political activity both at the national level and in Gujarat as well. There was a struggle for gaining influence over the anti-colonial movement among the various ideological and political currents. The workers in the textile mills in Bombay, jute mills in Calcutta and mine workers were on the path of struggle against inhuman exploitation, gruelling working hours and low wages. The trade union movement was in the forefront of both the struggle of the workers and the nationalist movement. This was also the period of the Great Depression. The industrial recession that followed it hit major industries and this gave a further fillip to the militancy in the labour movement. The communist presence and leadership of the labour movement deepened during this period.

There was a mushrooming of people's organisations, ranging from trade unions, Kisan Sabhas, students' federations, women's organisations and cultural and literary forums, all of which were imbued with a strong anti-colonial consciousness. In all these various forums, various political parties and forces, ranging from the Congress, socialists and the communists worked together at different points of time. Needless to say, the attempt to jointly work in various organisations was not easy given the diverse and sometimes even divergent perspectives. However, one remarkable feature of the national movement has been its inclusiveness, despite discordant strands of separatism. However, the end of the 1930s and the early 1940s saw the ominous shadow of the partition looming over the country which was soon to become a dreadful and frightening reality, accompanied as it was by mutual slaughter in Punjab and Bengal.

These were challenging times for any sensitive young person. Desai got involved in the communist movement and joined the Communist Party in 1934. But he left the Communist Party after a brief period of five years since he found the bureaucratic structure of the party suffocating. More importantly, he opposed the change in the Party's stand regarding support to British war efforts in India when the Soviet Union was attacked by Nazi Germany in 1939. He resigned from the party in 1939. Desai continued to pursue his research and activism through his entire teaching career and subsequently as well leading to a plethora of publications both in English and Gujarati.

11.2 CENTRAL IDEAS OF A.R DESAI

As you would have learnt from the previous section, Desai was involved in radical politics and later on in leftist and Marxist groups that were active in the nationalist movement in Surat and later in Mumbai where he pursued his higher studies. Expectedly then, his central ideas were concerned with Indian nationalism, role of the state in social and political transformation, development, and Marxian perspective on Indian society. Let us discuss each of his ideas in following sub-sections.

9.3.1 Indian Nationalism was the canvas and the backdrop against which social sciences took root in India. His social enquiries arose out of the questions and issues that were facing Indian society and the Indian people and their struggles of which he was an integral part. This is the most significant fact that needs to be kept in mind while assessing his life work. A large part of his work was based on the method of historical materialism. His doctoral work was published as a book titled, Social Background of Indian Nationalism. Later he brought out another volume, Recent Trends in Indian Nationalism. Originally his doctoral work, the former was published in 1946 and has run into several editions. Characterised by a broad historical sweep, this work was written during the high point of the anti-colonial movement, and captures the A R Desai diverse contradictions that the country was passing through, including the imminent partition of the country.

Desai analyses the various forces at work at the time and the changes brought about by colonial policies in the basic structure of Indian society. He views nationalism as a historical category, a modern phenomenon which comes into existence at a certain point in history. In India, it evolved as

result of a combination of objective factors and subjective factors when the Indian people were political subjects of the British Empire. While the initial stirrings of Indian nationalism arose in the early nineteenth century, it took concrete shape only in the latter part of the century.

The nation that emerged was not a homogeneous one; it comprised of different classes that arose in the course of colonial intervention. British colonial rule initiated a deep structural transformation in Indian society which led it to a new path of development, capitalist development and initiated changes in almost spheres of Indian social life, from modern means of transport and communication, capitalist property relations in land, the establishing of a centralised state, introduction of western education, new forms of administration and even limited forms of self-rule at the provincial levels. It destroyed the older order and unleashed many dynamic new forces which revolutionised Indian society, though to sub-serve its own interest, which was the colonial exploitation of India. Colonialism had a contradictory dimension to it and Desai analyses that. Marx had argued that capitalism would play revolutionary role in altering the nature of the productive forces in Indian society characterized by the caste system; however, Marx's own ideas changed in this regard. But Desai was clear that colonial rule did not play a revolutionary role since it destroyed the very institutions that could facilitate the growth of capitalism, i.e. the factories of the pre-capitalist period. Desai's concern was also to highlight the specificity of the Indian pre-capitalist social formation with its caste system. He highlights the nature of the 'self-sufficient' village community lacking private property in land, which was the key component in the agrarian system in pre-British India. He outlines the social consequences of the transformation of agriculture, the decline of town handicrafts and the decline and destruction of village artisan industries. According to him, 'It was the village artisan industries that constituted the industrial pillar of the economic autarchy of the village, the other being the self-sufficient village agriculture'.

- **Social background of Indian nationalism**

Indian society experienced a qualitative structural transformation during British rule which led it on a new and different path of development. British rule initiated some of the basic changes in social

physiognomy of India society. It generated new currents in the economic processes. It resulted into a fatal blow to the peculiar feudal framework which provided the matrix for the Indian society for a millennium. Thus, to discern the social transformation of Indian society is the first distinctive feature of the Desai's work.

Another distinguishing feature of this work is the specific Sociological approach adopted in the study. The entire study is developed on the explicit assumption of applying historical materialism. The method is employed here to understand the social transformation that took place in Indian society during British period. Thus, the history of the rise of national sentiment in India is closely bound up with the growth of a unified national economy. This unification took place as a result of the destruction of former pre-capitalist forms of production prevailing in India and the substitution, in their place of the modern capitalist economic forms. Let us try to understand the changes in Indian Society under following heads: -

- **Village structure and Rural economy in pre-British period**

A self-sufficient village, based on agriculture carried on with the primitive plough and bullock-power and handicraft by means the primitive equipment, was a basic feature of Pre-British Indian Society. The village population was mainly composed of peasants. The village committee, representing the village community which was the de-facto owner of the village land. The peasant families enjoyed traditional hereditary right to possess and cultivate his holding from generation to generation.

All exchange of products produced by the village workers was limited to the village community. The village did not have any appreciable exchange relations with the outside world. Another feature of the village economic life was the low stage of division of labour. Further the Pre-British Indian society almost completely subordinated the individual to the caste, the family and the village panchayat culture of the Pre- British Indian feudal society was predominately mystical in character. This was due to the fact that the society was economically on a low level, stationary and socially rigid. Whatever changes occurred was quantitative and not qualitative in character.

- **Transformation of Indian Society: A product of British Conquest**

The transformation of the pre-British feudal economy into a Capitalist economy was a long drawn-out process. It was mainly a result of the British conquest of India, the political and economic policies adopted by the British government and the economic penetration of India chiefly by British capitalism in its three phases of development - trading, industrial and financial.

Peculiar features of British conquest were the disruption of old Indian economic system and introduction of new economic forms. It is bound up with the decay and even extinction of old land relations and artisans, and with the emergence of new land relations and modern industries. In place of village commune appeared modern peasant proprietor or zamindars, both private owner of land. The class of artisans disappeared with modern industry; new classes like class of capitalist, industrial workers, agricultural labourers, class of tenants, class of merchant etc. emerged. Thus, the British impact not only led to the transformation of the economic anatomy of Indian Society, but also its social physiognomy. Further the new land revenue system, commercialization of agriculture, fragmentation of land etc. led to transformation of Indian agriculture and thus, Indian village.

At a higher end this resulted into growing polarization of classes in agrarian areas, poverty in rural areas and exploitation by the owners of land. It gave rise to new class structure in agrarian society with categories like-zamindars, land lords, tenants, peasant proprietors, agricultural labour, money lenders and merchant class. Similarly in urban society there were - capitalist industrial working class, petty traders, Professional class like doctor, lawyer, engineer etc.

Apart from transforming Indian society, British also introduced qualitative changes like the introduction of railways, postal services, centralized uniform law, English education, modern industrial and many more.

- ***Implications of British policy on Indian society***

Although it is said that British government advocated various exploitative merchandism in India but unintentionally their efforts led to unification of Indian society. The role of railways and press is significant in this direction. It has brought the scattered and disintegrated Indians into the

mainstream. The implication of this was social movements, collective representations, national sentiment and consciousness among Indian people and formation of unionism at various levels. Once this set up was organised, it gave rise to nationalist freedom movement and awakening of Indian nationalism.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- 1) In few lines outline Desai’s approach to the understanding of nationalism in India.
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- 2) What was village structure and Rural economy in pre-British period.
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- 3) What are the implications of British policy on Indian Society.
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11.3RELEVANCE OF THE MARXIST APPROACH TO THE STUDY OF INDIAN SOCIETY

According to Desai, one of the major events, relevant to Social Science profession that took place during the last thirty years is a relatively massive growth of higher education in the form of large-scale expansion of university and other specialised institutional complexes. Trained human power in social sciences, in the form of sizeable body of teachers, researches and students has emerged. Knowledge generators and knowledge transmitters are operating on a big scale in the national

scene.

Of late, it is increasingly being realized that there is something basically disturbing about the entire enterprise of knowledge production and dissemination in social sciences. Desai says that the dominant approaches which shaped sociological studies have been basically non-Marxist. The practitioners and advocates of dominant approaches have always adopted an attitude wherein the potential of Marxist approach to understand the Indian reality has been bypassed, underrated or planned value biased.

Desai poses a question, is there an approach in social science which can fulfil these functions so essential to understand the social transformation that is taking place in India. Is there an alternative paradigm, model of inquiry, a framework which would help in understanding the Indian society? But he himself submits that the paradigm evolved by Marx if adopted consciously even as a heuristic device, would provide this alternative approach for conducting fruitful and relevant researches about the Indian society. To him the Marxist approach helps one to raise relevant questions, to conduct the researches in the right direction, enables one to formulate adequate hypotheses, assist one to evolve proper concepts and appropriate research techniques and can also help to locate the central tendencies of transformation with its major implications.

Desai highlights certain crucial aspects of Marxist approach, which will prove relevant for explaining the type of transformation that is taking place in the Indian society. The Marxist approach to understand any society and changes there distinguishes itself by emphasizing the need to initiate any investigation of social phenomenon in the context of the basic and primary, almost life giving, activity carried on by human beings viz. production through instruments of production, to extract and fabricate products from the nature so essential for the survival and persistence of human species. Marx himself has formulated the basic significance of this activity in the following words "Men can be distinguished from animals by consciousness, by religion, or by anything one likes. They themselves begin to distinguish themselves from animals, as soon as they

begin to produce their means of subsistence". The way in which men produce their means of subsistence depends in the first place on the nature of the existing means which they have to produce. What individuals are, therefore, concedes with their production, with what they produce, and with how much they produce it. What individuals are, therefore depends on the material conditions of their production. This conception of history, therefore, rests on exposition of real processes of production, starting out from the simple material production of like and on the comprehension of the form of intercourse connected with and created by this mode of production or of civil society and its various stages as the basis of all history".

The Marxist approach demand from every one, endeavouring to understand social reality to be clear about the nature of mean of production, the techno- economic division of labour involved in operating the instruments of production, and social relations of production or what are more precisely characterized as property relations. Thus, Marxist approach to understand post independent Indian society will focus on the type property relations which existed on the eve of independence and which are being elaborated by state, as the active agents of transformation of Indian Society. Marxist approach will help the Indian scholars to designate the type of society, the class character of the state and the specifics of the path of development with all the implications.

In short, the Marxist approach gives central importance to property structure in analysing any society. It provides "historical location or specification of all social phenomena. The Marxist approach recognizes the dialectics of evolutionary as well as revolutionary changes of the breaks in historical continuity in the transition from one socio-economic formation to another".

Important Works:

1. (1966) Social Background of Indian Nationalism, Popular Prakashan, Bombay.
2. (1959) Rural Sociology in India, Popular Prakashan, Bombay.
3. (1971) ed. Essays on Modernization of Underdeveloped Society Tacker publication, Bombay.
4. (1975); State and Society in India: Essay in Dissent, Popular Prakashan, Bombay.
5. (1979) Peasant struggle in India, Oxford Publication Delhi.

6. (1979) Rural India in Transition, Popular Prakashan, Bombay.

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11.4 LET US SUM UP

The work of D.P Mukerjee is quite significant in building Sociology of India. He was deeply influenced by Marxian thought as is evident in his emphasis on economic factors in the process of cultural change. We find how he looks at the impact of the West on the Indian society as a phase in the social process of cultural assimilation and synthesis. In his view, Indian culture has grown by a series of responses to the successive challenges of so many races and cultures, which has resulted in a synthesis. His analysis of the cultural challenges of colonialism and the rise of new middle class, his emphasis upon Indian tradition is undertaking a dialectical analysis of the process of change.

This chapter focuses upon the work of A. R. Desai and shows how Marxist approach can be utilized in understanding Indian reality. The crucial work on Social Background of Indian nationalism clearly reflects on the economic interpretation of Indian society. It shows how changes in means of production led to the social transformation in the society. Use of historical materialism for understanding transformation in Indian society is the beauty of the work. Attempt has been made how the national consciousness emerged through qualitative changes in Indian Society.

11.5 GLOSSARY

1. **Class struggle:** The Marxist approach to Indian sociology emphasizes the relationship between class and other aspects of society, such as politics, culture, religion, and the state. It also highlights the significance of class struggle in shaping the nationalist movement.
2. **Dialectical materialism:** The Marxist approach is guided by the principle of dialectical materialism, which views the relations between classes in terms of social relations of production and forces of production.
3. **Mode of production:** The mode of production in society determines the relations of production, which in turn determines the relationship between classes.

4. **Socialist reform:** Marxist sociology suggests that socialist reform comes from analyzing unjust systems of power and oppression, rather than a class revolution.

11.6 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q1. Discuss the work “Social back ground of Indian Nationalism”.

Q2. How is Marxist approach relevant in understanding Indian society.

Q.4. Discuss A. R. Desai as a Marxist.

11.7 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Mukerji, D.P; 1958. *Diversities*, Manak Publication, New Delhi.
2. Omen, T.K and P. N. Mukerjee; 1986, *Indian Sociology Reflection and Introspection*, Popular Prakashan, Bombay.
3. Singh, Y.; 1973, *Modernization of Indian Tradition*, Thompson press, New Delhi.
4. Singh, Y; 1986; *Indian Sociology- Social conditioning and emerging concerns*, Vistaar publication, New Delhi.
5. Desai, A.R; 1966; *Social Background of Indian Nationalism*. Popular Prakashan Bombay.

CIVILIZATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

N.K BOSE

STRUCTURE

- 12.0 Objectives
- 12.1 Introduction
- 12.2 N. K. Bose: His Life and Works
- 12.3 Cultural zones and pattern of unity
- 12.4 Civilization study at the phase of confidence
- 12.5 Let us Sum Up
- 12.6 Glossary
- 12.7 Self-Assessment Questions
- 12.8 Suggested Readings

12.0 OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this lesson is to analyse:

- Methodology of N.K Bose.
- Understanding Changes in Tribal India.

12.1 INTRODUCTION

N. K. Bose was basically a student of Indian civilization and culture and his approach was historical. He encouraged the Studies of the distribution of cultural traits. He also developed a classification based on Indian textual categories.

He was greatly influenced by the 'Inductive Natural History' approach of Prof. Franz. Boas, an American diffusionist, and whose influence is reflected in the works of diffusion of spring festival complex (1927), element of temple architecture (1949) and Basic material traits in rural India (1961). He also was a follower of functional approach of Malinowski and is highlighted in the work on Nature of culture i.e. the adaptive function of culture.

Thus N.K. Bose is a man of diversity with exposure to various fields in his career he has justified his knowledge by using them on different aspects of Indian society.

- Civilization understanding of India
- Unity in diversity

12.2 N. K. BOSE: HIS LIFE AND WORKS

N. K. Bose was born in Calcutta on 22 January, 1901. He received his early education in four schools situated at four distinguished places of three States of the country. In this way he was educated at Anglo-Sanskrit School, Patna Sagar Dutta Free High School Kamarhati, 24-Paragana (West Bengal), Ranchi Zilla School, Ranchi (Bihar) and Puri Zilla School, Puri (Orissa). He was admitted to Scottish Church College, Presidency College and University College of Science Calcutta. He had passed his Bachelor of Science with honours in Geology and Master of Science Anthropology examination with First Division in the year, 1917, 1919, 1921 and 1925 respectively.

He was appointed as Research fellow in Anthropology, Calcutta University in 1920-30. He left this post to join Salt Satyagraha. Again, he was recalled by Syama Prasad Mukerjee, the then Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University in 1938 and appointed as Assistant Lecturer in Anthropology. He

served this post till 1942 when he was arrested by the British. He returned in 1945 as lecturer in Human Geography and then became reader in Geography in the Science College, Calcutta.

He was invited as Visiting Scholar (with the status of visiting professor, but with no teaching assignment) in the University of California, Berkeley in the Department of South-Asian Studies in 1958 and continued on the same position in the University of Chicago, Department of Anthropology in 1959. He was also invited to lecture on Social and Culture Change in India at the Universities of Wisconsin and Michigan. On return he was appointed as Director of Anthropological Survey of India. He served this post for a period of nearly five years (1959-64), until and unless he got retirement in 1964. During this period, he also worked as Advisor of the Government of India on Tribal Affairs.

In post-retirement period he served as special invitee of study team for Hill District of Assam under the chairmanship of Mr. Tarlok Singh in 1965. He was invited by the Administration of NEFA to report on educational problems in 1966. In 1965 he was again invited to the U.S.A. to represent India at the annual conference of the Association for Asian Studies in New York. He lectured on Social and Political Changes in India and on the Political Philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi in Columbia University, New York, University of California, Berkeley, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Duke Universities, North Carolina, University of the State of New York, and Harvard University, Washington.

In recognition of his excellent work in anthropology, Professor N.K. Bose, was awarded Annandale Gold Medal of the Asiatic society of Bengal in 1948. He was elected as the president of Anthropology and Archaeology Section of Indian Science Congress in 1949. He was elected a Fellow of the National Institute of Science of India in 1955. In course of his career, he became life member of a large number of professional organisations. He was also invited by a number of organisations to deliver special lectures.

Professor Bose was a devoted social worker and served in various capacities in many philanthropic

organisations. He received President's award of Padmashri in 1966. His major publications are as follows:

- 1929: Cultural Anthropology. Bombay Asia Publication House.
- 1932: Canous of Orissan Architecture. Calcutta: Ramananda Chatterji.
- 1948: Excavations in Mayurbhanj University of Calcutta.
- 1967: Culture and Society in India. Bombay. Asia Publishing House.
- 1959: Modem Bengal. Vidyodya Library, Calcutta.
- 1963: fifty Years of Science in India: Progress of Anthropology and Archaeology. Calcutta: Indian Science Congress Association.
- 1957: Problems of National Integration. Simla, Indian Institute of Advanced Study.
- 1968: Selection from Gandhi Bombay: Nawjiwan Publishing House. 1959:
- 1962: Studies in Gandhism. Calcutta, Merit Publishers.
- 1953: May days With Gandhi Calcutta: Merit Publishers.
- 1969: Problems of Nationalism. Calcutta: Allied Publishers.

N.K. Bose being the exponent of civilisation perspective gives civilizational view of the Indian Society.

•BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Nirmal Kumar Bose was born in Kolkata in the year 1901. His father Bimanbehari was a doctor by profession. Young Nirmal was very good in sports. Nirmal Kumar admired his father's wisdom, altruism and sense of dedication for his work. His mother was Kiranshashi Devi. She led an extremely disciplined and organized life. It is said that Nirmal Kumar Bose imbibed the trait of self-restraint from his mother. In the last phase of her life, Kiranshashi Devi stayed in Puri as a widow. But no matter how engrossed he remained with studies, Nirmal Bose would frequently visit his mother so that she did not feel lonely without his father. He received his school education from different schools in Bihar, Bengal and Orissa. He completed his Bachelor of Science with Honours in Geology and Master of Science in Anthropology from the University of Calcutta.

Bose's Involvement with Civil Disobedience Movement After completing his Masters in 1925 and gaining an exposure to field based social anthropological research Bose at the age of 29 began his career not as an academic but as a social worker who was an ardent follower of Gandhi and read almost all the relevant Gandhian literatures by that time. Since 1930 he engaged himself with Gandhian social activism and worked particularly among the subaltern Harijans of Birbhum through establishing Khadi sangha (a centre of cottage industry), and Sikshaghar (adult literacy centre). His active participation in civil disobedience movement resulted in his imprisonment for the first time as category 'C' political prisoner and Bose was put behind the bars for almost two years (1931-1932) initially at Suri and then at Dumdum Central Jail. In 1934 he met Gandhian person for the first time at Sebragram, Wardha and started working at Bolepur until 1938 (the year when he joined as a faculty in Calcutta University) following Gandhian principles with revitalized vigor and enthusiasm. Again since 1942 to 1945 he took part in August Movement and was debarred in a phased manner but this time as category 'A' political prisoner. Again in 1946 he was appointed as a professor of Cultural Geography in the University of Calcutta but managed to get an early leave to work as personal secretary to and as Bengali interpreter of Mahatma Gandhi till September 1947, and joined Gandhi during his station at several places from Noakhali (now in Bangladesh) to Kolkata (Calcutta). (Sarkar 2012: 428) He was drawn into the national movement at a young age and this gave a distinctive edge to his scientific and literary work. He also went to jail for nationalist activities during the movement for India's Independence.

The greatest single influence on Bose's life was his association with Gandhi. Bose was interested in Gandhi's ideas on the creation of new society in India, and began by making a detailed study of his writings. He was Gandhi's secretary and close companion. Bose was impressed about Gandhi's search for truth through experience. In his view, Gandhi was the quintessential fieldworker, always ready to see and listen, and never drawing conclusions about a human situation without first experiencing it. He has written several books on Gandhi, including Selections from Gandhi's Writings. Bose had a varied career wherein he held high positions with great distinction. He taught

in various universities in India and abroad. He was the director of the Anthropological Survey of India from 1959-64 and from 1967-70 held the office of the Commissioner for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the Government of India. In recognition of his excellent work in anthropology, Bose was awarded Annandale Gold Medal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1948. He was elected as the President of Anthropology and Archaeology Section of Indian Science Congress in 1949. He was elected a fellow of the National Institute of Science of India in 1955. He was a devoted social worker and served in various capacities in many philanthropic organizations. He received Padma Shri in 1966.

❖ **Contribution of N. K. Bose**

His contributions in diversified field are: -

- a) **Contribution in the Study of Architecture:** Bose received his formal training in anthropology as a M.Sc. student in Calcutta University during 1923-24. He came to the discipline of anthropology by an accident. When the non-cooperation movement was launched, he decided to leave the Government College for ever. He left Calcutta and settled down at Puri. In his book the structure of Hindu society he gave the detailed view of the Indian Civilisation.

In Puri he came across a master Silpi (temple architect) named Ram Maharana, who initiated Bose to the traditional canons of Orissan architecture. He edited an Oriya manuscript on Silpa Sastra, which was later published in 1932. Thus, he learnt from the field that a student of civilization will have to integrate information from various levels: the text, as well as the product of arts. The elegance of ancient Orissan temples fascinated Bose so much that he started giving lectures on these temples to the visitors to Puri.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Note: Write your answers in the space given below.

1) What attracted Bose most about Gandhi.

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2) What was the most important aspect of fieldwork outlined by Bose.

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3) List two criteria used by Bose to classify tribal communities in India.

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b) Contribution in exploring Indian Civilization through A.S.I

During the period 1959-1964, when Bose was the Director of Anthropological Survey of India, he divided the researches to be carried out by this India-level anthropological institution into five phases. They were:

Phase I: Study of distribution of material traits all over India and mapping out the pattern of their distribution *vis-a-vis* linguistic areas.

Phase II: Study of a few important ancient craft techniques - pottery and metal craft.

Phase III: Study of social organisation of crafts and caste organisation in different regions of India.

Phase IV: The study of the Superstructure of Indian Society through the study of temples Mathas and the Kinships.

Phase V: Study of the process of modernisation in castes, occupation urbanization tribal movements and social movements in different regions of India.

C) Bose's Contribution on the Study of Caste System: Bose's interest in the study of caste system in India appeared in his mind, when he was working among the slums with untouchables of Bolpur town under the Gandhian Reconstruction Programme. He rejected the myth of divine origin, reincarnation and notion of purity and pollution. In a series of brilliant articles - 'Hindu method of Tribal Absorption' (1941), 'Caste in India' (1951), 'Some Aspects of Caste in Bengal (1958) Bose proposes that the root of persistence of the caste system is to be found in the economic and cultural security provided by the non-competitive, hereditary, vocation based productive organisation, which operated in isolated village communities and were guided by a general norm of inter-ethnic cultural tolerance. Further, the institutions of Sanyas (asceticism) provided at least a limited avenue of freedom and prestige to the individual, who were, otherwise, bound to the rigid hierarchy of the system. Bose has been quick to point that such an ideal pattern caste based rural society could thrive adequately only when there was adequate ecological and demographic space to setup new villages.

On the basis of above logic, Bose proposed that fundamental structural change and even breakdown of caste system would be possible only when the economic base of the system was qualitatively transformed. It was this consideration that prompted him to initiate a series of research on change in traditional occupation in different regions of India, particularly West Bengal. His general proposition has been that caste, as an economic system and as a regulator of social life, is

disintegrating are different rate in different regions of India. Bose was particularly curious about what has happened to the caste system in a city like Calcutta which has been exposed to nearly two hundred years of modern commercial industrial and urban development.

On the basis of rapid survey during 1962-63 he has arrived at a conclusion that the diverse ethnic groups, in the population of the city, have come to bear the same relation to one another as do the caste in India as a whole. Actually, the superstructure that cohere the caste under the old order seems instead to be re-establishing itself in a new form.

Bose has emphasised upon the consciousness or ideal model of caste as a normative system, while studying change. For example, the recent proliferation of politically competitive caste associations is not considered by him as an indication of strengthening the caste system. He is of the opinion that these recent developments rather indicate deviations from the non-competitive whole. During 1942-45 as a political prisoner under British Government he gave a series of lectures on the structure of '*Hindu*' society to the fellow political prisoner. These lectures formed the basis of his Bengali book *Hindu Samajer Gadan* (Structure of Hindu society, 1949). This book was published few years before comparison of civilization became a proper subject of study by the American anthropologist, Robert Redfield. In this book, Bose has highlighted many dimensions of Indian social Structure and Social processes, such as tribal enclaves and their absorption, the dual themes of self-sufficiency of village communities and their broader links with kingship, text, pilgrimage-centres, norms of sacred and secular life in ancient texts, social movements in the Medieval period in relation to Islam, the impact of British rule and the emerging economy of Indian Society, particularly of caste system. From this book, it appears that anthropological study of Indian civilization involves a combination of many perspectives such as analysis of classical and medieval texts, administrative records, particularly of land tenure and study of village, individual caste association and the wider social network of the civilization in kingships, fairs, pilgrim centres and so on. The persistent focus has been on a study of the fate of the Varna-Jati systems at different phases of Indian History.

Bose has observed that the historical situation in which the classical Varna Jati system of social order came into being will not be repeated in modern times. It will not suit our times for the population of India has increased manifold and land per capita has diminished considerably. However, the cultural history of Indian civilization presents an example of unity in diversities. Although the inhabitants of India present diversified scenes on the basis of region, religion, language, community, race, occupation and material possessions, but they share many traits, customs, traditions, beliefs, etc. in common which are handed down generation after generation. The diversified groups are tied together by Indian system of Jajmani, in which each caste serves another according to hereditary positions and occupations. The inter-regional and inter-ethnic unity can be seen at the time of making pilgrimage at Dhams located in different parts of India. Fairs also present examples of inter-communal unity. Thus, India is excellent example of unity in diversity.

12.3 CULTURAL ZONES AND PATTERN UNITY

To the students of Indian society and history, the great cultural division of India has always been the Aryan North vis-a-vis the Dravidian South. This also has been indicated by Iravati Karve's extensive study on kinship system (1952). As an acute observer of cultural facts and an indefatigable traveller (Bose, *Diary of a Wanderer*, 1940), Bose observed that the division of Indian population on the basis of language was obvious on a different set of cultural divides in terms of items of material culture - North-West continuous with West Central Asia, and East, continuous with Southern Asia. This proposition was later on elaborately worked out on the basis of an extensive survey of the distribution of a set of material traits and forms and techniques of potters all over India. Apart from the intrinsic theoretical interests of unravelling archaic and persistent culture-historic processes through distribution studies, Bose's special interest in bringing the archaic link into relief was to indicate how regions or states of India, which are today separated by difference of language, share many elements of material culture in common.

In his book *Peasant Life in India: A Study of Indian Unity and Diversity*, Bose propose a pyramidal imagery of unity of Indian civilization. According to him, if the regionalisation is in evidence to a certain extent in relation to the material arts of life, it is apparent already that the degree of differentiation is less in respect of the country's social organisation. What is more reassuring is that if one rises to higher reaches of life confined to ideals, or faith or arts, the differences which one noticed at the material level of life gradually become feebler and feebler. They are eventually replaced by a unit of beliefs and aspirations which gives to Indian civilization, a character of its own. The structure of Indian unity can be compared to a pyramid. There is more differentiation at the material base of life and progressively less as one mounts higher and higher.

In another article, *"The Geographical Background of Indian Culture" (1950)*, Bose discusses as to how a kind of uniformity grew up between geographically and even ecologically distinguishable regions of India, through economic tradition of caste system. He also discusses about the various traditional cultural media which provided a mechanism through which the unifying thoughts and feelings of thinkers, artists and saints of India were brought to the door of most distant communities and enabled them to share some common intellectual and emotional elements of civilization.

In his Jagdish Bose Memorial Lecture of 1971, Bose stated that Indian civilization was in contrast to the civilization of Europe. The civilization of Europe was essentially based on repeated experiences of war leading to the spirit of nationalism. The civilization of India on the other hand, developed a pattern of cultural pluralism under relatively peaceful conditions. To him, Indian civilization encouraged diversity of culture, but in its economic organization, it tried to weave all communities into a network of interdependence, but distinct entities.

12.4 CIVILIZATION STUDY AT A PHASE OF CONFIDENCE

According to Bose, the creative potentialities of the traditional structure of Indian civilization cannot be properly assessed, if the observation are only limited to the post-Medieval and recent phase of recession of the civilization. The civilization has to be studied in a phase of expansion and

confidence. In his Bengali article "The temples of Konark". Bose refers to the expansion and confidence of phase of Indian civilization in a vivid manner. The temples of Konark were built in a glorious period of Orissan history. The king Narsingdev of Ganga dynasty had just defeated the Sultan of Gaura with his powerful army. The state was prosperous and people were infused with a passionate mood to enjoy life and to assert independence. The architects were brought up in this atmosphere and tried to give shape to, this confident and livelihood in their work. The sculptures are full of light. The sculptor's mind was not laden with any false shame. Even today, partly buried under debris of broken stone pieces, withstanding the ravages of time, the temple of Konarka preserves a vivid picture of a by-gone confident past.

Bose has also tried to capture the expressive modern thrust of Indian civilization through a number of critical character sketches of a few outstanding personalities. In Bengali, Book, *Nabin-O-Prachin* (New and Old), he writes about Gandhi's Satyagraha and search of truth, Tagore's creative pursuits and paintings, Jamani Roy's views on art and Ramkinkar Baiji's paintings, Although Bose has been a persistent student of Indian civilization, he has not made any conscious efforts to distinguish the concept of civilization from that of culture. He has, however, thrown some interesting hints on the general characteristics of civilization.

In the particular case of encounter of East and West in Bengal, Bose is of opinion that the civilization of Bengal cannot be defined in terms of spatial and temporal continuity of tradition. According to him, in the formidable and venture of cultural recognition, Bengali culture has always been in the process of becoming, instead of merely being. This tradition to become something is the characteristic of any civilization. Thus, the study of civilization is essentially a study of the inner most i.e., matters of the mind responding to the changing life experiences of a people.

12.5 LET US SUM UP

The chapter shows how diversified exposure of N.K. Bose's led to contribution in different fields. Being an anthropologist, his contribution in the field of Anthropological Survey of India is

remarkable. He studied the material traits for analyzing their distribution at various places in India. His understanding of tribal absorption to caste is a significant angle to analyze unity of Indian culture. He focuses how similar material culture helps in binding zones of India into one framework, further the linkage of India through traits; customs beliefs etc. placed his analysis at the significant platform.

12.6 GLOSSARY

1. **Division of labor:** A complex division of labor is a characteristic of civilization.
2. **Large population centers:** Large population centers are a characteristic of civilization.
3. **Monumental architecture:** Monumental architecture is a characteristic of civilization.
4. **Shared communication strategies:** Shared communication strategies are a characteristic of civilization.
5. **Systems for administering territories:** Systems for administering territories are a characteristic of civilization.

12.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q1. How N.K. Bose Justifies civilization perspective.

Q2. How has N.K. Bose studied caste system in India.

12.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Roy, S. 1970; *Anthropologist in India*, Indian Anthropological Association, Calcutta.
2. Cohn, B.S; 2000; *India: the Social Anthropology of a civilization*, oxford Univ. Press New Delhi.
3. Desai, A.R. 1969; *Rural Society in India*, Popular Prakashan, Bombay.

CIVILIZATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

SURAJIT SINHA

STRUCTURE

- 13.0 Objectives
- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Central Idea on Tribe, Caste and Village
- 13.3 Case Studies of Tribals
- 13.4 Let us Sum Up
- 13.5 Glossary
- 13.6 Self-Assessment Questions
- 13.7 Suggested Readings

13.0 OBJECTIVES

The purpose of this lesson is to analyse:

- Contribution of Surajit Sinha.
- Understanding Changes in Tribal India.

13.1 INTRODUCTION

Surajit Sinha was specialized in cultural anthropology with special interest in Pattern of Indian Civilization and changes in tribal India. He served Government of India in different capacities on anthropological matters. He has done extensive field work on the Bhumij tribe of Bengal/Bihar and his special interest included tribal transformation in Central India and the structure of Indian civilization.

Surajit Sinha demonstrated the possibility of orthogenetic development of civilisation in India from a primitive cultural level, roughly comparable to cultures of the less a cultured tribe of peninsular India. He also found elements of transaction in the tribal cultures in the direction of peasant cultures, on the line of Redfield's scheme of folk-peasant-urban continuum. Surjit Sinha examined the tribal caste interactions and proposed several useful concepts like "Tribal- Peasant continuum" "Bhumij-Kshatriya" as well 'tribal-Rajput continuum', which provide the model for understanding the process of transformation in the whole of middle India.

In his study of Bhumij, scheduled tribes of in West Bengal and Bihar, Sinha found that how they became integrated with the regional Hindu caste system. He tried to define two ideal levels of socio-cultural systems-the 'Tribal' and the emergent level of 'Hindu peasantry' - in terms of a set of characteristics in habitat, economy, social structure and ideological system. The peasant level included a number of emergent features like a surplus in economy based on settled agriculture, social stratification, ethical religion and puritanical value system as distinguished from the essentially egalitarian and non-puritanical tribal level.

There are large groups in the area like the Bhumij and the Mahato who dominate the demographic scene and landholding and are intricately involved in socio-ritual interaction with the caste system of the region. However, he viewed tribe as a system of social relations as well as a state of mind and cultural traditions; both characterised basically by isolation and lack of stratification. The upper Hindu castes have not only feeble social interaction with the tribes but they think that tribes have

their distinctive 'unsophisticated' and 'wild' way of life.

13.2 CENTRAL IDEAS ON TRIBE, CASTE AND VILLAGE (THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING)

Sinha's characterisation of tribe-caste and tribe-peasant polarities are derived from Redfield's earlier concepts of 'folk-urban continuum' and 'peasant society and culture'. Only, the polarities are redefined and specially oriented to deal with the nature of the continuum in central India.

1. **Tribal Society:** The tribal society, according to Sinha has following demographic and socio-structural features. It is isolated in-ecology, demography, economy, politics and other social relations-from other ethnic 'groups. The isolation generates, and in turn, is bolstered by a strong in-group sentiment. Internally, the group is characterised by homogeneity on account of lack of social stratification and role specialization other than by age, sex and kinship. Such an ideally isolated, homogeneous and un-stratified group is also marked by the following cultural features, some of which are direct inter-dependent correlates of aspects of social structures mentioned above : viewing one's culture as autonomous with reference to those of other groups and consequently, disconnection from the great traditions of Indian civilisation in terms of objectives reality and terms of objective awareness; a value system of equality; closeness of the human, natural and the super natural world; lack of systematisation of ideas, a 'sophisticated' stratum of culture, ethical religious and puritanical asceticism.
2. **Caste Groups:** In contrast with the isolated, homogeneous and un-stratified 'tribe', caste is typically connected, heterogeneous and stratified and is characterised by the following social structural features: multi-ethnic residence in the local community; inter-ethnic groups and stratified land tenure; ranked and interdependent interaction with other ethnic groups. Similarly, the following critical feature distinguishes the caste pole of the level of 'culture' interaction with the sub-culture of other ethnic groups in the region; interaction with the great traditions; polarization of lay and elite cultures with elaboration and systematisation of cultural ideals in the latter, hierarchic view of social relations bolstered by the concept of ritual pollution; emergence of ethical religion and a puritanical view of life.
3. **Peasant Village:** It is a territorial community of the multi-caste groups as most of the characteristics of ideal caste are found there. The peasant village community has extensive territorial affiliations with multiple centres of civilization through a diverse network of

relationship. The cultural system of the peasant village is heterogeneous in terms of internal division into caste and class and its complex external relations with a heterogeneous region having specialized centres of cultural nucleation. The tribal villages in contrast are typically uni-ethnic and their external relations are limited to villages lying in a homogenous culture area lived in by the same ethnic group.

Movement from the isolated tribal pole to the caste and peasant end thus involved a progress towards ethnic heterogeneity in social interaction, role specialisation, social stratification and emergence of elite classes and enlargement and diversification of territorial network with civilizational central. There is the corresponding movement towards cultural heterogeneity in terms of ethnic heterogeneity and social stratification and greater systematization of cultural ideals along with interaction with the great traditions. The ultimate opposite pole of the tribal end would, be an urban level of special kind which would fit in with the characters of an "orthogenetic" city as defined by Redfield and Singer as an ideal type. A group that lives in highly hetero-ethnic centres of cities exert authority by political power, wealth and knowledge of the most prestigious level of traditional culture, over a wide range network of inter-ethnic relationship. Whereas the tribe has least relationship as well as control over the regional social organisation of a civilisation, the ideal caste has maximum connectedness and control. Correspondingly, the culture of the ideal elite caste has maximum access to the great tradition and to the highest grade of regional sophistication of culture. The lowest castes come close to the tribes because of their social and cultural isolation from the elite castes.

13.3 SPECIFIC CASE STUDIES

Sinha's concept of tribe-caste and tribe-peasant continuum is mainly concerned with the processes by which tribes are integrated with the traditional civilisation of India. Sinha's conceptual ideas can be further elaborated by taking the examples of tribal groups.

1. The Hill Maria Gonds

The Hill Maria Gonds, a tribal group of Bastar district, is the most isolated segment of the Dravidian

Gondi-speaking people of central India. They occupy nearly 15,000 square miles of the area in the northwest part of Bastar district. Their habitat is typically hill and jungle clad.

Communication is mainly based on travel by government as even bullock carts cannot penetrate this difficult terrain. Although plough cultivation has penetrated considerably in the Maria community, even yet the Marias are supposed to value the slash-and-burn form of cultivation in a very emotional way.

They regard the crops as the combined labours of the village rather than of the labour of the individuals. If one suffers, all suffers and all combine to support the old and the needy, and to help each fellow villager to get through the heaviest part of the yearly round. Village is the main unit of cultivation.

People are, by and large, self-sufficient in their subsistence economy; they do obtain from outside sources such important items as cloth, iron implements, earthenware, brass pots, ornaments, salt etc. The most important means of procuring these items is weekly market.

Besides attending the weekly market, the people of Maria also procure some of their materials from the annual religious fair held at Narayanpur. Thus, the Maria has come into contact with about four or five artisan groups either at the market, or as itinerant traders or as transient or, rarely as permanent settlers in their own village.

The Maria social structure is essentially segmentary in character. Patrilineal class is the largest effective corporate group, further organized into motives, 'brother clans' and 'wife clans. The clans are regarded as equal in status.

The tribe is the widest extension of kin-like ties. Although, in theory, the tribe includes the entire Gond (Koitor) people, in reality, the line of endogamy does not extend beyond the Hill Maria group. Most of the villages in the interior are uni-class communities.

It appears that the interior villages, where the Maria live, are almost exclusively under swidden

cultivation and as uni-ethnic and uni-class communities. There is no stratification in terms of landholding and the religious headman of the village or the secular headman, the Gaita, is only primus interpreter among the village leaders. Although so unstratified within themselves, they are aware of other ethnic groups living within the range of social contact and rank them in some kind of consistent order.

Maria uses mainly three criteria for caste ranking in occupation, wearing of the sacred thread and acceptance of food. The various castes are not conceptualized as 'high' or 'low' but as 'big' or 'small'.

They were placed in the following three major blocks:

Table 1

<i>Big Caste</i>	<i>Own Caste</i>	<i>Small Caste</i>
Brahmin (priest)	Koiter (i.e., Gond)	Pathan (Muslims shopkeeper, cultivation)
Dakar (cultivation)		Mahar (weaver)
Hindu (including Chattisgarhis and Halbas)		Gadi (weaver)
Kallar (distiller, cultivation)		Ghasia (jewellery maker)
Kopal (cowherd)		Wade (blacksmith)
		Chamar (leather worker)
		Isai (Christian)

Thus, all the Hinduized groups, other than those who practise 'degrading' occupations, are placed in the 'big caste' category. And Hill Maria seems to have adopted the characteristic of Hindu attitude of regarding the Muslims and the Christians as ritually low. The Hill Maria has strong ideas of the Maria.

It lacks spiritual specialists of the Hindu great ideas about tradition, and that recognizable Sanskritic elements are understandably rare in their religion. The Hill Maria, in the characteristic way of many such isolated tribal groups, sharply distinguished between themselves and outsiders or strangers. The natural non-ascetic pleasure orientation of the Hill Maria is quite vivid.

Hill Maria Gonds of Bastar district who represent the most isolated segment of the Dravidian Gondi speaking people of Central India. They occupy nearly 15, 000 square miles of area in the North West part of Bastar district. Their habitat is typically hilly and jungle clad. Communication is mainly based

on travel by govt., as even bullock carts cannot penetrate this difficult terrain. Although plough cultivation has penetrated considerably in the Maria economy, even yet the Marias are supposed to value the slash and burn form of cultivation in a very emotional way. They regard the crops as the combined labours of the village rather than of the labour of the individuals. If one suffers, all suffers and all combine to support the old and the needy, and to help each fellow villager to get through the heaviest part of the yearly round. Village is the main unit of cultivation. People are, by and large self-sufficient in their subsistence economy; they do obtain from outside sources such important items as cloth, iron implements, earthenware, brass pots, ornaments, salt etc. The most important means of procuring these items is weekly market. Besides attending the weekly market, the people of Maria also procure some of their materials from the annual religious fair at Narayanpur. Thus, the Maria have to come in contact with about four or five artisan groups either at the market, or as itinerant traders or as transient or, rarely as permanent settlers in their own village.

Maria social structure is essentially segmentary in character. Patrilineal class is the largest effective corporate group, further organised into moieties, "brother-clans" and 'wife' clans'. The clans are regarded as equal in status. The tribe is the widest extension of kin-like ties. Although in theory the tribes include the entire-Gond (Koitor) people, in reality the line of endogamy does not extend beyond the Hill Maria group. Most of the village in the interior are uni-class communities.

It appears that the interior villages, where the Maria live are almost exclusively under swidden cultivation and as uni-ethnic and uni-class communities. There is no stratification in terms of land-holding and the religious headman of the village or the secular headman, the Gaita, is only *primus interpres* among the village leaders. Although so un-stratified within themselves, they are aware of other ethnic groups living within the range of their social contact and rank them in some kind of consistent order.

They used mainly three criteria for caste-ranking in occupation, wearing of the sacred thread and acceptance of food. The various castes are not conceptualised as "high" or "low" but as "big" or

"small" They were placed in the following three major blocks;

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1. Big Caste | Brahman
(priest) Dakar
(cultivation)
Hindu (including chhattisgarhis
and halbas) Kallar (distiller,
cultivation)
Kopal (cowherd) Koiter (i.e. Gond) |
| 2. Own Caste | Pathan (Muslims shopkeeper,
cultivation) Mahar (weaver) |
| 3. Small caste | Gadi (weaver)
Ghasia (jewellery
maker) Wade
(blacksmith)
Chamar (leather
worker) |

Thus, all the Hinduized groups other than those who practice, 'degrading' occupations, were placed in the 'big' caste category. And Hill Maria seems to have adopted the characteristic of Hindu attitude of regarding the Muslims and the Christians as ritually low. The Hill Maria have strong concept of the Maria lack spiritual specialists of the Hindu Great Tradition, and that recognisable Sanskritic elements are understandably rare in Maria religion.

2. The Bhumij of Barabhum (in 1950-59)

While the Hill Maria was marked by intense isolation clan and village solidarity, the Bhumij was characterized by degree of social stratification and rank consciousness among these people which makes them distinguishable from Hindu caste. Risley, who studied them in 1880s, mentioned that here a pure Dravidian race has lost their original language and now speak only Bengali; they worship Hindu Gods in addition to their own and the more advanced among them employ Brahmins as family priests.

They still retain a set of totemistic exogamous sub-divisions closely resembling those of the Mundas and Santhals. But they are beginning to forget the totems which the names of sub-division denote, and the names themselves probably soon be abandoned ritual pollution with reference to violation of the rule of tribal endogamy and sexual relationship with members of the lower castes and also with regard to acceptance of cooked food and water from members of the 'smaller' caste block.

But in spite of their well-developed concept of ritual pollution and having at least a simplified concept of caste hierarchy (without reference to the varna order), the Hill Maria do not have access to ritual service from any such caste of critical importance as the Brahmin, barber or washerman castes. Caste ranking in this area is based on what Marriott has called 'attributional' in contrast to 'interactional' factors.

The Maria interactions are largely restricted to their own ethnic area in terms of kinship, marriage and ritual ties. However, a good deal of similarity between the contents of Maria religion and that of the Hindus in ordinary peasant village has found such as worship of ancestral spirits, mother

goddess, powerful male gods; a vague belief in a great god or supreme being, feasting, dancing and noisy processions as prominent features of ceremonial life, animal sacrifice and ritual offering; use of certain ritual objects as red power, grain, iron, peacock feathers and chains; a belief in reincarnation and more vaguely in karma.

The tribe will then have become a caste in full sense of the word and will go stripping itself of all customs likely to betray its true descent. During 1950-53 and 1956-59, when Sinha studied the Bhumij, he observed that Bhumij had moved even farther in the direction of Hinduization since Risley's times.

Barabhum is a developed area as compared to Bastar area. It is accessible by road. The northern part of the Pargana main estate of Barabhum is relatively plain and the whole area has been subjected to extensive deforestation. Bhumij is regarded as the earliest inhabitants of Pargana. They live in a demographically denser and ethnically heterogeneous region when compared with the Hill Maria.

The Bhumij, like the neighbouring Santhal and Mahato, are settled agriculturists cultivating rice with the plough. Agriculture is mainly subsistence-oriented and is not a major source for earning cash. The important cash crops are oilseeds and tobacco, but the main regular source of cash earning is rearing the lac resin on privately owned trees. Unlike the Maria, the Bhumij have strong concern for individual ownership of land.

The class does not have any corporate property other than the class ossuary site, and the lineage only exerts some pressure against sale or transfer of shares of ancestral landed property to people outside the group. The village headman holds the maximum acres of land rent free as service tenure and he also gets rent from his tenants in the village.

These various types of people include landowners, landless labourers, poor cultivators, substantial cultivators and the village headmen. Within this village of seven ethnic groups, the Bhumij own more than four-fifths of the land.

Although the Bhumij hold the bulk of the traditional feudal tenures and in a large number of villages

dominate land, ownership their dominance is not uniformly distributed over the region. As many as 49 villages were given to Brahmins as rent-free religious tenures by the king of Barabhum. In these villages, the Bhumij are subordinate tenure-holders. They are in subordinate tenure relation to other castes such as Mahato, Kayastha and Baniya in some villages in the Pargana.

Whereas there is not a single weekly market in the 1,500 square mile area on the Abujhmar Hill, the typical habitat of the Maria, the area of 635 square roots of Barabhum contains 12 weekly markets. At a distance of 3 to 5 miles, across to the one corner has a weekly market. The total number of ethnic groups participating in the market might be over 30.

Like the Maria, the Bhumij are divided into a number of patrilineal endogamous clans or gotras, which are affiliated with the respective ancestral villages where the class ossuaries are located. The clans tend to be localized around the ossuary village, but there is no clear-cut territory or corporate organization in terms of clan. The clans are segmented into functional patrilineages with equivalent status for the further segments. This imparts a sense of equality among the Bhumij families tied by kinship that may possess wealth quite differentially.

Apart from differential landholding and position in the land revenue hierarchy, the Bhumij are divided into several socio-ritually defined marriage classes, partly corresponding with the land revenue hierarchy. At the lowest rung are the 'degraded' Nichu and Patit strata, while the bulk belong to the Nagadi class, who have access to the ritual service of 'degraded' Brahmins, but do not abstain from taking non-vegetarian food or liquor.

The Ataishey classes are the one who also employ 'degraded' Brahmins but avoid taking chicken and liquor. The more prosperous ones aspire to be recognized as Rajput Kshatriyas, and it is likely that the royal Kshatriya lineage of Barabhum is also of Bhumij origin (Sinha, 1962).

The very demographic situation places the Bhumij within easy reach of a number of ethnic groups. And often, having a dominant position in the land revenue administration and in landholding, they have certain advantages in participating in inter-ethnic interactions. It is, therefore, not surprising

that whereas the Hill Maria participate quite remotely in stratified ranking in terms of caste, the Bhumij are more vividly involved in it.

Their participation in the regional caste system is indeed quite interactional. They have access to the ritual services of the Brahmin, Vaishnava, barber and washerman castes and some very low caste groups such as the Sahis, Dom and Ghasi, who serve as their midwives. A wider range of castes are tied to the Bhumij in terms of ceremonial friendship, participation in festivals, sharecropping and market relationship. In their desire to be recognized as Rajput Kshatriyas, the Bhumij have been intensely involved in social mobility movements under the guidance of the Ataishey upper class (Sinha, 1959).

The Bhumij has a strong feeling that they are the true autochthones of Barabhum, as their ancestors had cleared the forests to develop cultivable lands, and, as such, they look upon most of the ethnic groups of the Paragana, except Kharia and Pahira, as relative outsiders.

Beginning with their own groups, the Bhumij range the various ethnic groups of the region at different points of socio-cultural distance from them, beginning with the closest, roughly as follows:

1. Kharia, Pahira and Santhal, Hindu artisan castes, barber, washerman.
2. Mahato.
3. Brahmin, Vaishnava.
4. Rajput-Ksatriya.
5. 'Bengali' castes: Baniya, Kayastha, Tamil etc.
6. Bihari castes, with which the Bhumij do not share a common language (Sinha, 1957).

This evaluation is mainly based on their idea of relative exogenousness of the various groups mentioned above.

The Bhumij continues to worship many of their traditional gods and goddesses such as Marangburu (the Mountain God), various hill gods, gods and goddesses of the sacred grove and so on. But, the worship of these gods does not have the same prestige as worshipping the gods of the Hindu great tradition, such as Shiva, Durga and Kali.

Sinha, in his interaction with residents, found that a few Bhumij in the village of Madhupur became involved in self-conscious reflection on the Hindu ideological concepts under the influence of wandering Vaishnava sadhus. Some of these Bhumij were also literate and were quite capable of expounding the complex themes in such sacred texts such as Chaitanya Charitamrita Srimadbhagabat etc., to the non-literate within their limited social range (Sinha, 1953). The religious theme of the celestial love of Radha and Krishna provides a major stimulus to the composition of the songs and the dances of Barabhum.

The Bhumij shares a good lot of the Maria's sensuality, but this again is slightly toned down by a concern to appear good in the eyes of the upper caste Hindus. The zest for mixed dancing, drinking and festivity is opposed by reformist mobility movements (Sinha, 1959). Although a good deal of premarital sexual life is tolerated, there is also considerable overt concern about the chastity of the female folk.

The co-existence of segmentary and hierarchic principles in the social structure is reflected in the sphere of the value system. The Bhumij of the village of Madhupur, for example, look upon the headman as equal in terms of lineage membership, but also show some deference to him for holding a position of power, wealth and prestige.

The headman is more than primus interpres. The hierarchic principle is also expressed in male-female relationship, restricting the sphere of activity and freedom of movement of the females as one moves up the social hierarchy.

According to Sinha, the position of the Bhumij in the regional caste system comes out in relief if we compare them with the partially hunting and gathering Kharia and Pahria, who live in isolated hamlets in the foothills of Pargana Barabhum. They are not only ecologically isolated but have not access to the services of the ritual specialist's castes too.

They have unusually simple notions about the regional caste hierarchy, are internally homogeneous and less puritanical than Bhumij in their notion of premarital sex and have very feeble knowledge of

the great tradition. They are comparable to the Hill Maria in many ways, other than the fact that their settlements are like scattered islands in an ethnically heterogeneous Pargana dominated by other castes.

Within the threshold of the caste and the peasant pole the Hill Maria was marked by intense isolation, clan and village solidarity, on the other hand the Bhumij was characterised by degree of social stratification and rank consciousness among these people which makes them hardly distinguishable from Hindu Caste. Risley in 1880's mentioned that A pure Dravidian race has lost their original language and now speak Bengali; they worship Hindu Gods in addition to their own and the more advanced among them employ Brahmans as family priests. They still retain a set of totemistic exogamous subdivisions closely resembling those of the Mundas and Santhals. But they are beginning to forget the totems which the names of subdivision denote, and the Santhals. But they are beginning to forget the totems which the names of subdivision denote, and the names themselves will probably soon be abandoned ritual pollution with reference to violation of the rule of tribal endogamy and sexual relationship with members of the lower castes and also with regard to acceptance of cooked food and water from members of the "smaller" caste block. But in spite of their well-developed concept of ritual pollution and having at least a simplified concept of caste hierarchy (without reference to the Varna order), the Hill Maria do not have access to ritual service from any such caste of critical importance as the Brahmin, barber or washerman castes. Caste ranking in this area is based on what Marriott has called "attributional" in contrast to "interactional" factors.

Barabhum is a developed area as compared to Bastar area. It is accessible by road. The northern part of the Pargana main estate of Barabhum is relatively plain and whole area has been subjected to extensive deforestation. Bhumij is regarded as the earliest inhabitants of Pargana. The Bhumij lives in a demographically denser and ethnically heterogeneous region when compared with the Hill Maria.

The Bhumij, like the neighbouring Santhal and Mahato are settled agriculturists cultivating rice with the plough. Agriculture is mainly subsistence oriented and is not a major source for earning cash. The important cash crops are oil seeds and tobacco, but the main regular source of cash earning is rearing the lac resin on privately owned trees. Unlike the Maria, the Bhumij have strong concern for individual ownership of land. The class does not have any corporate property other than the class ossuary site, and the lineage only exerts some pressure against sale or transfer of shares of ancestral landed property to people outside the group. The village headman holds maximum acres of land rent free as service tenure and he also gets rent from his tenants in the village. These various types of people include land owners; landless labourers, poor cultivators, substantial cultivators and the village headman. Within this village of seven ethnic groups, the Bhumij own more than 415th of the land of villages dominate land, ownership their dominance is not uniformly distributed over the region. As many as 49 villages were given to Brahmins as rent-free religious tenures by the King of Barabhum. In these villages, the Bhumij are subordinate tenure-holders. They are in subordinate tenure relation to other castes such as the Mahato, Kayastha, Sundi, and Baniya in some villages in the Pargana.

Sinha stated that whereas there is not a single weekly market in the 1500 square mile area on the Abujmarh Hill, the typical habitat of the Maria, the area of 635 squares roots of Barabhum contain 12 weekly markets. At a distance of 3 to 5 miles, across to the one corner has a weekly market. The total number of ethnic groups participating in the market night is over 30.

Like the Maria, the Bhumij are divided into a number of patrilineal endogamous clans or gotras, which are affiliated with the respective ancestral villages where the class ossuaries are located. The clans tend to be localized around the ossuary village, but there is no clear-cut clan territory or corporate organisation in terms of clan. The clans are segmented into functional patrilineages with equivalent status for the further segments. This imparts a sense of equality among the Bhumij families tied by kinship that may possess wealth quite differentially.

Apart from differential land holding and position in the land revenue hierarchy, the Bhumij are divided into several socio-ritually defined marriage classes, partly corresponding with the land revenue hierarchy. At the lowest rung are the 'degraded' Nichu and Patit strata, while the bulk belong to the Nagadi class, who have access to the ritual service of "degraded" Brahmins, but do not abstain from taking non-veg or liquor. The Ataishey class are the one who also employ 'degraded' Brahmins but avoid taking chicken and liquor. The more prosperous ones aspire to be recognized as Rajput Kshatriyas, and it is likely that the royal Kshatriya lineage of Barabhum is also of Bhumij origin (Sinha, 1962).

The very demographic situation places the Bhumij within easy reach of a number of ethnic groups. And often having a dominant position in the land revenue administration and in land-holding; they have certain advantages in participating in inter-ethnic interaction. It is, therefore, not surprising that whereas the Hill Maria participate quite remotely in stratified ranking in terms of caste, the Bhumij are more vividly involved in it. Their participation in the regional caste system is indeed quite interactional. They have access to the ritual services of the Brahmin, Vaishnava, Barber and Washerman castes & some very low caste groups such as the Sahis, Dom & Ghasi, who serve as their midwives. A wider range of castes is tied to the Bhumij in terms of ceremonial friendship, participation in festivals, share cropping and market relationship. In their desire to be recognized as Rajput Kshatriyas, the Bhumij have been intensely involved in social mobility movements under the guidance of the Ataishey upper class.

The Bhumij has a strong feeling that they are the true autochthones of Barabhum as their ancestors had cleared the forests to develop cultivate lands, and, as such, they look upon most of the ethnic groups of the Pargana, except Kharia and the Paharia, as relative outsiders. Beginning with their own groups, the Bhumij range the various ethnic groups of the region at different points of socio-cultural distance from them, beginning with the closest, roughly as follows:

- (1) the Kharia, Pahira and the Santai, Hindu artisan castes, Barbers, Washerman
- (2) Mahato

- (3) Brahman, Vaishnava
- (4) Rajput - Kshatriya
- (5) 'Bengali' castes: Baniya, Kayastha, Tamil etc.

Bihari castes, with which the Bhumij do not share a common language (Sinha, 1957). This evaluation is mainly based on their idea of relative exiguity of the various groups mentioned above.

The Bhumij continues to worship many of their traditional gods and goddesses such as Marangburu (the Mountain God), various hill gods, gods and goddesses of the scared Grove and so on. But the worship of these gods does not have the same prestige as worshipping the gods of the Hindu Great Tradition such as Shiva, Durga and Kali.

Sinha in his interaction with residents found that the a few Bhumij in the village of Madhupur became involved in self-conscious reflection on the Hindu theological concepts under the influence of wandering Vaishnava sadhus. Some of these Bhumij were also literate and were quite capable of expounding the complex themes in such sacred texts as chaitanya charitamrita srinabdhagabat, etc. to the non-literate Bhumij listeners. These Bhumij's certainly operated as the 'literate' commenting on the Great Traditional within their limited social range (Sinha, 1953). The religious theme of the celestial love of Radha and Krishna provides a major stimulus to the composition of the songs and the dances of Barabhum.

The Bhumij shares a good lot of the Maria's sensuality; but this again, is slightly toned down by a concern to appear good in the eyes of the upper caste Hindus. The zest for mixed dancing, drinking and festivity is opposed by reformist mobility movements (Sinha, 1959). Although a good deal of premarital sex life is tolerated there is also considerable overt concern about the Chastity of the female folk.

The co-existing of segmentary and hierarchic principles in the social structure is reflected in the sphere of the value system. The Bhumij of the village of Madhupur, for example, look upon the headman as on equal in terms of lineage membership, but also show some deference to him for holding a position of power, wealth and prestige. The headman is more than primus interprets. The

hierarchic principle is also expressed in male-female relationship, restricting the sphere of activity and freedom of movement of the female as one moves up the social hierarchy.

According to Sinha the position of the Bhumij in the regional caste system comes out in relief if we compare them with the partially hunting and gathering kharia and Pahira who live in isolated hamlets in the foot hill of Pargana Barabhum. They are not only ecologically isolated but have no access to the service of the ritual specialist castes. They have unusually simple notions about the regional caste hierarchy, are internally homogeneous and less puritanical than Bhumij in their notion of premarital sex and have very feeble knowledge of the Great Traditions. They are comparable to the Hill Marias in many ways; other than the fact their settlements are like scattered island in an ethnically heterogeneous Pargana dominated by other castes.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Note: Write your answers in the space given below.

I) Which tribal group Suarjit Sinha studied? Tick the right one.

- a) Hill Maria Gond
- b) Khasi Tribe
- c) Santhal Tribal
- d) Oraon Tribe

II) Write a short note on the tribal culture described by Sinha.

.....
.....
.....

Answer: I) a

• **Difference between Hill Maria and Bhumij Tribes**

Sinha differentiates between Hill Maria and Bhumij tribes. According to him, it involves a sharp swing from near the ideal 'tribe' pole to near the 'peasant' and 'caste' pole. There is a systematic and yet sharp progression towards lessening of ecological isolation and increase in ethnic heterogeneity in regional demographic pattern and in social interaction, social stratification and

emergence of indigenous elite class and enlargement and diversification of the network of spatially defined social relationship with civilization Centre's.

In cultural structure also, the movement is towards the development of regional cultural heterogeneity in terms of ethnic diversity, social stratification and role specialization, greater inclusion of Hindu great tradition and of ethical slant in religion, and greater emphasis on puritanical values.

The final contours of the two polarities are guided by the degree of ethnic heterogeneity and the degree of the complexity and hierarchy in the pattern of interaction between and within the ethnic groups of a religion.

In case of Bhumij, according to Sinha, population density, ethnic heterogeneity and social hierarchy in the area are sustained by settled plough cultivation, regional craft and market organization and the supervisory role of the chief in the hierarchic land revenue organization of the Pargana. It cannot, however, be stated that technological evolution, population growth and increase in settlement size could generate a caste system in a tribal area.

<p>Table 2 <i>The Hill Maria Gond and the Bhumij and their Level of Complexity</i></p>	
Tribe (Hill Maria Gond, Madhya Pradesh)	Caste Peasant Bhumij (West Bengal and Bihar)
<i>Ecology</i>	
Hill and forest	2/3 plain; 1/3 forest
<i>Ethnic Complexity</i>	
Uni-ethnic villages	Average village contains six ethnic groups
Uni-ethnic tribal tract	The Bhumij form 15% of the population of Pargana Barabhum containing 64 ethnic groups
<i>Technology and Economy</i>	
Swidden	Wet rice cultivation
No market with the tribal tract	Market at regular intervals of 3-5 miles
Community ownership of swidden land	A hierarchic land revenue organization involving at least four levels of sub-infendation
<i>Stratification</i>	
Internal stratification practically none	Considerable feudalization of the political structure and corresponding recognition of at least three nearly endogamous socio-ritual classes
<i>Caste-like Interaction</i>	
Ranked in three strata	20 to 28 ranks
Non-tribal ritual specialists employed	At least four categories of caste employed

The kind of regularity in progression revealed by comparing two societies so obviously apart in their possible position in his ideally conceived continuum may mislead to imagine that it may be a simple task to evaluate the relative position of more nearly related societies on the proposed continuum.

It is quite likely that within the proximal range, all the criteria used in defining the continuum will not move at the same rate. A group may be ahead of another in market participation but behind in sharing great tradition gods and ethical slant in religion.

Tribal Movements

There have been a series of ethnic (tribal) rebellions during the early days of the British rules in the 18th and 19th centuries: Sardar Larai (1885) and Birsa Movement (1895-1900) among the Munda; Ganganarain Hangama (1832) among the Bhumij; Kol Rebellion (1832); Santhal Rebellion (1857-58); Rebellion of the Kacha Nagas (1880s), and so on.

Here, Sinha is not concerned with all categories of social movements among the tribes. On all categories of social movements, one may refer to Mahapatra's paper on "Social Movements among Tribes in Eastern India with special Reference to Orissa" (Mahapatra, 1968). In his paper on "Tribal Solidarity Movements in India", Sinha (1972) deals social movements in context of the self-conscious socio-political movement aimed at asserting political solidarity of a tribe or a group of tribe's vis-a-vis the non-tribals. Therefore, his focus, as an anthropologist, is on political solidarity with exploring the social and cultural context of the movements.

Sinha views that one of the major roots of tribal solidarity movements arise out of ecological-cultural isolation, economic backwardness, a feeling of frustration vis-a-vis the advanced sections. Tribes, who are either too isolated or too integrated with the Hindu social system, are not involved in these movements. The policy implications of this analysis are obvious: there should be provisions for larger economic opportunities and greater understanding with the emerging core of the Indian national culture.

Although it is true that these movements are guided by minority of emerging elite, it would be oversimplification to look into the phenomenon exclusively from the perspective of sub-nationalism engineered by a few self-seeking elites. Sinha discovers in these movements both a process of progressive enlargement of socio-political and cultural experience beyond the primitive tribal units and also a process of drawing solidarity boundaries around the expanded horizon vis-a-vis the Indian core.

The review also suggests certain policy guidelines regarding the relatively unintegrated tribes. Assuming that the hitherto isolated tribes should be fully integrated with Indian national polity and the mainstream of the emerging national culture.

It may be proposed that economic opportunities made available to these areas should be a little ahead of the political opportunities and as far as possible, the economic opportunities should permeate a broad base of the population instead of being limited to an elite group.

Sinha argues that one need not, and should not, encroach upon 'the cultural autonomy' of these groups, arrangements should be made for greater acquaintance with the 'emerging core' of Indian national culture so that the elite as well as the masses are oriented towards the core pattern rather than seek an escape model in their search for new identity.

It appears that instead of taking an alarmist position about tribal solidarity movements, one should welcome the 'genuine' solidarity movements and resist the 'spurious' ones. The extent to which one is able to properly identify the 'genuine' tribal movements and meet them with 'genuine' nationalism, our task of building a new nation by integrating the relatively isolated tribes will be successful.

Framework for Research:

Sinha (1968) suggests a framework for deciding the topics for urgent research in social anthropology in India and a few general topics for investigations.

To Sinha, the urgent problems in social anthropology of the Indian population may be approached from at least three distinct vantage points:

- (a) Primitive groups may be selected for covering the missing links in our study of world culture.
- (b) Selections of groups and problems for a theoretical understanding of the totality of Indian society and culture as structures, patterns and processes.
- (c) Anthropological study of problems urgent needed in national reconstruction and development.

Limitations of Approach:

Sinha views that exclusive urgent attention on the ‘vanishing’ primitives has some essential limitations in the total perspective of Indian civilization:

- (1) First of all, the primitive tribes cover a very limited (though significant) dimension of the total complexity of Indian society and culture.
- (2) Even the primitives, except perhaps for the remote aboriginals of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, cannot be properly studied except as historically dependent categories of Indian civilization.
- (3) It is generally assumed that tribes are changing at a faster rate than the castes. Except for a few extreme cases like the Great Andamanese, the above assumption is not based on systematic examination of facts.
- (4) The cry of alarm about vanishing customs need not be stretched in the case of the Indian population. Our general impression is that social structures and cultural patterns of the marginal tribes are not changing as such a fast rate as to induce to take up a large-scale crash programme in salvage anthropology in terms of ad hoc search for vanishing customs at the cost of a systematic study of the total society and culture in India.

Perspective of Indian Civilization:

The above limitations in the ad hoc search for vanishing customs among the so-called ‘vanishing’

primitive tribes in India lead to emphasize the choice of urgent problems in the perspective of the totality of the Indian civilization.

Urgent anthropological research may be directed towards fully documenting the traditional core of the civilization in terms of significant contemporary social and cultural forms. This approach does not ignore the primitive strata, but only views the latter in the context of the dominant core of the civilization.

Here, again, the choice of problems may be guided by emphasis on either of the following concerns:

- (a) Study of forms and processes which are rapidly changing.
- (b) Phasing of research in such a way that certain programmes are first systematically completed on an urgent basis so that the next stages of research may be taken up on the basis of sound ground work.

Sinha suggests that the primary emphasis should be on the second approach while paying sufficient attention to the rapidly changing groups and traits.

He points out the following areas of research:

- (a) Studies on social and cultural economy
- (b) Studies on ethnic groups
- (c) Studies on local communities
- (d) Studies on regional and all-India networks and Centre's
- (e) Studies on organization of specialists
- (a) Studies on Social and Cultural Economy**

Assuming that we know something about the varied social and cultural organizations of agriculture through the village studies since 1950, very little work has been done in the fields of social and cultural economy of the artisans, fisherfolk, nomads and traders.

(b) Studies on Ethnic Groups

The socio-cultural field of India may also be conceived as clusters of several categories of ethnic groups living in villages and towns: tribes, Hindu castes, religious minorities etc. There is a need to conduct studies on a broad regional or all-India perspective. Dumont's study of the Pramalai Kallar (1957), Pradhan's work on the Jat (1966), and the earlier monographs on Mahar (Robertson, 1938), the Chamar (Briggs, 1920), and the Dom (Briggs, 1953) are exceptions.

Therefore, all-India studies may be taken up on a few selected categories of castes: Brahmins, Rajputs, Kayasthas, some untouchable castes, selected artisan castes, traders (spice vendors and bullion merchants) and fisher folk. It would be worthwhile to study the Moslems in different regions of India as a special project. Similarly, a study of the Jains may also be taken up.

(c) Studies on Local Communities

Although we have several anthropological studies on village communities since 1950, there is a need to study urban communities, especially the relatively ancient towns of various functional categories located in different cultural regions of India. This would provide us an understanding of the traditional urban base of the Indian civilization.

(d) Studies of Regional and All-India Networks and Centre's

It is known that apart from ethnic groups, villages and towns, social and cultural forms are stabilized in terms of wide regions such as former zamindaries and feudatory states, dialects and language areas and all-India networks of math's and sects, etc. Therefore, it is essential to do studies on zamindaries and feudatory states, the regional pattern of inter-group interaction, stratification and the regional synthesis of styles of life.

(e) Studies on Organization of Specialists

Any civilization has its own mode of organizing specialists who live in urban as well as rural centres. It is known that the ancient pattern of learning Sanskrit as well as many of the higher arts, such as classical music, dance, painting and sculpture, have undergone considerable change due to competition with emergent new forms and cultural demands in the society and also due to the

decline of traditional patronage.

Therefore, studies may be taken up on a few important centres of traditional Sanskrit learning in different regions of India and also study of the traditional, colleges or associations and their roles in giving judgments on social norms. The mode of transmission of styles among some of the important schools (gharanas) of classical music and dance may also be taken up.

13.4 LET US SUM UP

Sinha's study attempts to track the linkage between tribe and caste. It also reflects how the isolated groups are brought into mainstream. Sinha tried to summarize the differences between the Hill Maria and Bhumij. According to him, it involves a sharp swing from near the ideal tribe pole to near the peasant and caste pole. There is a systematic and yet sharp progression towards lessening of ecological isolation and increase in ethnic heterogeneity in regional demographic pattern and in social interaction, social stratification and emergence of indigenous elite class and enlargement and diversification of the network of spatially defined social relationship with civilizational centres. In culture structure also the movements are toward the development of regional cultural heterogeneity in terms of ethnic diversity, social stratification and role specialization, greater inclusion of Hindu Great Traditions and of ethical slant in religion, and greater emphasis on puritanical values.

The final contours of the two polarities are guided by the degree of ethnic heterogeneity and the degree of the complexity and hierarchy in the pattern of interaction between and within the ethnic groups of a region. In the case of Bhumij, according to Sinha population density, ethnic heterogeneity and social hierarchy in the area are sustained by settled plough cultivation, regional craft and market organisation and the supervisory role of the chief in the hierarchic land revenue organisation of the Pargana. It cannot however be stated that technological evolution, population growth and increase in settlement size could generated a caste system in a tribal area.

13.5 GLOSSARY

1. **Culture:** A civilization's distinctive outlook is given by its culture.
2. **Technology:** Technology is an essential part of civilization, allowing people to do many things without the need for slaves.
3. **Religion:** Religion is a pillar of a progressive civilization.
4. **Moral traits:** Praiseworthy moral traits are the foundation of civilization and are essential for the survival of any society.
5. **Common system of measurements:** A common system of measurements allows people to understand the same quantity of an object or distance.

13.6 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- Q1. Discuss Surjit Sinha's approach for understanding Indian society.

- Q2. Discuss the contribution of Sinha on Bhumij tribes.

- Q3. Discuss Sinha's understanding of tribe-caste continuum.

13.7 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Roy, S. 1970; *Anthropologist in India*, Indian Anthropological Association, Calcutta.
2. Cohn, B.S; 2000; *India: the Social Anthropology of a civilization*, oxford Univ. Press New Delhi.
3. Desai, A.R. 1969; *Rural Society in India*, Popular Prakashan, Bombay.

SUBALTERN PERSPECTIVE:

DAVID HARDIMAN

STRUCTURE

- 14.0 Objectives
- 14.1 Introduction
- 14.2 The Concept of Subaltern
- 14.3 David Hardiman's Study of the Devi Movement
- 14.4 Let Us Sum Up
- 14.5 Glossary
- 14.6 Self-Assessment Questions
- 14.7 Suggested Readings

14.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Discuss the idea of Subaltern in India.
- Get knowledge Hardiman's work on the subaltern studies.

14.1 INTRODUCTION

The present unit will discuss the Subaltern viewpoint and assess critically the Sociology of India and the absence of voice of the marginalised (peasants/tribals/ Scheduled Castes') in the major writings of history. Initially we will discuss the concept of subaltern, coined by Italian scholar Antonio Gramsci. The term got much more popular with the development of colonial studies, especially when a new trend in history started in writing the history of the peasants' insurgency or rebellion and tribal uprisings in South Asia. A group of scholars started a new trend, like Ranajit Guha, David Hardiman, Partha Chatterjee, Shahid Amin, Gyanendra Pandey, David Arnold, Sumit Sarkar, Dipesh Chakrabarty and others. Along with some of these scholars the role of Ambedkar will also be taken up because he worked for the emancipation, upliftment and liberation of the Dalits in India.

14.2 THE CONCEPT OF SUBALTERN

The term 'subaltern' was coined by Antonio Gramsci. Initially it was widely used to denote inferior rank in army, but nowadays, the term subaltern implies people of inferior rank for his/her various attributes such as economic condition, race, ethnicity, gender, caste, sexual orientation and people are marginalised for such attributes. Thus, subaltern perspective is the way to understand society from the below. The people who are marginalized for various reasons in a stratified society produce knowledge and have politics of their own. The dominant historiography or writing of history and study however excludes them from their concerns.

Subaltern perspective looks into those who are neglected and marginalized and contrasts it with the elite perspective. Italian Neo-Marxist Antonio Gramsci initiated the concept of subaltern in his Prison Notebooks to signify marginalised people. In general, subaltern implies people who are of inferior ranks, but Gramsci uses the term in much broader sense than its general meaning. By subaltern, he meant all kinds of non-hegemonic those who did not occupy powerful and upper-class

status groups in a class divided society. As such, subaltern implies group or individuals who are outside the power structure. They are made subaltern or subordinated by the dominant hegemonic power structures and they suffer under dominant power relations.

The term subaltern came into popular academic debate after a group of scholars started publishing series of essays and volumes under the title Subaltern Studies on the tribal movement and peasant insurgencies and rebellions of colonial India. It is evident that apart from the mainstream nationalist movement the colonial power faced various tribal uprisings and peasant's insurgencies in India. Such resistance and movements were ignored by the mainstream historiography or the study of writing histories.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-I

Note: Write your answers in the space given below.

1) What is subaltern perspective.

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2) Who were the major Indian scholars who studied Subaltern perspective.

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14.3 DAVID HARDIMAN'S: SUBALTERN STUDIES

Like Ranajit Guha David Hardiman is also one of the core members of the subaltern historiography movement in India. He focused mainly on the history of South Asia during the colonial period. In his works, he emphasises on the impact of colonial rule on the rural society and their assertions. His analysis of Indian nationalism and independence movement has given new insights in understanding

the local power structure and nationalism. He examined the role of local peasants' activities and Adivasi (tribal) assertions during the colonial time especially in western India. He has used ethnographic and archival sources to analyze movements of western India to promote the subaltern studies in India. He has studied the Devi movement which took place in Gujarat during 1922-23. It was Adivasi tribal movement by tribal peasants against the moneylenders, landlords and liquor shop owners Hardiman in his article titled "Adivasi Assertion in South Gujarat: The Devi Movement" discusses about the assertion of the Adivasis against the liquor dealers for the harmful effects of liquor on the people of their community. The colonial Abkari Act of 1878 banned all local manufacture of liquor and permitted a central distillery at the headquarter town of the district.

The liquor dealers used to pay large amount of money to the government to run the distilleries in addition to the license to sell the liquor in the tribal villages. The distribution of liquor badly affected the lower caste people, especially the Adivasis. Hardiman narrates the adverse effects in his article. In spite of certain control over liquor sellers they continued to have a monopoly on the sale of factory-made alcohol and its distribution amongst the clusters of villages of Adivasis. The excise officials were being bribed for distribution of factory-made liquor and illicit distillation (Hardiman 2013: 203-4). The profit made by the money lending and liquor selling by them was huge being and was invested by them in land. The Adivasi community was affected and got addicted to drinking. Their lands were mortgaged or sold to the liquor shop owners. The Adivasi peasants could gradually realise how the liquor barons in their own villages are exploiting them, although they failed to articulate and protest against such exploitations because of the dominant oppressors like the liquor. But the feeling of exploitation led them to protest among the Adivasi subaltern groups could no longer be suppressed by the dominant liquor barons.

An interesting incident took place in 1922 as a new tradition started in the western part of Gujarat which Hardiman calls as 'Devi' movement. Hardiman found that early in 1922 an epidemic of smallpox broke out in the coastal areas of Gujarat amongst the subaltern fishermen communities. They believed that the smallpox was caused by a goddess and they need to satisfy the goddess to get

rid of the epidemic. They started organising ceremonies to satisfy the deity (Shamans by the goddess). It is through Shamans (women being possessed) that the goddess passed the information that she would be satisfied if they gave up eating, fish, meat and drinking liquor, toddy. The people followed her advice. The Devi movement started to be known as Sarabhai. Slowly the process of shamanism through human beings had spread in the Adivasi villages and they also started practicing Shamanism. The Adivasi peasants used to gather together to listen to the women possessed by Devi. To fulfil Devi's demands to refrain from drinking liquor and toddy, flesh and meat, along with having regular bath. The effect of 49 Subaltern Critique this was that most Adivasis socially boycotted the Parsi liquor shop owners and the landlords, resulting into the Adivasis starting social reforms among themselves. Their assertions resulted in loss of business by the liquor barons, although efforts were made by the liquor barons to bring the Adivasis back to their old habits of drinking liquor but they refused and refrained themselves and their belief in Devi helped them to avoid liquor.

During the mainstream anti-colonial movement, Gandhiji incorporated Adivasis in his movement because of their tendency of assertion and their political voice, observed Hardiman. In South Gujarat, the Adivasis were considered as the passive object of colonial policy. The Gandhian nationalists of Gujarat brought them into the nationalist movement. in alliance with the middle-class. With the help of the local narratives, memories, songs as well as the archival materials, Hardiman examined the role of Adivasis not only in their assertion against the money lenders, liquor barons and the anti-liquor movement but also in the nationalist movement and social reformation. Independent of outside help, they tried to break the feudal structure of money lenders and the colonial resource base. Hardiman has undertaken a detailed study of local areas of Kheda district in Gujarat among the peasants of the area. "His ethnographic account reveals that the middle peasantry is relatively radical as compared to poor and landless Adivasi peasants of the villages in the district.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-II

Note: Write your answers in the space given below.

1) What did Hardiman's study of the Devi Movement explain about the Adivasis.

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14.4 LET US SUM UP

In this lesson we explained the concept of subaltern and the views of David Hardiman on the subaltern. The discussion on Adivasi and Dalit subaltern perspectives' gives us the scope to explore the idea of subaltern and to discuss society from the subaltern point of view. The subaltern writing of history is a critique from within and outside. The essay on "Can Subaltern Speak" by Gayatri Spivak is a milestone on the debate on Dalit subaltern. The 'voices from below' cannot be missed and ignored. The debates on the theory and methodology of the subaltern historiography and subaltern studies offer the scope to the historians and other social scientists to give due attention to the assertions by the subaltern and politics by the peasants and other subaltern classes.

14.5 GLOSSARY

1.Subaltern: A term used to describe a person who is of inferior rank or status, or who has been marginalized or oppressed. It can also refer to the subordination of class, caste, gender, race, language, and culture.

2.Postcolonial theory: In postcolonial theory, the term subaltern describes the lower social classes and the other social groups displaced to the margins of a society.

3.Dalits: In Hindu society's Varna system, the lower caste people are referred to as Dalits.

4.History from Down Below: A term used by British Historian, E.P. Thomson to describe the subaltern perspective

14.6 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q1. What did Hardiman's study of the Devi Movement explain about the Adivasis.

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Q2. What is subaltern perspective.

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Q3. Who were the major Indian scholars who studied Subaltern perspective.

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14.7 SUGGESTED READINGS

1.Dhanagare, D. N. 1988. "Subaltern Consciousness and Populism: Two Approaches in the Study of Social Movements in India". Social Scientist. Vol. 16, No. 11. 18-35

2.Gandhi, M.K. 1990, 'A Vindication of Caste', Annihilation of Caste: An Undelivered Speech, Arnold publishers, New Delhi.

3.Guha, Ranajit. 1983. Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India, Delhi: OUP.

4.Guha, Ranajit. 2013. "On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India" in Subaltern Studies Writing on South Asian History and Society. Vol. I. New Delhi: OUP.

5.Hardiman, David. 2013. "Adivasi Assertion in South Gujarat: The Devi Movement" in Ranajit Guha (ed). Subaltern Studies Writing on South Asian History and Society. Vol. III. New Delhi: OUP.

SUBALTERN PERSPECTIVE:

RANAJIT GUHA

STRUCTURE

15.0	Objectives
15.1	Introduction
15.2	Ranajit Guha and Subaltern Studies
15.3	Let Us Sum Up
15.4	Glossary
15.5	Self-Assessment Questions
15.6	Suggested Readings

15.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to:

- Discuss the idea of Subaltern in India.
- Get knowledge Ranajit Guha's work on the subaltern studies.

15.1 INTRODUCTION

The present lesson will discuss the Subaltern viewpoint and assess critically the Sociology of India and the absence of voice of the marginalised (peasants/tribals/ Scheduled Castes') in the major writings of history.. The term got much more popular with the development of colonial studies, especially when a new trend in history started in writing the history of the peasants' insurgency or rebellion and tribal uprisings in South Asia. A group of scholars started a new trend, like Ranajit Guha, David Hardiman, Partha Chatterjee, Shahid Amin, Gyanendra Pandey, David Arnold, Sumit Sarkar, Dipesh Chakrabarty and others. Along with some of these scholars the role of Ambedkar will also be taken up because he worked for the emancipation, upliftment and liberation of the Dalits in India.

15.2 RANAJIT GUHA: SUBALTERN STUDIES

The subaltern studies which emerged in India as a post-colonial theory is about rewriting history of the people. This project is mostly credited to Ranajit Guha and his colleagues such as Partha Chatterjee, David Hardiman, Shahid Amin, Gyanendra Pandey, David Arnold, Sumit Sarkar and Dipesh Chakrabarty. The subaltern historiography i.e. the methods of studying history is concerned with the "history of the subaltern people". The basic premise of the subaltern history was to look at the history from below or the history of the subaltern people as opposed to the elitist perspective in history which ignores their contributions in making of history. Dhanagare (1988) has pointed out that the subaltern historiography approach seeks to restore a balance by highlighting the role of politics of the people as against elite politics played in Indian history. According to Guha, the subaltern historiography focuses on the peasants and tribal movements during colonial period in India as it has been overlooked by the dominant mainstream elitist historiography. To him, the neglect of the politics of the people and the contributions of the subaltern classes in the nationalist movement makes Indian history incomplete. Further, according to him, the elitist historiography has

the tendency to analyse Indian nationalism and freedom struggle as an idealist venture of the indigenous elites who led people from subjugation to freedom. Such historiography emphasises the role of the individual leaders or of organisations and institutions as the major force during the freedom struggle. Dhanagare (1988) asserts that ‘the followers of this approach argue that elitist historiography, whether of the neo-colonialist or of the neo-nationalist variety, has always overstated the part the elite played in building Indian nationalism but it has failed to acknowledge and less properly interpret the contributions made by the people (masses) on their own, independently’.

Guha (2013) in his article entitled “Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India,” argues that the historiography of the Indian nationalism was dominated by these elitists who were the colonial and bourgeois nationalist. This type of historical writing gives the impression that the Indian nation and the consciousness of nationalism was an achievement of only the elites. The contributions made by the people in this regard have no relevance. Although they have made their contribution during the freedom struggle, ‘independent of the elite’ in making and development of the Indian nationalism. On the other hand, the elitist perspective of history writing portrays their articulation and uprising as the law-and-order problem. The one-sided perspective considers Indian nationalism as the response of the charisma of certain elite leaders. Thus, the subaltern historiography overlooks the politics of the people. The subaltern historiographers argue that there was politics of the subaltern classes in the nationalist movement parallel to the politics of the dominant elites. Their politics did not originate from the elite politics and did not depend on their elite politics. For them the subaltern is an autonomous domain.

Thus, subaltern approach in studying the peasants and tribal movements in India is an important milestone because it examines the politics of the people and in opposition to the politics of the elites. Dhanagare (1988) argues for and constructed a twofold division between the ‘people’ and the ‘elite’. Both are viewed as two domains of the nationalist movement. He constructs structural dichotomy or the divisions in the structure of society. The politics of the people did not come from

the politics of the dominant groups. They are the indigenous people, marginalised groups and classes of the labouring population and the intermediate strata in town and country. They are diverse groups of people who do not share common or uniform ideology but the interesting common feature among them was a notion of resistance to elite domination. The divisions and diversions among them create the problem of alliance which was not possible among them. Guha argues that many a times the elitist historiography of Indian nationalism tends to provide a personal account of the “goodness of the native elite who had antagonistic relations with the colonial regime. Although, they had the tendency as collaborationist exploiters and oppressors with no interest to promote the cause of the people. They were most concerned for power and privilege from the British Raj. According to Guha, the history of Indian nationalism is a sort of spiritual biography of Indian elites.

The movement, protest, resistance of the peasants, tribal and the marginalised groups during colonial period against the colonial power reflects varied 47 Subaltern Critique intensities. Their mobilisation and resistance independent of the elite emerged from people themselves. The subaltern historiography constructs the binary of the elite and the people. The mobilisation in the elite politics was achieved from above while the mobilisation in the subaltern politics was achieved from below. The subaltern politics and mobilisation were guided more by the traditional institutions like clan, caste, kinship, territoriality, family network, deprivation. The elite politics and mobilisation were governed more by legalistic and constitutional considerations. The subaltern mobilization was more violent, aggressive and spontaneous while the elite mobilisation was cautious, controlled and moderate.

Thus, the subaltern studies project was to create an alternative history, ‘the history of the people’. Guha discusses in *Elementary Aspects of the Peasants Insurgency in Colonial India* (1983) an interesting account of the peasants’ assertions, peasant’s consciousness, their mystic visions and religiosity and the social bond of their communities in his study of the 19th century peasant’s insurgency in colonial India. Since he is a Marxist subaltern historian, he interprets the past in order to bring about radical change in historiography and a radical transformation in consciousness. He

views that the peasant and tribal insurgents should not be considered as ‘objects’ of history but as ‘makers’ of their own history. They are endowed with a transformative consciousness of their own.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1) What does subaltern historiography overlook.

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2) What is the main theme of Ranajit Guha’s work on Subaltern perspective.

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15.3 LET US SUM UP

In this lesson we explained the concept of subaltern and the views of scholars like Ranajit Guha, David Hardiman and B.R Ambedkar on the subaltern. The discussion on Adivasi and Dalit subaltern perspectives’ gives us the scope to explore the idea of subaltern and to discuss society from the subaltern point of view. The subaltern writing of history is a critique from within and outside. The essay on “Can Subaltern Speak” by Gayatri Spivak is a milestone on the debate on Dalit subaltern. The ‘voices from below’ cannot be missed and ignored. The debates on the theory and methodology of the subaltern historiography and subaltern studies offer the scope to the historians and other social scientists to give due attention to the assertions by the subaltern and politics by the peasants and other subaltern classes.

15.4 GLOSSARY

1. **Subaltern:** A term used to describe a person who is of inferior rank or status, or who has been marginalized or oppressed. It can also refer to the subordination of class, caste, gender, race, language, and culture.
2. **Dalits:** In Hindu society's Varna system, the lower caste people are referred to as Dalits.
3. **History from Down Below:** A term used by British Historian, E.P. Thomson to describe the subaltern perspective

15.5 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q1. What is the main theme of Ranajit Guha's work on Subaltern perspective.

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Q2. Who were the major Indian scholars who studied Subaltern perspective.

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15.6 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Dhanagare, D. N. 1988. "Subaltern Consciousness and Populism: Two Approaches in the Study of Social Movements in India". *Social Scientist*. Vol. 16, No. 11. 18-35
2. Gandhi, M.K. 1990, 'A Vindication of Caste', *Annihilation of Caste: An Undelivered Speech*, Arnold publishers, New Delhi.
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4. Guha, Ranajit. 2013. "On Some Aspects of the Historiography of Colonial India" in *Subaltern Studies Writing on South Asian History and Society*. Vol. I. New Delhi: OUP.

SUBALTERN PERSPECTIVE: B.R. AMBEDKAR

STRUCTURE

16.0	Objectives
16.1	Introduction
16.2	B.R. Ambedkar: His life Sketch
16.3	Ambedkar and Dalitisation of Untouchables
16.4	Central Idea: Liberation - A Subaltern approach
16.5	Let us Sum Up
16.6	Glossary
16.7	Self-Assessment Questions
16.8	Suggested Readings

16.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this lesson is to:

- To make you understand about B.R. Ambedkar life.
- To equip with the central ideas of Ambedkar.
- To make you understand about Ambedkar as social reformer.
- To emphasize subaltern perspective in Ambedkar's work.

16.1 INTRODUCTION

Indian society has been hierarchical in nature and egalitarianism has been its main stance. The hierarchical and in egalitarian structure of Indian society came into existence during the period of Manu smriti. It was Manu smriti which set the tenor of social discrimination based on birth. This in turn led to economic degradation and political isolation of one section of the society now popularly known as Dalits. Dalits are the poor, neglected and downtrodden. Their social disabilities were specific, severe and numerous. Their touch, shadow or even voice was considered by the caste Hindus to be polluting. They were not allowed to use certain metals for ornaments, to eat a particular type of food, to use a particular type of footwear, to wear a particular type of dress and were forced to live in the outskirts of the village towards which the wind blows and dirt flows. The doors of the Hindu temples were closed for them and their children were not allowed into the schools by the Hindu caste children. Their hereditary occupation includes sweeping, scavenging, shoe making, carcasses etc.

Generally, the word Dalit includes those who are designated in administrative parlance as Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and other backward classes. However, in common political discourse, the term Dalit is so far mainly referred to Scheduled Castes. The term Scheduled Caste was used for the first time by British in Government of India Act 1935. Prior to this, the untouchable castes were known as depressed classes in public discourse. Mahatma Gandhi gave them the name Harijan man of God. Gandhi himself did not coin the name. He borrowed the name from a Bhakti saint of the 17th century Narsimha Mehta. The name '*Harijan*' became popular during 1931. Gandhi apprehended this move as a step towards the disintegration of Hinduism. By terming Antyajas as '*Harijans*' Gandhi tried to persuade caste Hindus to drop their prejudices against the achchutas i.e. untouchables. The purpose to adopt this new nomenclature of Harijan for the untouchables was to induce change in the heart and behaviour of the Hindu towards untouchables. At the same time, it was hoped that this new name would be accepted by the untouchables who would try to cultivate the virtues which it connotes. The terms Harijan got further recognition as an emancipatory

nomenclature in the formation of *Harijan Sewak Sangh*, an organisation established for the purpose of uplifting of the Dalit's under the aegis of the Congress. A weekly '*Harijan*' was also started by Gandhi to provide voice for the cause of the downtrodden. However, Ambedkar disagreed with changing names for the redressal of the structural hindrances in the way of the untouchables. To him it did not make any difference when the downtrodden were called '*achuta*' or Harijan 'as the new nomenclature did not change their status in the social order.

16.2 B. R. AMBEDKAR: HIS LIFE SKETCH

Bhimaro Ramji Ambedkar, popularly known as Babasaheb Ambedkar was born at Mhow in Central India on April 14, 1891. Babasaheb drew his surname not from the father whose surname was Sakpal. He took his surname 'Ambavadekar' from his ancestral village Ambavade a small town in the Ratnagiri district as Maharashtrian surnames are often derived from the names of their native villages. From Ambedkar it was changed into Ambedkar by his loving teacher whose own surname was Ambedkar.

Fourteenth child of Ranji Sakpal and Bhimabai, Ambedkar belonged to an untouchable caste Mahar. His family was famous for keeping the palanquin of the village goddess. On the yearly festival his family used to attract for attention of the whole village. His grandfather Maloji Sakpal was retired military personnel who served as a Havaladar in the Bombay army of the East India Company. His father also served in the army and rose to the rank of Subedar Major. He was head Instructor in a military school for about fourteen years. Although Ambedkar's family was known by its relatively higher status in comparison to other similar castes, whose inmates had also earned name by serving in the armed forces on good ranks, but all this could not save him from the torture of the stigma of untouchability.

The onslaught of untouchability was so rapid that it could not spare any institution of whatever kind. So, the institution of education was not free from the disease of discrimination based on low and

high dichotomies of both. Ambedkar and his brother were usually made to sit apart in the school on a piece of gunny bag, which they carried to school. The teacher would not care to check their homework. When they felt thirsty in the school, they were not allowed to drink water on their own and somebody would oblige them by pouring drinking water into their mouths as if through a funnel. It was during his school days that Ambedkar came to know what it meant to be an untouchable. One day during summer, Ambedkar and his brother along with his nephew were forced to travel a long distance without being allowed to drink water on the way. The only fault was that they being untouchables were travelling a bullock- cart and the god-fearing caste Hindu cart man to his warmth came to know that well- dressed boys in his cart were the accused untouchables. This horrible experience made Ambedkar realise that he belonged to a family that was untouchable and could not enjoy the life that of caste Hindus. Another bitter experience was the refusal by the barber to cut his hair lest the razor of the barber gets polluted. He used to get his hair cut by his sisters.

The life did not change for Ambedkar even in a big city Bombay where his father moved to with his family. In Bombay Ambedkar was first admitted to Maratha High School and after a few months was sent to the Elphinstone High School. Although the Elphinstone High School was one of the leading high schools in Bombay and also run by the Government, the life in the school was not free from caste prejudices "There were the same prejudice and the same hatredness. The school was a miniature reflection of the vast insulting world outside.

Discrimination in the school was not only confined to social aspects of the life, it had, infected the very fabric of the education system. Since the untouchables were forbidden by Shastras to read and hear Vedas. Ambedkar being an untouchable was not allowed to for Sanskrit as the second languages because its knowledge could help him to read Vedas.

Ambedkar passed the Matriculation examination in 1907 he joined Elphinstone College for higher studies with a scholarship of Rs 25 per months. The Scholarship was awarded by Maharaja Sayaji Rao of Baroda. He successfully completed his graduation in 1912. However, the evil of low caste

continued to follow him even in the college. After passing B.A. Ambedkar joined the Baroda State service. His graduation and state service could not come to his rescue from the clutches of untouchable. The peons in his office used to throw office files at him lest they become polluted.

In 1913, Ambedkar got an opportunity to go abroad for higher studies on a Baroda State scholarship. He joined Columbia University as a Gaekward Scholar. He was the first Mahar to study in a foreign University. He worked very hard and after two years he was awarded the MA degree in 1915 for his thesis "Ancient Indian Commerce". He continued with his long hours to concentration of Ph.D. entitled "National Dividend for India": A Historic and analytical Study". After eight years the original thesis was revised in the light of the Montagu Chelmsford Reforms with references to finance and published under the title "The Evaluation of the Provincial Finance in British India. In June 1916, he left the Columbia University to join the London School of economics and Political Science. He got admitted in October 1916 to the Gray's Inn for Laws and for study of economics to the London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). In LSE he was allowed in preparation of the degree of D. Sc (Economic) on account of his earlier advanced studies in economics. Ambedkar has to postpone his higher studies in London as the term of his scholarship was over and he was called back to India by the Dewan of Baroda. After a period of three years in September 1920 Ambedkar re-joined the LSE and also entered Gray's Inn to qualify as a barrister.

Writing of Ambedkar:

1. The untouchability, who are they?
2. Who were Sudra?
3. State and Minority
4. Annihilation of Caste
5. Emancipation of Untouchables

16.3 AMBEDKAR AND DALITISATION OF UNTOUCHABLES

The category of Dalit was used by no less a person than Ambedkar in his fortnightly called '*Bahiskrit Bharat*'. Though Ambedkar did not popularise the word Dalit for untouchables his

philosophy and action have contributed in its growth and popularity. The word Dalit is a common usage in Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati and many other Indian languages, meaning the poor and oppressed persons. It also refers to those who have been broken, ground down by those above them in a deliberate way. "It includes all the oppressed and exploited sections of surplus society. It does not confine itself merely to economic exploitation in terms of appropriation of surplus. It also relates to suppression of culture as a way of life and value system- and, more importantly, the denial of dignity. It has essentially emerged as a political category. For some, it connotes an ideology for fundamental change in the social structure and relationship. This word 'Dalit' indicates struggle for an egalitarian order and provides the concept of pride to the politically active Dalit's. The word Dalit gained currency through the writing of Marathi speaking literary writers in the early 1970s. "Dalit writers who have popularised the word have expressed their notion of Dalit identity in their essay, poem, dramas, autobiographies, novels and short stories. They have reconstructed their past and their view of the present. They have expressed their anger protest and aspiration.

"Dalit" is a by-product of the Ambedkar movement and indicates a political and social awareness. Ambedkar adopted a different approach and philosophy for the emancipation of Scheduled Caste. He wanted to liberate the Dalits by building an egalitarian social order which he believed was not possible within the fold of Hinduism whose very structure was hierarchical which relegated the Dalits to the bottom. Initially, he tried to seek emancipation of the Dalits by bringing transformation within the structure of Hinduism it involves his effort through opening the temples for the Dalits, multi-caste dinners and public donning of the sacred thread of the *savarnas*. However, Ambedkar came to realise soon that such an approach would not bring the desired result for the amelioration of the inhuman condition of the Dalits. He asserted that the Dalits should come forward and assert for their own cause. He gave them a mantra - Educate Organise and Agitate. He did not have faith in the charitable spirit of the caste Hindu towards the untouchables as it failed to bring any change in the oppressive social order. Ambedkar did not have any faith either in the Mahatmas or in Saints whose main emphasis was not on the struggle between man and man. Their philosophy was mainly

concerned with the relation between man and God.

Babasaheb B.R. Ambedkar himself a Dalit, and efforts to transform the hierarchical structures of Indian Society for the restoration of equal rights and justice to the neglected lot by building up a critique from within the structure of Indian society. His was not a theoretical attempt but a practical approach to the problems of untouchability. He tried to seek the solution to this perennial problem of the Indian society not by making moral appeals or bringing transformation in the outlook of the individual but seeking transformation in the socio-religious and politico-economic structures of the Indian society where he thought the roots of the untouchability lay. He thought that until and unless the authority of the Dharm Shashtra has been challenged which provide sacred basis to the system of discrimination based on the lofty supposition of the 'Prusha' from whose feet Shudras were allegedly born. It was his subaltern perspective, a perspective from below which helped him to come to the conclusion that untouchability was emanated neither from religious notions, nor from the much-popularised theory of Aryan conquest. He thought that it came into existence as a result of the struggle among the tribes at a stage when they were starting to settle down for a stable community living. In the process, the broken tribesmen were employed by the settled tribes as guards against the wandering bands. These broken tribesmen employed as guard became untouchables.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Note: Write your answers in the space given below.

1) What are the subaltern communities according to B. R Ambedkar.

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2) How did B R Ambedkar define Dalit hood.

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3) Discuss the efforts made by Ambedkar to help remove untouchability.

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4) Critically examine Ambedkar's views on the caste system.

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16.4 CENTRAL IDEA: LIBERATION A SUBALTERN APPROACH

The entry of Ambedkar into the Indian political arena during 1920s provided the issue of social reforms a new dimension; He was of the opinion that until and unless the downtrodden themselves come forward to fight their own battle, no one else could alleviate their grievances. No one else could better fight than them about their own state of affair. Ambedkar impressed upon the people to understand their own affairs themselves. Self-awakening, he believed could provide them necessary strength to fight against evils in society. Ambedkar exercise the spirit of despair from the mildest of dumb millions who had been forced to live the lives of sub-human beings. Here was an orator, preaching them the grand universal law that liberty is neither received as a gift; it has to be for Self-elevation is not achieved by the listening of others but, by courage and need a vision and a mission. Ambedkar inspired them to do battle for their human rights. He was driving them to action by acting himself. Ambedkar was displaying energy by his own action; arousing their faith by showing faith. The movement started by J. Phule was nearer to the real goal of Dalit liberation than that of the movements led by liberal reforms like Ranade. Gokhale and Karve who concentrated more on inducing reforms in the different setting of Hindu dominated society rather than its total

transformation. It was Ambedkar who provided for the first time to the Dalits a system of struggle which they could consider as their own. Although Phule had done the same before him in the 19th century, but Phule could not succeed as she did not belong to the untouchable, caste. Phule was born in Mali-Kunbi caste broadly consider Shudra but not 'untouchable while Ambedkar was born in the Mahar community which is untouchable caste. Another factor which distinguished Ambedkar from Phule was that the latter studied at local mission school but had no opportunity available to study abroad. Ambedkar stays abroad during his higher education exposed him to English political institutions, liberal democracy Babasaheb and the system of rule law, which cultivated in him a faith in parliamentary democracy as the best means for achieving the socio-economic liberation of the underprivileged sections of the Indian society. He was equally concerned with the cause of the freedom of India from the colonial Ambedkar said "I will demand what is rightful for my people and I will certainly uphold the demand for swaraj. However, Ambedkar was always concerned to highlight the cause of the downtrodden and even ready to redeem the same. At the first Round Table Conference he said that: One fifth of the total population of British India was reduced to a position of worse than that of a serf or a slave. He then declared to the surprise of all the untouchables in India were also for replacing the existing government by a government of the people, for the people and by the people. He said that this change in the attitudes of the untouchables to British Rule in India was surprising and a momentum phenomenon. And justification his stand, he observed with a rise in his voice and a glow in his eyes; 'when we compare our present position with the one which it was our lot to bear in Indian society of pre-British days, we find that, instead of marching on we are marking time. So, from the above it is clear that for Dr. Ambedkar, political freedom was as important as the social transformation of Indian society.

In his speech delivered at Bombay on 12 June 1951 Ambedkar said that the Scheduled Castes should come forward to cooperate with other communities in strengthening the newly won freedom. But at the same time, he cautioned his fellow beings to keep in view the interests of their community. He was sure that the Scheduled Castes could not capture political power by joining the Congress. To win,

guard and promote the interests of the untouchables, he emphasized that they should consolidate themselves under their own political party. Ambedkar was of firm belief that "however the caste Hindus worked hard for the welfare of the untouchable they did not know their mind. That was why he was fundamentally opposed to any organisation started by the caste Hindus for the uplifting of the Depressed Classes. His principal objective was to achieve a respectable place of existence for the downtrodden sections of the society to which he belonged. But at the same time, he was not ready to compromise with the cause of the Indian freedom. He too wanted swaraj but the contents of his conception of swaraj were more versatile than that of the Savarna leaders of the Indian Freedom movement. He accepted the responsibility of framing a constitution for independent India. He said "I feel now that it was the golden opportunity for me and my community".

It was his subaltern perspective which made him to think practically that the administration was unsympathetic to the Scheduled Castes because it was completely run by the officers who were relatives of the oppressors or were known to them. Had these officers belonged to the Scheduled Castes they would have given proper protection to their brethren. He was of the opinion that the high caste tyranny and oppression could be achieved by being inside the government, rather than by sitting outside. Ambedkar, a firm believer in the parliamentary form of government, impressed upon the Scheduled Castes and capture political power in the system of adult franchise.

Ambedkar was not only a visionary he tried his level best to translate his vision into a practical reality with the purpose of breaking the ladder less multi storied tower of Hindu society, he formed the Independent Labour Party in 1936 so as have a broad alliance of peasant workers and Scheduled Castes. In 1942 he formed another political party for defending the interests of the Scheduled Castes. That party was known as Scheduled Castes Federation (SCF). Although the SCF could not make a significant mark in the electoral political, it provided an alternative to the Dalits to think about capturing the political power by organising themselves into a political organisation. After the death of Ambedkar his close associates formed the Republican Party. Ambedkar hoped that the Republican Party would be a vehicle for all who sought to achieve the great goals surpassing the

narrow confines of the Scheduled Caste Federation" It shows that Ambedkar wanted to consolidate the downtrodden into a significant political force to guide them to achieve a dignified place in the Indian society. During his long journey of political struggle, he had come to realise that the issue of Dalit liberation and empowerment could never be genuinely taken up by the caste Hindus.

The Dalits themselves have to come forward to take up the herculean task of their emancipation and empowerment. He had no hopes from the caste Hindu to get any help in such a project. He had already burnt his fingers in Mahad agitation in 1927 where in spite of the resolution of Bombay State Assembly to declare all public open to untouchables the high caste Hindus violently resisted the untouchables attempt to public place. He suggested special rights for the Scheduled Castes during the Round Table Conferences, in the form of special electorate. The clash with Gandhi not only shook Ambedkar's faith in the legal method of redressing grievances, but also convinced him of the futility of striving for equality any remaining within Hinduism. Ambedkar now opined that Hinduism was incapable of reform on its own and that the untouchables must ready themselves to fight their battle for equality alone. The failure of all attempts to bring reforms in the system of Hindu religion realised to Ambedkar, "that the untouchables were not really a part of Hindu society and would never be accepted as equals by the. In other words, the project of Dalit liberation through reforms in Hindu religion failed to yield any result. In the face of such failure, Ambedkar was forced to leave the Hindu religion. At the Conference in Nasik district on October 13, 1935 Ambedkar said that unfortunately he was born a Hindu untouchable and it was beyond his power to prevent that. But he declared that it was within his power to sever ties with that religion. He thundered, "I solemnly assure you that I will not die a Hindu. Twenty years after, in October 1956 he converted to Buddhism". With this declaration of Ambedkar, the struggle of Dalit liberation entered into a new phase: fighting against the oppressive structures of Hinduism from outside and this new form of Dalit struggle which distinguished itself from the pre-struggle of Ambedkar for transformation of the Hindu religion from within.

Ambedkar realised that caste and Brahmin Hinduism reinforce each other and discriminate against

the downtrodden sections of the society. He said in 1946 "to the untouchables. Hinduism is veritable chamber of horrors". He traced the genesis of the oppressive nature of the caste dominated Indian Society to the 'sacred shastras of the Hindu who guarded them so closely that if anyone except them read or hear them he would commit an act of sacrilege. Manu smriti sanctioned severest punishment for such a sacrilegious act. Ambedkar quotes from Manu smriti, "If the Shudra intentionally listens for committing to memory the Veda, then his ears should be filled with lead and if he utters the Veda, then his tongue should be cut-off; if he has mastered the Vedas, his body should be cut to pieces. According to Ambedkar Veda, Smritis and Shastras were all instruments of torture used by Hinduism against the untouchables.

In fact, it was Ambedkar's subaltern perspective which pierced through the shastras to reveal their true face. He emphasized in his 'Annihilation of Caste' that the Smritis and Shastras were not the embodiment of religious but a system of rules to deprive the basic. Ambedkar distinguished between rules and principles. Rules are practical and based on prescription, but needs principles are intellectual and are useful methods of judging things. Rules seek to tell an agent just what course of action to pursue. Principles do not prescribe a specific course of action. Rules are commands and tell what to do and how to do it, whereas principles provide man references point to his conscience to guide his course of action.

On the basis of a discussion around the distinction between rules and principles in references to religion, Ambedkar comes to conclusion that what is called Religions by the Hindu something but a multitude of commands and prohibition. He said the Hindu religion as contained in the Vedas and smritis is nothing but a mass of critical social and political rules and regulation. Therefore, he said that there should be no hesitation in saying that such a religion must be destroyed and there is nothing irreligious in working for the destruction of such religion that discriminates against its own people whom it bracketed as untouchables.

The above discussion shows that what Ambedkar was against was a religion of rules not religions in

itself. Had he been against religions he could not have had embraced Buddhism. Ambedkar wanted to raise religion in consonance with liberty equality and fraternity. In short, his religion could not be against the principles of democracy.

Another aspect of Dr. Ambedkar subaltern approach for the emancipation of Dalits and their empowerment was his distinct formulation of Indian nationalism in opposition to the dominant discourse of Hindu nationalism as represented by Raja Rammohan Roy, B.G Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Golwalkar and Shyama Prasad Mookerjee on the one hand, and communist secular socialist nationalism represented by M.N Roy, R.P Dutt, T. Nagi Reddy and E. M. S Namboodripad on the other. Although the protagonists of Hindu nationalism differed in many ways from each other in essence they strengthen the Brahmanical hegemony in modern India.

Ambedkar's conception of nationalism articulated and synthesised the national perceptions and aspiration of the downtrodden. Ambedkar's alternative form of nationalism, popularly known as 'Dalit-Bhujan-nationalism' also incorporated the subaltern philosophy of Jyotirao Phule and Periyar, E.V Ramaswami Naicker. It constructed anti-Hindu and anti-Brahmanical discourse of Indian nationalism. It aimed at establishing a casteless and classless society where no one would be discriminated on the basis of birth and occupation. Within the dalit-Bhujan framework of Indian nationalism, Ambedkar built a critique of pre-colonial Brahmanism and its inegalitarian social set up based on low high dichotomy of graded caste system. This system of inegalitarianism led to the process of exploitation by the unproductive Brahmanical castes of the various productive castes.

16.5 Let us Sum Up

Dr. Ambedkar was an iconoclastic social reformer who at the very formative years of his career realised what it meant to be an untouchable and how struggle against untouchability could be launched. The social reform movement of the caste Hindus could not win him to its side because of his existential understanding of the pangs of untouchability.

What distinguished his subaltern approach was that it looked at the problem of the Dalits from below,

from a vantage point of the deprived and oppressed. This perspective led him to think differently from the dominant stream of social and political thought of his time. His castes in India: The Mechanism Genesis and Development, Annihilation of Caste. Who Were the Shudras? And The Untouchables: Who Were They and Why They Became Untouchable? Is testimony to his independent and original; thinking? In these seminal works Ambedkar smashed the mythological basis of untouchability and laid bare its economic roots. He built a strong case against the 'Janam' (birth) thesis of the untouchability which foreclosed all the way for Dalit emancipation. He exhorted its victim to oppose it booth and nail. He said "It is disgraceful to live at the cost of one's self-respect. He drew a distinction between liberty living and living worthily. For living a worthy life, Ambedkar said society must be based on liberty, equality and fraternity. "In an ideal society there should be many interests consciously communicated and shared. There should be varied and free points of contracts with other nodes of association. In other words, there must be social endosmosis. This is: fraternity which is only another name for democracy. Democracy is not merely a form of government. It is primarily a mode of associated living of conjoint communicated experience. It is essentially an attitude of respect and reverence towards fellow men" For Ambedkar social tyranny is more oppressive than the political tyranny and" a former who defies society, is a much more courageous Manthan a politician, who defies government. Thus, Ambedkar provided a subaltern perspective to see clearly the chameleon of Indian caste-ridden social set-up deceptively appearing in crimson colours and the ways to guard the interests of the Dalits.

16.6 Glossary

1. **Social upliftment:** Ambedkar founded the Bahishkrit Hitakarani Sabha in 1924 to uplift the "depressed classes". The organization's motto was "Educate, Agitate and Organize".
2. **Classless society:** Ambedkar believed in a classless society, but also believed that the state would exist as long as society and should be active in development.
3. **Democratic and peaceful measures:** Ambedkar believed that democratic and peaceful measures were the best option for change.
4. **Freedom of mind:** Ambedkar believed that freedom of mind is the real freedom and that a person whose mind is not free is a slave.

16.7 Self-Assessment Questions

Q1. Discuss sketch of Ambedkar.

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Q2. Discuss Ambedkar as subalternist.

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Q3. How Ambedkar interpret dalitisation.

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Q4. What role did Ambedkar play in drafting of the country's constitution.

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16.8 Suggested Readings

1. Ambedkar B.R (1995), Annihilation of Caste (Jalandhar: Bheem Patrika)
2. Ambedkar B. R. (1916), Caste in India Their Mechanism Genesis and Development (reprint Jalandhar: Bheem Patrika Publications, 1977.
3. Ambedkar, B. R (1936), Annihilation of Caste (reprint Jalandhar, Bheem Patrika Publications, 1995)
4. Ambedkar, B. R (146) Who were the Shudras? (Bombay: Thacker and Co.)

SOCIAL CONDITIONING OF INDIAN SOCIOLOGY: IDEOLOGY**STRUCTURE**

- 17.0 Objectives
- 17.1 Introduction
- 17.2 Village Studies
- 17.3 Social Structure
- 17.4 Universalization
- 17.5 Let us Sum Up
- 17.6 Glossary
- 17.7 Self-Assessment Questions
- 17.8 Suggested Readings

17.0 OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this lesson are:

- To understand the meaning of social conditioning of Indian society.
- To impart knowledge to the students about village studies.
- To give them idea about the village structure

17.1 Introduction

The categories of knowledge, their meaning, content and the methodology of their construction bear the deep imprint of the social and historical forces of the time. We see its evidence in the writings of the pioneers of sociology like Karl Marx, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim. We find similar social conditioning in the writings of the Indian pioneers of sociology. This social conditioning, however, is historically constituted. To the western pioneers of sociology, major challenges came from the merging industrial society and its accordingly cultural and epistemological tensions. In the Indian context, the colonial experience, the memory of the past glory and the project for future political and cultural emancipation constituted the major cognitive and moral concerns. These concerns were, as sociology gained its status in India, reflected in problems of concepts, theory and method. A close relationship can be established between the social and historical forces working in Indian society and the evolution of the concepts and methods of Indian sociology. In this context, Yogendra Singh (1986: 1-31) discusses the social conditioning of Indian sociology. We have adapted Singh's ideas in the following pages.

During the colonial period, many British and European writings on Indian society and culture used conceptual categories, which were Eurocentric in cognitive and value terms; some of these also tended to distort history and imputed meanings to Indian reality in the abstract (a historically) as it to perpetuate colonialism. Concepts such as 'caste', 'tribe', 'village', 'community', 'family' and 'kinship' were defined as segmentary entities, often analogous to their socio-historical equivalents in European society. The emphasis was on showing how each of these social entities affirmed the principles of segmentation and autonomy rather than being parts of an organic whole. The element of discreteness was overemphasized and the linkages, both social and cultural, which bound these entities into an organic system of social structure and civilization, were neglected. This bias, which had its roots probably in the colonial ideology of the British social anthropologists and administrators, is obvious in their treatment of 'caste' and 'tribe' as discrete structural and cultural formations. G.S. Ghurye drew attention to this way back in 1943 in his *The Aborigines-so-called and their Future in* response to Verrier Elvin's *The Aborigines* (1943). He attempted to demonstrate continuities and linkages between the tribal and caste structure and tradition in Indian society. Apart from such

biases, the basic social categories of Indian society appeared to be devoid of a dynamic historical viewpoint. The colonial ethnographers, for instance, “took a placid, even a synchronic view of the tribal society”. The conceptual framework developed by the British administrators-turned-ethnographers and by anthropologists was inspired by the then prevailing model in anthropology. Tribal communities were treated as isolates, tribal as Noble Savages, and the primitive condition was described as a state of American simplicity”. (Singh, 1985: 104).

Similarly, a historicity and segmental treatment of concepts can be seen in the colonial administrators-turned-sociologists' view of village communities in India. As Louis Dumont (1957) rightly observes, Sir Henry S. Maine "hardly ever looked at the Indian village in itself, but only as a counterpart to Teutonic, Slavonic or other institutions". India was to him little more than "the historical repository of veritable phenomena of ancient usage and ancient judicial thought" (ibid: 830). They treated the village community as an autonomous sociological isolate. This is particularly reflected in the writings of Charles Metcalfe and other British administrators in India. The concept of 'community' was formulated by them in jural administrative terms patterned after Teutonic-Slavonic experiences where the notion of community was postulated as communal expression of individuals' rights and obligations and not as sangha - the Indian notion of community. D.P. Mukerji (1958) interprets sangha as being devoid of the notion of individual. The absence of the notion of 'individual' in the Indian tradition was later reiterated by Louis Dumont in his concept of the Homo hierarchicus. The collective principle not only operated at the normative level but also at the level of market and economy. It demonstrated the macro-structural linkages between castes; tribe, village community and family systems and the integrative role these institutions played in the unity of the Indian society (see Joshi, 1970). The roots of these integrative principles go far back into the historical past of Indian society. Irfan Habib illustrates it for Mughal India when he says: "the village was deeply affected by the requirements of commodity production (i.e., production for the market) ... the towns had not only to be fed by the countryside but to be supplied also with raw materials for their manufacturers" (1963: 37). During the 1950s and 1960s much literature generated by social anthropologists, economists and historians did away with the myth of the autonomy of the basic components of Indian social structure, i.e., the caste, tribe, village, family

and kinship. On family and kinship systems, while Dumont (1957) demonstrated the structural similarity between the inter-regional kinship systems, Gough (1979) demonstrated the linkages between these institutions and the modes of production.

The ideology in the interpretation of Indian society and its institutions by the colonial scholars can be seen in the way they defined these institutions and, in the methods, they employed to study them. Each institution was treated as an historical, isolate, devoid of linkages, and methodologically, emphasis was more on synchronic descriptions, largely with the help of informant's laymen. The contribution it made was not entirely free from conscious or unconscious partiality in the portrayal of social reality. In this context, several orientations in the interpretation of social reality of India emerged during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Bernard S. Cohn has analysed three such important orientations: the 'orientalist', 'missionary', and 'administrative'. The orientalists took a textual view of India offering a picture of its society as being static, timeless and space less. "In this view of the Indian society, there was no regional variation and no questioning of the relationship between prescriptive, normative statements derived from the texts and the actual behaviour of individuals or groups. Indian society was seen as a set of rules which every Hindu followed (Cohn and Singer, 1968: 8). The missionary view developed a little later. It saw all the roots of degeneration and evil, in Indian society in its religion (Hinduism), and offered avenues for its redemption in conversion to Christianity. Unlike the orientalists, who often took a positive or even laudatory view of the Indian tradition, the missionaries treated Indian, particularly Hindu institutions as 'degenerate and base'. According to Cohn, the differences in the perspectives on India between the missionaries and the orientalists rested on differences in their social origin. The administrative perspective on the Indian social reality was grounded in the British utilitarian tradition (see Stocks, 1978) which also viewed traditional institutions in Indian as impediments to development of a rational modern society; hence, the need for social and institutional reforms.

These perceptions of Indian social reality were conditioned by the social origin of the scholars and by their

specific ideological positions: classicism for orientalists, evangelism for missionaries and rational utilitarianism for administrators-turned-social scientists. In addition, they all held a static, non-historical and fragmentationist view of Indian institutions. Even their economic anthropology of the village tended to circumscribe all relationships within the confines of a village territory, as we see in William Wiser's, "The Hindu Jajmani System" (1936). The general theory of the Indian village organization in the writings of Sir Henry Maine and Charles Metcalfe was a near-transplantation of the European model of village organization on the Indian scene, and of course, these generalizations were without an 'intensive ethnographic base'. Thus, the sociology of India from roughly 1775 to 1940 to which Bernard S. Cohn refers was conditioned by the social background, ideology and preferred methods of collection of data by each category of sociologist or ethnographer concerned.

Yogendra Singh discusses four types of theoretical orientations related to the Indian sociology. **They are: (1) philosophic theoretic orientation; (2) culturological orientation; (3) Structural theoretic orientation; and (4) dialectical historical theoretic orientation.** On the formalization criteria of theory none of these existed in a systematic form. Most of them have operated at styles of analysis or have been evolved into quasi-formal systems of conceptual schemes. We, however, observe the changes in the theoretic structure of Indian society in terms of innovation, universalization of concepts and categories. The first two decades of the twentieth century mark caste, social customs, folklore, land systems and the village communities; and their comparison with similar institutions in the West. Most important meta-theoretic continuation was engendering and also ethno-sociological awareness about Indian sociology. It needs the quest for the universalization of the use of native categories in the analysis of Indian Society.

Singh discusses the following conceptual categories, which have been broadly used by different scholars for the study of Indian society:

1. Sanskritization and westernization- M.N. Srinivas
2. Little and great traditions – Mc Kim Marriott
3. Multi-dimensional tradition- S.C. Dube

4. Theory of structuralism-Richard Lembedt, D.P. Mukerji, A.R. Desai
5. Historicity of emotions - Louis Dumont

Besides, we have come across some other major categories also, which have been constructed or used by some other scholars. They are, for example:

1. Modernization - Yogendra Singh
2. Dominant caste and caste hierarchy- M.N. Srinivas
3. Reference group model for the caste - Y.B. Damle
4. Universalization and parochialization - McKim Marriott
5. Concept of rural cosmopolitanism- Oscar Lewis
6. Resource group-KN. Sharma

All the above conceptual categories are constructed or used by the two types of the scholars: one, the Indian scholars, e.g., Srinivas' concept of sanskritization; and second, western scholars, who did fieldwork in India and constructed them for their analysis. Here, we may say that though scholars are western but constructed native categories while doing studies in India, e.g., Marriott's category of little and great traditions.

Keeping in view all these conceptual and theoretical categories, Yogendra Singh presents an integral approach for doing the study in Indian society.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Note: Write your answers in the space given below.

1) Discuss the relationship between Religion, Ideology and Society.

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17.2 VILLAGE STUDIES

Sociologists in India have broadly concentrated their studies on the villages of India. Here, excerpts from Atal's (2003: 174-81) analysis of the village studies have been presented to understand the use of native categories in the analysis of Indian society.

Village studies movement in India has gone through a series of phases. As we have noted, it began in the pre-independence period largely as concern of the administrator, and was led by the practitioners of the discipline of economics; sociologists and social anthropologists arrived on the rural scene much later, and mostly after independence. They began their work in the style of an ethnographer, concentrating on single village and following a holistic approach. It may be noted that the so-called microcosmic approach of the anthropologists, developed and practised by them in the tribal settings, treated tribe as a unit of study, which consisted of several villages; the villages were parts of the wider whole of the tribe. Application of the same approach in the rural areas was, however, different; in the latter case, the village was treated as a unit of study, a community social system, and 'whole' of a sort. Thus, in a sense, anthropology in the rural setting adopted a still smaller unit for observation and reporting than in the case of tribal studies.

It is in this context that Robert Red-field's seminal concepts of indigenous civilization, little community, peasant society, and great and little traditions were examined, and their validity tested empirically. Taking clues from Redfield, and also from Srinivas' concepts of spread (local, regional, and all-India) and sanskritization (1952), McKim Marriott (1955) came up with two complementary concepts explicating the twin processes of universalization and parochialization. Oscar Lewis (1958) added to this inventory the concept of rural cosmopolitanism. A critical examination of these concepts led by S.C. Dube (1955) to propose a five-fold classification of Indian tradition; he tentatively listed them as classical, regional, local, western, and emergent national.

While researchers continued their village studies in the model of ethnography, these concepts offered them with useful talking points. In the process, the style of description changed, analytical categories began to be used and methodological innovations were made.

Debate on concepts and methodology led to the diversification of village studies. Questions of representatives promoted interest in comparative studies: more than one village, in the same or in a different culture area, was chosen for purposes of comparison. Rather than studying all aspects of life in a village, attention was focused on specific aspects such as caste, family, group dynamics and factionalism, economic life and jajmani system, village pantheon and the like. Efforts have also been made to study the same institutions in a number of villages.

Introduction of the comparative approach necessitated proper and usable definition of the key concepts, viz., village, caste, and joint family. Of these three concepts, very little has been written on the concept of village; the definition given by the census has generally been accepted. There are instances where administrative definition was found unacceptable. Two illustrations will suffice: (1) in Rajasthan, one of the places was, on popular demand, classified as town but later, upon the introduction of Panchayati Raj, political leadership of the community managed to reclaim its village status; and (2) the satellite villages, called Nagla in Uttar Pradesh, are generally included in part of the core village though they possess, in many cases, all the sociological attributes of separate village community. Based on these considerations, the present author ignored the revenue definition and treated a Nagla as a village in his study in *Local Communities and National Politics* (1971).

Attempts have also been made to classify the villages. Thus, some have taken the degree of nucleation as the key classificatory variable and talked about nucleated and dispersed villages. The concept of nucleated village includes the core village and the surrounding satellites. Similarly, coastal villages have been identified as a separate type. Studies have also been made of the fringe villages. In terms of social demography, classification based on the size of settlement, and the number of ethnic groups (single caste versus multi-caste villages) is also in vogue. In terms of economic pursuit, while there is recognition of the presence of fishing and pastoral villages, studies have mostly concentrated on agricultural villages. A unique village from the Kullu valley has also been reported, which has managed to keep itself from more or less completely insulated from the rest of the village of the region by physically shutting its doors off to the outside world, but speaking its own language, and by practicing its own culture (Rosser, 1955).

The most talked about concept in Indian rural sociology is that of caste. Whether the title of the study emphasizes village or caste, it is the latter which invariably holds the floor. Village studies came in for heavy criticism because of this 'obsession' with caste. The fact, however, remains that caste is a vital element of Indian society, and its neglect in a study would have made the entire exercise worthless. It is only the students of village who started empirical investigation of this most complex phenomenon of Indian social structure.

The great gap between the ideological precepts and the living reality - between the text and the present-day context - that they discovered was an eye-opener. While the urban-based armchair theoretician was content with what has been written about caste in the old scriptures and transmitted it to others. With his seal of approval, the village sociologist found it difficult to digest. Controversy was raised as regards the status of this concept- is it to be treated as a cultural concept associated with pan-Indian civilization or is it to be regarded as a social structural category of universal application? Culturologists, following the line of Indology, opted for the former and sociologists for the latter. A seminal essay by Irawati Karve (1958) raising the question unambiguously, what is caste deserves special mention. Distinction between Varna, Jati, Gotra, Vansh and the like assumed significance. The concept of sub-caste came under heavy fire, whereas Karve's concept of caste cluster found many followers. Mayer's (1960) distinction of kindred of cooperation and kindred of recognition as two facets of caste was quite attractive but was challenged by Atal (1968). Atal 'strongly emphasized the need for distinguishing between caste as a unit (jati) and the caste system; using the notion of subset he provided a specific definition on the concept of sub-caste. For the caste as a unit, Atal regards endogamy as the pivotal attribute; by the same token caste system is characterized by a plurality of interacting endogamous groups.

Other related concepts are those of dominant caste and caste hierarchy. The concept of dominant was proposed by M.N. Srinivas (1959) in his essay published in the American Anthropologist. Soon it caught the fallacy of many and became a catchword in rural sociology, as did his earlier concept of Sanskritization. The concept of dominant case was challenged by B.R. Chauhan (1967), Yogesh Atal (1968), S.C. Dube (1968), and T.K. Oommen (1970). In this connection, the concept of faction may be mentioned. In

village studies in India, this was introduced by Oscar Lewis (1958) in his studies on group dynamics in a North Indian village while Lewis talked of permanent factions which were kin-linked and were cooperative in orientation. Yogesh Atal (1963, 1968) identified short-lived alliances as aspect of village factionalism, which he designated as ephemeral factions. A number of scholars have written on the concept of faction, important among them being Ralph Nicholas (1965), Paul Brass (1965), Richard Sisson (1972), B.K. Nagla (1984) etc. KN. Sharma (1963, 1969) introduced the concept of resource group.

A major motivating factor for village studies in the 1960s was the Community Development Programme (CDP). Several scholars went to the village to study the process of externally induced, directed, culture change. As a result, a number of case studies on innovation and innovators, and on the leadership, were prepared. These changed the focus of village studies from the description of social structure to social change. Some re-studies have also been attempted: Wiser's Behind Mudwalls (1961) and Ghurye's After a Century and Quarter - Lonikand: Then and New (1960) may be mentioned. Srinivas has revisited his legendary village of Rampura several times in past 20 years and has written a book entitled The Remembered Village.

Beyond the Village

In more recent years, attention has shifted to a more general process of modernization. This has taken the scholars beyond the village. Employing more sophisticated tools, either of survey research or of psychological testing; a group of villages have been taken up for investigation. There have been studies of communication links, flows of information, voting behaviour, attitudes and aspirations, health practices and family planning, and of economic transactions in the village communities. Some have attempted to analyse class and power relations in a caste society, following largely the Weberian model.

There is, thus, a much more differentiated pattern of village studies in India. Of late, rural research in India has received a certain setback. The interest seems to be on the wane. Indian social science is increasingly getting oriented towards the urban. This shift in focus is understandable, although the neglect of the village cannot be commended.

It must be admitted that considerable data have been generated regarding the villages. There is a need to look at this data with a view to stocktaking. Most of this material is discrete, descriptive and discipline-specific. Very little has been done to consolidate and codify it. While methodological questions have been raised and debated, and concepts have been evolved and conceptual frameworks have been formulated, no rigorous writing on theory has appeared so far.

17.3 SOCIAL STRUCTURE

The Indian social structure, in a broader way, is stratified into two divisions: (1) the folks or the unlettered peasantry, and (2) the elites. The folks and peasantry follow the little tradition, i.e., the village tradition. The second division of elites follows the great tradition. The great tradition consists of the traditions contained in epics, Puranas, Brahmins and other classical Sanskrit works. The roles and statuses of Sita and Draupadi constitute the pangs of great tradition. The little tradition, on the other hand, is local tradition tailored according to the regional and village conditions. The great tradition is found clearly in twice-born castes, especially priests, and ritual leaders of one kind or other. Some of these corporate groups follow the traits of civilization and the great tradition. The carriers of little tradition include folk artists, medicine men, tellers of riddles, proverbs and stories, poets and dancers, etc.

Little and great traditions help to analyse social change in rural India. The nature of this change is basically cultural. There is a constant interaction between the two traditions which brings about change in rural society. Yogendra Singh explains this interaction as follows: "Changes in the cultural system follow through the interaction between the two traditions in the orthogenetic or heterogenetic process of individual growth. The pattern of change, however, is generally from orthogenetic to heterogenetic forms of differentiation or change in the cultural structure of traditions."

Both Singer and Marriott (1955) argue on the strength of data generated from the villages of their

study that the cultural content of social structure at the level of little tradition in a village witness change. First, there is change in the village culture due to the internal growth of village. In other words, the little tradition changes due to its own internal growth. Second, the little also undergoes change due to its contact with great and other parts of the wider civilization. "The direction of this change presumably is from folk or peasant to urban cultural structure and social organization. The great tradition, i.e., the epic tradition also witnesses universalized pattern of culture resulting from its interaction with the village or little tradition.

Singer has made certain statements about cultural change in a. His observations are as under:

- 17.3.1 Indian civilization has evolved out of pre-existing folk and regional cultures. This aspect of civilization constructed the tradition - Ramayana, Mahabharata and other religious scriptures. This great tradition maintained its continuity in India's diverse regions, village, castes and tribes.
- 17.3.2 The cultural continuity of great tradition is based on the idea that people share common cultural consciousness throughout the country.
- 17.3.3 The common cultural consciousness is formed through the consensus held in common about sacred books and sacred objects.
- 17.3.4 In India, cultural continuity with the past is so great that even the acceptance of modernizing and progress ideologies does not result in linear form of social and cultural change but may result in the traditionalizing of apparently modern nations.

To include, it could be safely said that there is one cultural approach out of several to explain rural social change in India. In simple words, one could say that a villager borrows norms and values from the great tradition of country's civilization. In this borrowing, he makes changes according to his village's local conditions history. The villages vary from region to region and, therefore, the little tradition also continues to remain diverse. On the other hand, the great tradition, i.e., the sacred books, also receives a uniform pattern. The concepts, therefore, explain the cultural change both at regional and national levels.

17.4 PAROCHIALIZATION AND UNIVERSALIZATION

Parochialization and universalisation are complementary to the concepts of little and great

traditions. These are processes of cultural change. When the great tradition, i.e., the tradition of epics and sacred books, undergoes change at the local or village level, it is parochialization or localization of great tradition or civilization. Parochialization, therefore, is the cultural change made at the village level

17.5 LET US SUM UP

Universalization, on the other hand, is a cultural change from little tradition to great tradition. Both these processes are related to the interaction between little tradition and great tradition. Interpreting the process of universalization, Yogendra Singh observes that when the little tradition moves upward to the great tradition, it is the process of universalization. And, when the great tradition moves downward to the local or village level, it is parochialization. His interpretation runs as follows: "Elements of the little tradition, indigenous customs, duties and rites circulate upward to the level of the great tradition and are identified with its legitimate forms. This process, Marriott calls 'universalization'. Likewise, some elements of the great tradition also circulate downward to become organic of the great tradition, and lose much of their original form in the process. He (Marriott) used the term 'parochialization' to denote this kind of transaction between the two traditions."

In the process of parochialization, obviously, there is some loss of the elements of great tradition. Whatever is laid down as elements of great tradition is reduced at village level or interpreted differently by local leaders of priestly castes. This process is called de- sanskritization.

17.6 GLOSSARY

1. **Socio-anthropological perspectives:** Village studies in India are based on four main socio-anthropological perspectives: evolutionary, ethnographic cultural, structural-functional, and Marxist.
2. **Longitudinal studies:** These studies allow researchers to track and analyze changes in rural societies over time.
3. **Participatory research:** This method involves engaging community members in the research process to foster a sense of ownership and collaboration.

4. **Holistic nature of village communities:** Village studies can discuss the holistic nature of village communities or focus on specific aspects of rural life.
5. **Useful information for other disciplines:** The data collected from village studies is accurate, reliable, and unbiased, making it useful for other social scientists, historians, and economists.
6. **Importance of village studies:** Mahatma Gandhi famously said, “India is not Calcutta and Bombay. India lives in her seven hundred thousand villages”.

17.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

- 1) Describe briefly relationship of Indian Village with the State in pre-British India.

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- 2) Briefly mention two studies by Indian scholars explaining economic ties of villages with the outside world.

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- 3) What do you understand by the term village exogamy.

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17.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Atal, Yogesh (1963), 'Short Lives Alliances as an Aspect of Factionalism in an Indian Village', *The Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 3, pp. 65-75.
2. (1968), *The Changing Frontiers of Caste*, Delhi: National Publishing House.
3. (1971), *Local Communities and National Politics*, New Delhi: National Publishing House.
4. (2003), *Indian Sociology: From where to where*, Jaipur: Rawat Publications.
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5. Chauhan, B.R. (1967), *A Rajasthan Village*, New Delhi: Associated Publishing House.
6. Cohn, Bernard S. and Milton Singer (eds.) (1968), *Structure and Change in Indian Society*, Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company.

THEORY AND METHODS IN INDIAN SOCIOLOGY**STRUCTURE**

- 18.0 Objectives
- 18.1 Objectives
- 18.2 Theoretical Typology
- 18.3 Let us Sum Up
- 18.4 Glossary
- 18.5 Self-Assessment Questions
- 18.6 Suggested Readings

18.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this lesson, you will be able to understand:

- Various methods used to study Indian society.
- Theoretical explanation of Indian Society.

18.1 INTRODUCTION

Within the context of history, colonialism, and its impact on the intellectual and cultural traditions in India, of which sociology and other social sciences are at a certain level of manifestations, provide an important historical backdrop for its theoretic, ideological and professional evaluation. Major theoretic orientations in Indian society have shown varying degrees of ups and downs during the last century. The analysis is not possible without a framework of sociology of knowledge within the context of history.

Radhakamal Mukerjee, B.N. Seal and B.K. Sarkar continuously refuted the efforts of western ideologists. Seal thought that institutions could only be compared when they were historically co-existed and parallel. To Mukherjee, Indian social institutions are unique. Therefore, the study of any society should be done in the particular context of society. Ideology, theory and method are related to the context. Without the context, there is no relevance of ideology, theory and method. Keeping this in view, we would discuss in this chapter the work of sociologists in Indian context.

The Indian sociology, as an emergent distinctive discipline during colonial and post-colonial phases, has been significantly influenced and patterned on western paradigm.

• THEORETICAL PARADIGM

Almost all sociologists in India have taken up studies on the theoretical paradigm of Durkheim, Weber, Marx and Parsons. Besides the western paradigms, according to Singh (1993), Indian sociologists have adopted four theoretical orientations: (i) philosophical, (ii) culturological, (iii) structural and (iv) dialectical-historical.

Before the discussion of these theoretical orientations, we would like to refer an important essay on ideology theory and method in Indian sociology by Yogendra Singh (1993) which covers a period of about a quarter century from 1952 to 1977:

- (i) 1952 to 1960 - a period of adaptive changes and innovations;
- (ii) 1960 to 1965 - a period of significant shifts in theoretic priorities and beginning of some critical tensions in theory and ideology of Indian sociology;
- (iii) 1965 to 1970 - a period of marked sociological self-awareness and growth of new directions in theoretical and substantive contributions; and
- (iv) 1970 to 1977 - a period of new maturity and new horizons of knowledge.

These four periods correspond with four theoretical developments in Indian sociology as mentioned above.

- (i) The philosophical orientation in Indian sociology is associated with the contributions of Radhakamal Mukherjee, D.P. Mukerji and AK. Saran. This orientation has not made a significant impact on the theoretical nature of the Indian sociology. According to Singh (1983) it is interesting to note that despite the profoundness of scholarship of these scholars, the impact is minimal. The impact of western sociology was becoming more and more enveloping and empirical bases of societal understanding looked simpler than the rigour of philosophy and pain of meaning fully digging the past; that to swim with the current stream was easy sociological course; than the cognitive grasp of complex historical past.
- (ii) The culturological orientation begins with the work of Srinivas, Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India. Brahminization, Sanskritization and Westernization were major concepts derived from this study. Sanskritization characterized a change within the framework of Indian tradition.
- (iii) The structural orientation focuses on power structure, social stratification, family structure, demography and similar aspects, which reveal patterns, arrangements and repetitiveness. The empirical aspects- are converted into

abstracted concepts, models and categories. The structural studies have also taken comparative framework.

- (iv) The dialectical-historical orientation is primarily based on Marxist approach and method for the analysis of social reality. The dialectical method has not been termed as Marxist as adaptations have been made keeping in view the Indian social reality. It is, however, a less developed branch of Indian sociology. D.P. Mukerji and Ramkrishna Mukherjee emphasized the significance of dialectical model (Singh, 1983). A.R. Desai had consistently used dialectical-historical approach with ideological fervour and commitment. He has consistently exposed contradictions in policies and programmes of change. The dialectical-historical orientation grew rapidly in the seventies, when micro-empirical realities were subjected to class observation along with macro-structural social and economic processes in India.

18.2 THEORETICAL TYPOLOGY

Singh's typology of four major theoretic orientations is significant and logically coherent. According to Singh (1993), these theoretical orientations basically have implicit or explicit ideological connotation. The implications can be discerned at the level of analysis, which as a critique rejects the way social reality is managed or justifies the formation of social reality as has come to be manipulated and constructed. At other level, they imply need for alternatives, modifications and corrections. Knowledge-neutrality is contradictions in terms. Evaluation and analysis of social reality reveal systematic formulation of scattered, diverse and immediate impressions which are mediated through common man's impressionistic perceptions and views. At the third level, (dominance of

theoretical orientations generated institutionally tends to lead to negation and blinding of our own intellectual traditions.

In his book on Sociology of Indian Sociology, Ramkrishna Mukherjee (1979) describes the trends in Indian sociology. He itemized the narratives, which are presented in Tables 1-4 with particular reference to the Indian sociologists who played role.

Table : 1

<u>Value Preference</u>	
A.K. Coomaraswamy	The cultural conquest of the West over the East must be resisted, and colonialism removed because it promotes western cultural domination.
B.N. Seal	Every national personality (like every individual personality in the nation) has a right to the realization of its own ideal ends, satisfactions and values, within the limits imposed by the similar rights of others (individualistic justice), and also a right to co-partnership and co-operation for the common good and common advantage (socialistic justice), within the limits imposed by the preceding clause.
B.K. Sarkar	Society is upheld by the 'Might of Man', the growth of which is hindered by colonialism through economic, political and ideological exploitation of the dependent people.
G.S. Ghurye	The needs and aspirations of individuals for a better life are to be fulfilled without establishing (or, if it is established coercively by removing) 'a well-divided chequer-board of humanity'.
D.P. Mukerjee	Development of man is conditioned by the social milieu and, therefore, national independence, economic development and the resolution of class contradictions in society are necessary conditions for man's development but not the sufficient conditions.
Radhakamal Mukerjee	Development of man is possible through commonality and cooperation in a free society, and not through contradictions and conflict.
S.V. Ketkar	Socialism is to be established by 'economic evolution' in a free society but in harmony with the historically engineered linguistic, cultural, psychological and political distinctions between mankind.
B.N. Dutt and K.P. Chattopadhyay	Socialism is to be established by the resolution of contradictions in Society, especially the class contradictions traditions, and in the subjugated countries by the resolution of the colonial contradiction as the initial step.

Source: Mukherjee, Ramkrishna (1979), Sociology of Indian Sociology, Bombay: Allied, p. 38.

Table: 2

<i>References</i>	<i>Theoretical Formulation</i>
AK. Coomaraswamy	Development of man is possible in his specific social and cultural context which may be harmfully affected by an aggressively dominating culture.
B.N. Seal	Social development is not unilinear: instead, there are multiple paths of development along which "nationalism is only a halting stage in the onward march of humanity".
B.K. Sarkar	While the 'might of man' is ultimately dependent on the values projected by a few, it is stabilized, promoted or retarded by the contextual social structure and its function.
GS. Ghurye	Development of man is culture-specific since "cultural development is reflected in the trend of thought about man as a living entity".
D.P. Mukerjee	Indian social reality can be properly appraised only in terms of its special traditions, its special symbols and its special patterns of culture and social actions".
Radhakamal Mukerjee	Since human institutions form an indivisible unity of the individual, society and values, any consideration of social facts without their value-component is unreal; instead, there should be a fusion of 'empirical' and 'normative' sociology.
S. V. Ketkar	Indian society is to be regarded as a part of the world society but also it should be examined internally in terms of unity in diversity due to its linguistic, cultural and psychological distinctions.
RN.Dutt K.P. Chattopadhyay	The Indian social reality can properly be understood by taking note of (a) Marx's formulation of the historical stages by social development, and (b) Weber's formulation regarding the role of Hindu religion on the people. Indian social reality can be best grasped by an analysis of the class character of society in different phases of history but, specially, in the light of (a) the contact of people with different culture and social patterns, and (b) the diffusion of culture among them

***Source: Mukherjee, Ramkrishna (1979), Sociology of Indian Society,
Bombay: Allied, p. 40.***

Table: 3

<i>References</i>	<i>Research Orientation</i>
A.K. Coomaraswamy	Cultural approach to understand Indian (and Asian) social reality by specifically in a non-western and the Oriental context.
B.N. Seal	Bio-sociological approach toward the conceptualization and empirical verification of different paths of social development, with particular reference to the historical and contemporaneous development of Indian society.
B.K. Sarkar	Structural functional approach to Indian (an Asian) social organization and culture form a historical, contemporary and futuristic perspective in order to dispel the notion of the 'other worldly' outlook of the Orientals and to examine the process of development of the 'might of man', especially in the Indian context.
GS. Ghurye.	Structural-functional approach to India's social organization and culture in a historical context and also through an examination of their varied contemporary aspects.
D.P. Mukerjee	'Marxologist's' dialectical approach to understand personality and culture in the Indian social context.
Radhakamal Mukerjee	Beginning with the structural functional approach to ascertain the inter-dependence between the economic sphere and the entire socio-historical-cultural order of Indian society, the 'transdisciplinary' approach was to be used for a comprehensive appraisal of social reality in the Indian and world context.
S.V. Ketkar	Historical approach through encyclopaedic bibliographical research to establish the thesis that as in the world context India should be regarded as a 'unit' and also that the Indian social organism should be regarded as an expression of 'unity in diversity'
B.N. Dutt	Marxist dialectical approach to explain the evolution of India's social and political structure.
K.P. Chattopadhyay	Diffusionist and structural-functional approach to India's social organization and culture in the historical context and in analyzing varied contemporary aspects, leading in later years to a Marxist dialectical approach to explain India's social reality.

Source: Mukherjee, Ramkrishna (1979), Sociology of Indian Sociology, Bombay: Allied, p. 41.

Table : 4

<i>References</i>	<i>Contribution to Sociology</i>
A.K. Coomaraswamy	A historic-contemporary overview of the Occidental dominal over the Indian and Oriental culture, with a rationalized analysis the 'meaning' of the latter.
B.N. Seal	Concept-formation in order to study social change and social development with special reference to India, and the corresponding methodology for empirical research on an inductive-inferential~ including employing statistical tools and techniques.
B.K. Sarkar	<p>A historico-contemporary-futuristic appraisal of Indian (and Asian) social development, dispelling the notion of the other worldly outlook of the Orientals and nothing to the need for</p> <p>(a) intensive empirical research to verify the theoretical formulations and preliminary empirical findings, and (b) the creation of an extensive data-base.</p> <p>Data-base for historical and contemporary empirical research on India's social organization and culture.</p>
G.S..Ghurye	Theoretical formulations about the role of tradition' in order to analyse social change; and a historico-contemporary- futuristic appraisal of Indian society, her classes and culture, pointing to the need for empirical research in a comprehensive manner and irrespective of disciplinary boundaries in social science.
D.P. Mukerjee	Theoretical formulation about the role and structure of values in all societal manifestations; a methodology for an integrated social science approach to social reality; and the creation of a data-base concerning historical and contemporary perspectives on Indian society.
Radhakamal Mukerjee	Creation of a historical and contemporary data-base, essentially from bibliographical research, denoting psycho-social and cult distinctions among the linguistic regions of India.
S.V. Ketkar	Constructed a preliminary historical data-base from which to proceed with empirical research on the evolution of India's social and political structure.
B.N.Dun	Methodology for large-sale survey research, and the creation of data-base for historical and contemporary empirical research on India's social organization and culture.

Source: Mukherjee, Ramkrishna (1979), Sociology of Indian Sociology, Bombay: Allied, p.43

Table: 1 show that within the framework of man and society the goals set by the pioneers ranged from an idealized version of oriental culture to the materialistic view of social development as; propounded by Marx. Also, between these two polar-opposite goal sets, there are those emphasizing the culture-specific of value-specific development of man or the establishment of a society free from exploitation but coming about through cooperation and harmony among the social segments of the resolution of contradictions and conflicts among them.

Table: 2 shows that the theoretical formulations of the pioneers were not unsystematic and abstract generalization about man and society. Also, they did not merely express those characteristics of a social phenomenon, which were spontaneously observed by them a point in which, like in their value preference, they differed from the modernizers who supplemented them in the social arena. On the contrary, their multi-dimensional comprehension of social reality from historical, contemporary and futuristic perspective it meant that their widely divergent theoretical formulations had considerable inductive power to explain the changing reality by accentuating different aspects of social dynamism. The pioneers considered different aspects of the Indian (or the world) society to reveal its substantive reality.

In Table: 3 Empirical research was strongly advocated by the pioneers, except perhaps by Coomaraswamy. Following their various value preferences and theoretical formulations, their research orientations registered different approaches to sociological research, as noted.

In Table: 4 irrespective of the above formulation of their approaches, which may have to be revised or elaborated in the light of further research into the work of the pioneers, it is evident that their interest in empirical research was not exclusively with respect

to any particular social phenomenon like caste, family, national integration, stratification, or rural or urban society. Also, even while dealing with one phenomenon (such as caste), they did not restrict their attention to only one specific aspect, such as the relative positions of the caste's variations in that aspect of the phenomenon.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1) Discuss briefly the theoretical framework in studying Indian Society.

18.3 Let us Sum Up

Thus, we find even from an imprecise account of the works of the pioneers in Indian sociology that from different points of view they had proceeded systematically to analyse the Indian social reality in neither an insular nor an imitative manner. Even Coomaraswamy, who appears to have rejected western culture, had the entire Oriental culture with its various mores and modalities in view. The others too did not indulge in repetition of these theories to suit the native situation. Indian thinkers, with one to two exceptions, have been too much dependent on the West for their theory and have been promptly accepting the changing theoretical framework from the West.

It is true that a lot of empirical work has been done during past few decades but it would be difficult to suggest that sociology has gained theoretical maturity of its own in India. New areas of research have multiplied but the theoretical rigour and depth of interpretation seem to be lacking. The contribution of earlier generations of sociologists continues to be regarded and recognized as rigorous and significant by serious scholars. It reflects the following major approaches to the study of Indian society: Indological: Ghurye and Dumont; Structural-Functional: Srinivas and Dube; Marxian: D.P. Mukerji and A.R. Desai, Ramkrishna Mukherjee; Civilizational: N.K. Bose and Surajit Sinha; Subaltern: Ambedkar, David Hardiman and Ranajit Guha; Cultural Approach: Yogendra Singh etc. Most of these approaches have been discussed in the lessons of different units of the course on the Perspectives on Indian Society.

18.4 SELF-ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1) Discuss the views of Indian Sociologists in studying Indian society.

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2) Discuss the theoretical framework of Indian sociologists.

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18.5 GLOSSARY

1. **Theory:** A general principle or body of principles that explains phenomena. It can also refer to the abstract principles of a science, art, or body of fact.
2. **Methodology:** A set of approaches and methods used in a study.
3. **Theory and methodology:** Theory helps determine which variables are important to measure and control in an experiment, while methodology provides insight into how to control and measure those parameters.
4. **Quantitative data:** Information that can be measured and written down with numbers.
5. **Academic research:** Research conducted for an academic qualification.

18.6 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Atal, Yogesh (2003). *Indian Sociology: From Where to Where*, Jaipur and New Delhi: Rawat Publications.
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SOCIAL CONDITIONING OF INDIAN SOCIOLOGY**STRUCTURE**

19.0 Objectives

19.1 Introduction

19.2 Social Conditioning of Indian Sociology

19.3 Let us Sum Up

19.4 Glossary

19.5 Self-Assessment Questions

19.6 Suggested Readings

19.0 Objectives

The main objective of the lesson is:

- To acquaint you with the production of sociology of knowledge in India.
- To acquaint you with the works, theories and methods of pioneer sociology in India.
- To provide your insight in to the conditions responsible for the initial of sociology in India.

19.1 Introduction

The present work, attempts to explore the ideological bases of sociology and it's a charge in history and tradition. This led us to the analysis of the role of social and historical forces in the production of knowledge in general. As Y. Singh says, it is our premise that production of knowledge is socially conditioned since the categories of social science; its tools for the perception of reality are mediated by social forces, culture and tradition. Indeed, the social conditioning of knowledge is revealed by the extent to which the concepts, methods and priority areas of research in sociology bear the impact of history and social forces operative in society. The three dimensions of visualizing India was: -

1. **Firstly**, the contribution of the British administrators-cum-sociologists which were quite substantial related to studies of the various aspects of India social structure, customs and traditions not without ideological biases in the selection of themes and sociological paradigms.
2. **The 'missionaries'** who derived their paradigm from their own version of the normative principles of Christianity and who judged most Indian social and cultural institutions negatively. Their solution India's problem was, therefore, Christianisation.
3. **The Orientalist** looked at Indian reality from a purely textual perspective and was charmed by its philosophical traditions. Their view, rooted in humanistic concerns, tended to romanticize Indian social institutions and contributed simplicity to an ideology of status quo. Their approach was static and a - historical.

Among these, the British cum- sociologists viewed Indian social institutions from a rational-utitarian view point. It was rooted in the ideology of Pragmatism and reformation. The view of social reality that it offered was mechanistic segmentary and instrumental in nature. It constituted a typical colonial paradigm for social analysis and offered a deeply fractured picture of Indian Society. The differentiation in the ideological foundation of the early western paradigms for

interpretation of Indian reality is not merely explained by colonial orientation; it is also related to the social origin and class background of these Scholars.

The early 'pioneers among Indian sociologists responded sceptically to the ideological formation of Indian reality by the Western Scholars. Nationalism provided an ideological basis for their thinking. After Independence, the orientation changed slightly, the influence of American social anthropology, the desire to bring about planned social transformation in society and its institution, led to a spate of village studies and social surveys from the perspective of functional theory. The emphasis was either on the cognitive mapping of social structure or on policy related studies with specific agents for social development.

The changing social conditions and intellectual concentrations at the global level of sociology had their impact on Indian Sociology as well. The publication Louis Dumont and D. Pocock's symposia in 'Contribution to Indian Sociology set in motion a new self-search of epistemological issues among Indian Sociologist from the mid-1950s onwards. Although these authors raised the questions of Indian history and traditions from the perspective of Structuralism among Indian Sociologists. By the 1970's and 1980s however, interest in social processes assumed significance as an epistemological problem of the nature of categories, methods and observation of social structure and changes in society.

This led to studies of social movement, modernization processes and the forces of societal restructuration resulting from social and cultural mobility in society.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-I

1) Discuss the three dimensions of visualizing India in brief.

19.2 Social Conditioning of Indian Sociology

The categories of knowledge, their meaning, content and the methodology of their construction bear the deep imprint of the social and historical forces of the time. To the western pioneers of sociology, major challenges come from the emerging industrial society and its accompanying cultural and epistemological tensions. In the Indian context, the colonial experience, the memory of the past glory and the project for future political and cultural emancipation constituted the major cognitive and moral concerns. These concerns were as sociology gained its status in India, reflected in problems of concepts, theory and method.

To Y. Singh, during the Colonial period, many British and European writing on Indian Society and culture used conceptional categories which were Eurocentric in cognitive and value terms; some of these also tended to distort history and imputed meaning to Indian reality in the abstract (a historically) and if to perpetuate colonialism, concepts such as 'caste' tribe 'village', 'community', 'family' and kinship were defined as segmentary entities, often analogues to their socio-historical equivalents in European society. The emphasis was on showing how each of these social entities affirmed the principles of segmentations and autonomy rather than being parts of an organic whole. This bias, which had its roots probably in the colonial ideology of the British social anthropologists and administrators is obvious in their treatments of 'caste and tribe as discrete cultural and structural formation G. S. Ghurye's attention to this was back in 1943 in the foreword called and their Future in response to Verrier Elwin publication 'The Aborigines (1943)'. Similarly, the concept of 'community was formulated by them in rural administrative terms patterned after Teutonic - Slavonic experiences where the notion of community was postulated as communal expression of individual rights and obligation and not as sangha. D. P Mukerji interpreted 'sangha' as being devoid of the notion of individual. It thus demonstrated the macro-structural linkages between caste, village and family system and the integrative roles these institutions played in the unity of the Indian Society.

B.S Cohn has analysed three such important orientations:

i) **Orientalist:** They took a textual view of India offering a picture of its society as being

static. Indian society was seen as a set of rules which every Hindu followed.

- ii) **Missionary:** They saw all the roots of degeneration and evil in Indian Society in its religion, and offered venues for its redemption in conversion to Christianity.
- iii) **Administrative:** This perspective on Indian social reality was grounded in the British utilitarian tradition which also viewed traditional institutions in Indian as impediments to development of a rational modern society.

Cohn says, By the 1940s the study of Indian society cumulatively has the following components:

- i) Broad - scale humanistically oriented tradition which emphasized the relationship between textual studies and static model of contemporary Indian society.
- ii) An administrative tradition centred on the census for the study of Caste which sought to see Indian society as a collection of discrete entities whose traditions and customs could be classified and studied.
- iii) A tradition of economic study which sought to describe the making of village economics, with some attention to the social structure of villages.
- iv) An anthropological tradition centred on the general theory of village organization in a broad comparative framework, but without an intensive ethnographic base.

This perception of Indian social reality, as we argued were conditioned by the origin of the scholars and by their specific ideological position: classicism for orientalist, evangelisms for missionaries and rational utilitarianism for administrator- social scientists.

Further the pioneers of Indian sociological B. N Seal, B. K. Sarkar, G. S. Ghurye, Radha Kamal Mukerjee, D.P. Mukerji B.N. Dutt and K.P Chattopadhyay drew their value promise and prospect on the approach to studying India society from the nationalist preformation leadership of the 19th century. The sociologists of the pioneer generation were less concerned with the professionalization of sociology as a discipline, in respect of concept, theories, methodology or with establishing sociology as a branch of science. Their deeper concern

however was with the issue of social relevance.

Later during 1950 and 1960 there was a shift in character of sociology which Ramkrishna Mukerji attributes of the phase by modernizers of Indian sociology. It included sociologist like M.N. Srinivas, K.M. Kapadia, A.K. Saran N.K. Bose, T.N. Madan and others. The new theoretical perspective in the study of tradition moved in the direction of structuralism and ethno-sociology (L. Dumont and Veena Das), normative fundamentalism and social historicism (Y. Singh). Thus, the context of conceptual indigenization arose in the 1950. Its social conditioning was germane to intellectual renaissance in India following the national movement for political and cultural independence. During 1950's it was reflected in frames of reference: (i) the policy in charge of sociology and the quest for relevance (ii) the search for paradigm of sociological for India.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-II

1) What are the three important orientations according to B.S Cohn.

19.3 Let us Sum Up

This lesson basically deals with how production of knowledge is socially conditioned. Indeed, the social conditioning of knowledge is revealed by the extent to which the concepts, methods and priority area of research in sociology bear the imprints of history and social forces operative in society. The unit highlights how the Indian sociology was conditioned by the missionaries, Orientals and administrators, it also revealed the imprints of nationalistic movement on restructuring the concepts, methods and priority area of research in sociology in India.

19.4 Glossary

1. **Social conditioning:** The process by which people are trained to think, feel, and react in a way that is approved by society. Social conditioning can be influenced by family, biology, social experiences, and the physical and social environment.
2. **Indian sociology:** The discipline of sociology in India, which is influenced by the complex social reality of India. Indian sociology faces challenges such as the impact of globalization, liberalization, and privatization on the knowledge society.
3. **Modernization:** The process of change in ideology that can lead to modernization in India.

19.5 Self-Assessment Questions

Q.1. Discuss social conditioning of Indian sociology.

Q.2. Discuss early production of knowledge in Indian sociology.

19.6 Suggested Readings

1. Singh, Y. 1986. *Indian Sociology, Social conditioning and emerging concerns*, visitor Publication, Delhi.
2. Sharma, S. 1985. *Sociology in India*, Rawat Publication, Jaipur.
3. Dhanagare, D. N. 1998. *Themes and perspectives in India Sociology*, Rawat publication, Delhi.

SOCIOLOGY IN INDIA

STRUCTURE

- 20.0 Objectives
- 20.1 Introduction
- 20.2 The Historical roots of Indian Sociology
- 20.3 Sociology in India: Historical and theoretical Probing.
- 20.4 Sociology in India: Sociology of Knowledge Perspective.
- 20.5 Sociology and Independent India
- 20.6 Let us sum up
- 20.7 Glossary
- 20.8 Self-Assessment Questions
- 20.9 Suggested Readings

20.0 Objectives

The main concern of this lesson is to make you clear about:

- Growth and development of Sociology as a discipline
- Main contributors of early sociology.
- Theoretical and methodological understanding of sociology.

20.1 Introduction

Sociology in India is now a fairly grown-up discipline. As a discipline sociology has analysed social-structural units, mainly, caste, family, kinship and village community. Class relations in rural, urban and industrial settings have also been studied. The relevant questions have not been asked about the nature of theoretical frame work and methodological devices. The researches have not stated explicitly about the relevance of their research activities. Why a particular framework has been preferred over some other remains an unanswered question.

They wish to touch upon the questions on the basis of sociological analysis and researches on Indian society covering the post-independence period. The point is how Sociology has grown as a discipline in India. We have focused mainly on theoretical and methodological aspect of sociological researches in India. Our intention is thus to understand the nature of input of knowledge into framework and methods of study and the nature of knowledge and understanding that has been produced. The essence of all these cognitive explorations is only one straight question: what is the nature of sociology in India?

20.2 The Historical Roots of Indian Sociology

Sociology is a “humanistic social science”. It, therefore, has to take into account the specific ideas and ideals, values and aspirations, problems and predicament of concrete groups human beings in particular historical circumstances even when it tries to attain generalisations about human relations. Sociology therefore hardly fits in the mould of natural science and its development in different countries bears in one way or another imprint of particular historical experiences and cultural configurations. Lack of attention to the fact in India has resulted in that one cannot even today speak with much conviction of an Indian tradition in sociology whereas one could speak of a German or American tradition of sociology. This is largely because of the fact that in their teaching and research Indian sociologists has in an overwhelming manner drawn upon the concepts,

methods and theories already in use in the West instead of developing their own. The activity of the sociologists in this regard is hardly different from what is done by the physicists or biologists or even economists. But the sociologists have a special kind of reason for their worry. The relationship of data on the one hand and concepts, methods, and theories on the other in the human sciences is different from what it is in the natural sciences. When an Indian physicist formulates, Andre Beteille most appositely points out, a general rule or principle such as the Saha Equation or Chandrasekhar Limit, he takes for granted that it will be used by the physicists everywhere and not just in India. “The utility of common stock of tools is not in question in natural sciences; but in human sciences, its very existence is in question.”.

True, because of their familiarity with Western sociology and its basic concepts and categories, the Indian sociologists did not have to struggle as hard as their predecessors in the nineteenth century Europe to establish the legitimacy of sociology as a serious intellectual discipline. But their over dependence on the Western pathfinders made them forget the fact that sociology in the West was “an intellectual response, a cognitive response, to the problems which that society was facing as a result of industrialisation and the type of social upheaval and transformation that were taking place”. The Intellectual Revolution embodied in the movement for Enlightenment, Scientific revolution and Commercial Revolution, which spanned the period between the 14th and the 18th centuries, the French Revolution of 1789 and the Industrial Revolution put a deadly blow to the age-old feudal system monarchy and the church when the saga of the aspirations and achievements of individuals and the tale of their woes started, there was great uncertainty about the values and social order in the new situation Sociology in the West came by way of an attempt to come to grips with it. It “was very largely a kind of cognitive system which the industrial bourgeoisie in the European context tried to develop as a response, as a kind of worldview to overcome the problems of the disintegrating traditional worldview and, at the same time the disintegrating paradigms of knowledge.” But the industrial bourgeoisie did not develop in India when sociology came to the country.

Sociology in India was the product of intellectual response of the Indians to the Western interpretations of Indian society and culture by the Westerners, mainly after the colonial rule of the British began in India. Anthropology, the kindred discipline with sociology, too was largely the product of European expansion of the world during the last three or four centuries. The need to Emergence of Sociology in India 13 governs men of various races and vastly different cultures created the urgency in the European rulers to study the life and cultures of the ruled. The Western effort to gather information of the life and culture of the Indians, which formed the basis of sociology and anthropology in India, was marked by a similar interest of the colonial rulers. It is, of course, true that later genuine scientific interests enriched both the disciplines and they emerged in the Western context of modernity. At the same time one can ill-afford to ignore the colonial context within which sociology grew in this country. Lack of adequate attention to this dual aspect of the milieu in which sociology emerged in this country tends to give it the semblance of an appendage of Western sociology. No protest, for example, is made against the statement made in 1957 by Dumont and Pocock that the sociology of India has only properly begun in the last ten years.” What is more deplorable is the audacious statement of Robert Bierstedt who would trace the roots of sociology to Plato and Aristotle but summarily dismiss the tradition of social thought in the east. Bierstedt writes, “Although I may be guilty of a species of provincialism, I have excluded all sociologists outside of the Western tradition of intellectual history. If excuse be needed, one may say that sociology has not characteristically been a discipline that has appealed to the Eastern mind and there does not exist, in fact, a corpus of Eastern sociological thought” (Bierstedt, 1959: u). Bierstedt’s is not the lone voice. The error must need to be corrected.

20.3 Sociology in India: Historical and Theoretical Probing’s

About the nature of Indian Sociology its theories, concepts and methodology there can be number of points. These points are to be seen in relation to its founding fathers, namely, G.S. Ghurye, Radhakamal Mukerjee and D.P. Mukerji other sociological in this line are

A. K. Saran, Rama Krishna Mukerjee, A.R Desai, I. P. Desia, K. M. Kapadia, M. N. Srinivas, Y. Singh, Andre Beteille, and T. N. Madan etc. The important questions to be inquired are:

20.3.1 What is the 'fit' between theory, method and data in Indian Sociology?

20.3.2 What are the ideological influences on the understanding Indian Society?

20.3.3 How to construct social reality in India Context?

20.3.4 Could there be an Indian Sociology different from sociological of other societies or nations.

20.3.5 What is the input of the idealist and the positivist tradition in Indian Sociology and how far it has been useful in constructing India's social reality?

20.3.6 Similarly, what is the role of Marxist tradition in studying Indian society?

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Note: Write your answers in the space given below.

1) Discuss briefly the contribution of G.S Ghurye in studying Indian sociology.

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2) How you conceptualise Sociology in India.

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Early theoretical and Methodological Concerns:

Theory and Methodology refer to the sociology of knowledge perspective - the way the

reality of Indian sociology has been understood.

Let us try to analyze it by observing the focus of early founding fathers namely G.S. Ghurye, Radhakamal Mukherjee and D.P. Mukerji:

1. **G. S Ghurye:** The early phase of Indian Sociology was clearly led by G.S. Ghurye. Though he had no clear theoretical perspective and methodological orientation but he was influenced by the British diffusionism due to his association with W.H. Rivers. Ghurye's early studies were of Indological nature. His interest in Indological data speaks of his ontological orientation. Ghurye has provided a sort of "philosophical anthropology" which is implicit in his analysis of Indian Social structure.
2. **Radha Kamal Mukherjee:** He talks of universal categories and concept. To him, sociology could be a universal social science, and it should be related to natural and other social sciences. Mukherjee finds both the Western Liberal democratic pattern and the Marxist models inadequate. He integrates social science model at a Meta scientific and meta-anthropological level. It is a "human general theory of relativity", that resolves the conflict between the philosophy of science and the philosophy of values. Mukherjee's explanations are based on deductive reasoning's, hence exogenous and speculative.
3. **D.P. Mukerjee:** He refers historical dialectical mode of sociological analysis rather than empirical positivistic one. He rejects atomism and modern methods of research; He accepts an Indianized version of the Marxian approach.

Thus, sociology in India has been guided from its inception by the particularistic as well as universalistic criteria. Bombay school through Ghurye represented a particularistic view whereas Radhakamal Mukerjee advocated a Universalistic brand of sociology at Lucknow University. B.D.Gupta observe that Indology and religio-philosophic thinking influenced R. N. Saxena A. K. Saran and Y. B.Damle and thus Indian Sociologists have been characterized as "tradition- bound" and engaged in the study of

“subjective” values and “pattern maintenance” Y. Singh said that Indian sociology has remained limited in its scope, approaches and procedures “Positivism was found lacking in Indian Sociology in the pre-Independence period. But one can say that to some extent. British colonialism largely determined the intellectual climate and scientific temperament of India in the last century. In this connection B.D. Gupta raised three questions-

- a) Are there a tradition of sociological thinking and some primary accumulation of sociological knowledge in this country?
- b) What were the broad, historical social and cultural factors that shaped the birth and development of sociology, both in its reflectional and actional aspect in India?
- c) What was the receptivity or the association of social networks like institutions associations within which sociological thinking and empirical research were promoted?

A common answer to these questions would be the “philosophical thought about society as a whole and an attention to carry out secular solution of social problems characterised by the early precursors of sociological in India. But Gupta talks more of social welfare; social policy and social action-oriented understanding of Indian society and research in the 19th century. The formation of sociology as a discipline for teaching and research in university is a phenomenon of Late 1920s.

Prevalence of consciousness among intellectuals about India's problems could not be equalled with sensitization and conscientization of sociology as a discipline. For example, Raja Ram Mohan Roy had understanding of India’s social problem but he was not a professional sociologist.

Time and again the question about the nature of Sociology in India has been put forth by Sociologists from abroad as well as from within the country. The debate was carried in the

writing of Radha Kamal Mukerjee, D.P. Mukerjee and A.K. Saran. Later on, in the late fifties L. Dumont and D. F. Pocok took up to debate with the publication of the 'contribution to Indian Sociology in 1957. The debate even continued in the 'contribution to Indian Sociology- New Series. Further Two Seminars were conducted in the Sixties - one at Agra (U.P) and the other at Mount Abu (Rajasthan) on the issue of Sociology in India and Sociology for India respectively.

20.4 Sociology in India: A Sociology Knowledge Perspective

How we intend to discuss sociology in India from the point of its theory, methodology and data. The emphasis in the debate is on; whether sociology in India should concern itself with the study of values or it should study relations. The corollary of this question is: Whether the approach would be Indological (or culturological) or comparative. The main points of interest in a study are the method of study and the material to be studied. The question arises is: Is Indology a history? Is Indological study diachronic in nature? The question whether Indian society should be studies "from within" or "from without" or from both "within and without" has also been taken up in view of the "complexity", diversity and unity of Indian society. This refers to what is known as home-made model and external point of view: In other words, it poses the problem of culturology vs. positivism for studying Indian society. It is said

D. P. Mukerji has "positive-cum-subjective" approach by combining the view from "within" a (study tradition) and the "view from without".

Regarding the question of nature of sociology in India, there can be two views. It is "Hindu" sociology from one view point and as "Indian" Sociology from another. It has the hangover of British colonialism and the academic hegemony of the West on the one hand and, the input of the "Hindu Chauvinism" and Indian nationalism on the other

It can be said that the earlier generations of Sociologist were not so much concerned with any particular theoretical pre-supposition but tried to describe Indian reality from the historical point

of view. Descriptive studies of order and change did not raise fundamental questions because both order and change were sought to be explained in terms of culture, completely neglecting the dimensions of power.

We will see status of sociology in India by commenting on the works of prominent sociologist, who constructed sociology for India and Indigenization of sociology in the chapter ahead.

20.5 Sociology and Independent India

The study of sociology and social anthropology gradually and slowly became professionalised during 1910-1950. Autonomous departments on these two subjects did not exist in more than half-a-dozen universities, and Bombay University was the only centre of post-graduate research in sociology (which included anthropology) when India became independent. Sociology and anthropology seemed to be overshadowed by economics and political science, the practitioners of which seemed to have the ability of answering questions by the nationalist leaders of the country. The association of sociology with European and American traditions made it suspect in the eyes of Indian academics. Anthropology was suspected as nationalist opinion regarded as an instrument of colonial policy (Srinivas, 2003:495). There was an additional reason for dislike of anthropology. To be studied by anthropologists often suggested that those who were studied were considered primitive, and nationalists resented this implication particularly when the anthropologists were largely from the ruling race. But, in spite of this unfriendly, if not hostile, intellectual milieu, a small band of scholars continued their work analysing fundamental social institutions such as caste, joint family, untouchability, religion and sect. They published ethnographic accounts of particular groups recorded folklore and depicted the material culture of tribes and rural people. Sociology in India at least academically could find a solid base to stand upon in the results of the work of these scholars.

Independent India was looking for a dynamic society capable of keeping pace with the tempo of

economic development promised by the freedom struggle from the tutelage of colonial government. To understand how the millions of Indians with their myriad beliefs and values would respond to the call of development of the new nation was a desideratum. Sociology seemed to hold the promise for effective assistance for the task. The undertaking of planned development in the country, and the creation of national Planning Commission which later formed a Research Programme Committee, generated the demand for reliable data about the life and activities of peoples all over the country. New opportunities became available for students of sociology. Separate University Departments of sociology sprang up all over the country.

20.6 Let us Sum Up

In this lesson, we find that how Sociology in India developed under peculiar circumstances. The initial scholars who took to the disciplines of Sociology were either trained in Sanskrit or Indology. Indian scholars in the field of Sociology were initially concerned with describing the various social institutions, particularly emphasizing their origin and development. The pre-independence period and the nationalist surge are also partly responsible for their insistence on describing the wholesomeness of Indian institutions such as family caste religion, village social system and other. The impact of British tradition also had implications for the unit of analysis and even the choice of problem. The earlier generation of sociologists, except few, were not so much concerned with any particular theoretical pre-supposition but tried to describe Indian reality from the historical point of view.

20.7 Glossary

- **Sociology in India:** It is the study of society, social relationships, and human interactions in the context of India. It covers a wide range of topics, including how social issues like poverty, crime, and racism affect individuals.

20.8 Self-Assessment Questions

Q.1. Discuss briefly historical and theoretical probing in understanding sociology in India.

Q.2. Briefly discuss on 'Sociology in India'.

Q.3. Write a short note on Sociology of Knowledge perspective in Indian society.

20.9 Suggested Readings

1. Sharma, S. 1985. *Sociology in India; A Perspective from sociology of knowledge*, Rawat Publication Jaipur.
2. Nayar, P. K. B(ed) 1982. *Sociology in India*, B. R. Publishing house, Delhi
3. Singh, Y; 1986. *Indian Sociology: Social conditioning and emerging concerns*, Vistasar Publication, New Delhi.

SOCIOLOGY FOR INDIA

STRUCTURE

- 21.0 Objectives
- 21.1 Introduction
- 21.2 Towards theory and Methodology of Indian Sociology
- 21.3 Sociology for India
- 21.4 New trends in Indian Sociology
- 21.5 Let us sum Up
- 21.6 Glossary
- 21.7 Self-Assessment Questions
- 21.8 Suggested Readings

21.0 Objectives

This lesson basically deals with:

- The transaction of sociology especially after independence.
- Understanding theories and methodology in constructing Indian Sociology.
- Development of Sociology for India recent development in Studies and research.

21.1 Introduction

The debate on "For a Sociological of India" takes a different form after Dumont and Pocock stopped editing the Contribution to Indian sociology; Later J.P.S Oberoi looks at the aim of science and social science and commented. The sociology of knowledge is a study of urgent practical importance today, for some considerable of it should form the prolegomenon and background to the determination of particular priorities and objectives. In this regard, M.N. Srinivas refers the concepts of Westernization in place of modernization because the former entails the values of humanitarianism and egalitarianism. It is really an irony of our scholars that they have found human values in colonization of the Indian masses. For Y. Singh sociology means a system of operational concepts and societal self-consciousness "Sociology is a science and its theoretic structure should not differ basically from natural sciences. According to him, the search for sociology of India may not logically contradict the general and scientific nature of sociology. On the whole, one gets the impression as if "positivism and culturology" alone have influence and shaped sociology in India.

21.2 Towards Theory and Methodology of Indian Sociology

The immediate context is that India had colonial cognitive traditions in the past and it has become an independent nation since 1947 and this provides it a new context and milieu. Sociology of knowledge perspective would demand examination of the continuity/discontinuity of the colonial traditional approaches, concepts and methods of study.

Y. Singh observe that even the debate- whether Sociology has universal concepts and techniques or it refers to culturally oriented cognitive styles and structures could be seen in the context of the hangover of Colonialism in independent India. Today the tensions in India Sociology are between: -

- i) The 'Master theory' or 'General theory' and conceptual schemes.

- ii) Between 'universalism' of concepts and proportion and their 'particularism' or 'contextually'.
- iii) The role of ideology in theory construction

Y. Singh While analysing ideology, theory and methods in India sociology divides the period from 1952 to 1977 into four parts

- 1) 1952 to 1960: a period of adaptive changes and innovations
- 2) 1960 to 1965: a period of significant shifts in theoretic priorities and the beginning of some critical tensions in theory and ideology of Indian sociology.
- 3) 1965 to 1970: a period of marked sociological self-awareness and growth of new directions in theoretical and substantive contributions.
- 4) 1970 to 1977: A period of new maturity and exploring both theoretically and substantively new horizons of knowledge.

These four periods correspond with four theoretic developments in Indian sociology. These theoretic orientations are - i) Philosophical (ii) Culturological (iii) Structural and (iv) dialectical and historical. Singh further adds that Indian sociologists have been less concerned with constructing meta-theories or general theories and they have been more prone to using conceptual scheme for analysis of social problems. The work of Radhakamal Mukerjee, D.P. Mukerji and AK. Saran is included in the philosophical orientation. Dumont, Srinivas and Singer and Marriott are the chief representative of the approach. The structural theoretic orientation, in Indian sociology refers to the writing of Bailey, Beteille, Agarwal, Arora, Bhatt, D' Souza, Joshi, P. N. Mukerji, LP Desai and M.S.A Rao who worked on the areas of social stratification, structures, social movement, Kinship., family etc. studies of- D.P. Mukerji, Ram Krishna Mukerjee, AR Desai, C. Bettelheim etc. could be included under dialectical historical orientation.

Further, Singh raises the questions: "What should be the role of social science and social scientists in contemporary India? He writes: My argument is not that we should give up the

scientific spirit in social science researches and substitute ideology for it. He said, as the task of science is to explain social phenomenon in terms of prediction of causal relationship among various events. This should also hold good for the social sciences. To him the universalism of social science should be the formal structure and methodology. In a long essay R. S. Khare discusses the problem of external vs internal view about sociology of India. He raises certain questions about the debate for "sociology of India" and notes that sociology is seeking 'nationalists' identity. The main dimensions of the debate are-

- i) The insider's view from inside e.g. A. K. Saran
- ii) The outsider's view from inside e.g. L. Dumont
- iii) The outsider view from outside e.g. Bailey
- iv) The insider's view from outside e.g. Srinivas

Thus inside-outside dichotomy is clearly evident in India sociology 'Inside view is mechanical and outside is epistemological and structural. In comprehensive review of Trends in India sociology Ramakrishan Mukerjee reiterates his point of view namely diagnostic perspective about Indian sociology and raised questions with regard to phenomenon

- i) How is it? (enumeration of the phenomenon)
- ii) How is it? (Classification)
- iii) Why is it? (causality)
- iv) What will it be (Probability)
- v) What should it be? (desirability)

Few words about methodological orientation in Indian sociology reflects the focus on inside versus outside view positivistic versus Indological diachronic versus synchronic, etc. have been made methodology comprises of logic of enquiry and philosophy of science technique of operationalization of concepts and tools of research, problems of measurements and observations and problem of measurement and finally questions of universality and particularity in tools of research for observation. The basic question is: whether methods and techniques used in Indian

Sociology reflects the researcher's consciousness about research goals and refers to the character of research objects or that is a borrowed research instrument without referring to objects of research.

21.3 Sociology for India

This is an issue carried in Indian Sociology from the 1950's to the 1970's and 1980's. During and 1960 debate began on this theme and was initiated by Dumont and Pocock. It was grounded in a structuralist methodology for the treatment of social reality in the context of ideology. In contrast to Dumont and Pocock; F. G Bailey postulated that Indian sociology was the study not of representations but of active behaviour patterns, social roles and structures from an empirical perspective. But both of the debate was focussing on particularistic Indian sociology. This debate was carried out in 'contribution to Indian.

Later one finds a fundamental change emerging in the ideological basis on which the issue of sociology for India could be constituted. Few social scientists like Imtiaz Ahmed and R. Burghart rejected Dumont-Pocock notion of Hindu civilization.

1980's signify a remarkable shift in terms of emphasis. More attention is now paid to the nature of Indian social reality. A significant feature of the new debate on sociology for India is its grounding in empirical observation and analysis for sociology for India.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Note: Write your answers in the space given below.

1)What is meant by theory.

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2) Define Methodology.

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3) Define Indian Sociology.

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21.4 New Trends on India Sociology

Despite the continuity reflected in the quest for social relevance on an indigenous paradigm for sociology, the 1990's and 1980's in India mark several directions in which new explorations have been made. First, sociological studies show a new sensitivity in the choice of concepts and their uses as they move away from a continuum framework of analysis of social process to that of a notion of levels. The use of conceptual typologies, historical data and symbolic structural techniques adds new depth and dimensions to the studies of social structure.

The Marxist historical method of the analysis gains momentum as a series of studies on the peasantry, agrarian structures and working classes by younger generation sociologists, gains momentum. New series of study sensitive to theoretical orientation such as structuralism, ethno-sociology, systematic analysis and historical materialistic methods of Marxism and neo-Marxism have been conducted to analyse the social structure.

The 1970 and 1980: saw the establishment of a large measure of institutional support for the social sciences several organizations like the Indian Council for Social science research (ICSSR),

the Indian council of historical research, the Indian council of Philosophical Research and others. The University Grants commission further reinforced this process. The Professional association in sociology and the journals published by these and other bodies received financial supports from these research council and the Commission. All this contributed to the growth in social researches and offered more freedom for conventional and methodological explorations. It also brought several disciplines, particularly economics, history psychology, political science and anthropology, closer to sociology in respect of the interdisciplinary formulation of research and thinking on social problems. The important contribution was like U. Patnaik, P.H. Prasad, A. Rudra etc. as economists contributing to sociology; R. S. Sharma, R. Thapar, B. Chandra I. Habib etc. as historian influenced by sociology. An important result of this interdisciplinary sensitivity in concepts and method led to sociological studies of social movement (M.S.A Rao, T. K. Omen, A. R Desai, D. N. Dhangare, K. L. Sharma, and P. N. Mukherjee). The growth of social movement studies coincided with studies of Indian social structure using new conceptual perspectives. Further the studies of specific social processes such as urbanization, migration and demographic changes, educational processes, social stratification social exploration of specific categories like women children, tribes Schedule castes etc. conducted not merely as social portrait but to seek diagnostic and explanatory relationship enriching concepts and methods in sociology.

Specific areas of sociological research such as sociology of development, sociology of education sociology of health and medicine, sociology of profession and analysis of problems of weaker section of society such as Tribes, S. C, women etc. were expanded in order to promote social reconstruction and development. The understanding of the nature of these problems further enriched sociological insight into the nature of social structure, culture and its dynamics in Indian society

21.5 Let us Sum Up

The lesson identified major attempts to formulate sociology for India or Indian sociology. The

period from 1952 to 1977 was classified in the theoretical parameters like philosophical, culturological, structural and dialectical historical. An attempt has also been made to understand the role of social scientists in contemporary India. The new significance of the new development in the changing social conditions was also reflected and various new areas of research and studies were also identified. It indicates the shift in theoretical and methodological issues that took place after 1970s.

21.6 Glossary

1. **Theory:** A theory is a system of assumptions, principles, and relationships posited to explain a specified set of phenomena. A methodology is often a whole set of methods developed according to a philosophical theory about how best to research and learn about natural or social phenomena.
2. **Methodology:** Outlines how to practically implement research design to answer research questions. Methodology can be specific to a study due to variations in research questions, data sources, and practical considerations.
3. **Theory and method:** A theory explains how the world is, while a method tells you how to act in the world described by the theory.
4. **Theoretical framework:** Sets the theoretical context for research, and can be used across multiple studies.

21.7 Self-Assessment Questions

Q.1. Discuss early theory and Methodology in Indian sociology.

Q.2. Discuss new trends in Indian sociology.

Q.3. Briefly discuss on 'Sociology for India'.

21.8 Suggested Readings

1. Singh, Y; 1986. *Indian sociology- Social conditioning and emerging concerns*, Vistaar publication New Delhi.
2. Sharma, S; 1985. *Sociology in India*, Rawat publication, Jaipur.
3. Nayar, P.K.B (ed) 1982. *Sociology in India*. BR Publishing House New Delhi.
4. Singh, Y; 1986. *Indian Sociology: Social conditioning and emerging concerns*, Vistaar Publication, New Delhi.

QUEST FOR INDIGENIZATION OF SOCIOLOGY**STRUCTURE**

- 22.0 Objectives
- 22.1 Introduction
- 22.2 Universal values Specific Sociology for India
- 22.3 Indigenization of Sociology in India
- 22.4 Need for Indigenization
- 22.5 Attempts for Indigenization
- 22.6 Let us Sum Up
- 22.7 Glossary
- 22.8 Self-Assessment Questions
- 22.9 Suggested Readings

22.0 OBJECTIVES

The broad objectives of this chapter are to familiarize you with:

- Attempts for sociology in India
- Nature of sociology for India
- Queries on indigenization
- Requirement for process of indigenization.
- Attempts made in the direction of indigenization

22.1 INTRODUCTION

Time and again the question about the nature of Sociology in Indian has been put forth by sociology from abroad as well as from within the country. This debate was carried in the writing of Radha Kamal Mukerjee, D.P. Mukerji and A.K. Saran. Later on, in the Late fifties L. Dumont and D.F. Pocock took up to debate with the publication of the contributions to Indian Sociology in 1957. Further the two seminars were conducted in the sixties - one at Agra (U.P) and the other Mount Abu (Rajasthan) the proceedings of the two seminars: 'Sociology in India' and 'Sociology for India' respectively. The issue was whether sociology in India should be a part of global sociology or it should have Indian ness in its concepts, categories, classifications, approaches and methods of research investigations. This issue give rise to various questions on specific sociology for India, Indigenization of sociology, Indian Sociology and so on. Let us try to understand the relevance of these efforts and the works done in these directions.

22.2 UNIVERSAL VERSUS SPECIFIC SOCIOLOGY FOR INDIA

The contributions to the seminars on sociology in India were: R.N. Saxena, Y.B Damle, Y. Singh, B.R. Chauhan and Indra Deva. The other well-known names are Victor S. D. Souza, K. M. Kapadia and K. C. Panchandikar.

An Indological or culturological approach has been the hall mark of several pioneer sociologists. They have hammered against the acceptance of theoretical and methodological orientations of the western countries. R.N. Saxena focuses on the role of the concept of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. He further writes that a correct approach to Indian sociology can only be a synthesis of empiricism and intuition and a proper recognition of the fact that spiritual values have an important role in our social life.

- **TERMINOLOGY AND DEFINITION**

In India, people with indigenous characteristics are known by many names, such as ‘scheduled tribes,’ ‘tribes,’ ‘adivasi,’ ‘janajati,’ ‘girijan,’ ‘vanvasi,’ ‘vanyajati,’ and ‘hill tribe’. The tribal people of India are called ‘Scheduled Tribes’ in the Indian constitution. The question of tribes in India is closely linked with administrative and political considerations. Many groups and communities are increasingly demanding their inclusion in the list of scheduled tribes of the Indian constitution. That partly explains the steady increase in the proportion of the scheduled tribe population in India especially in the period between 1971 and 1981. Though indigenous people are called by names such as natives, uncivilized people, aboriginals, first peoples/nations, adivasis, tribals, the indigenous people of India prefer calling themselves Adivasi (original inhabitants). The word Adi means first, original or earliest time, and the word Vasi means dweller, inhabitant, and resident of. This self-identification as Adivasi corresponds to the modern concept of indigenous peoples. The International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGIA) thus states: As adivasis, “we are people with distinct historical, political, and cultural identities. We are united by our histories as distinct societies, by our languages, laws, traditions, and unique spiritual and economic relationships with our lands and territories” (IWGIA 2000).

Anthropology as a discipline came into existence to study the indigenous people of Africa, Asia, Australia and the New World. According to D.N. Majumdar, “Tribe is a collection of families or groups of families bearing a common name, members of which occupy the same territory, speak the same language and observe certain taboos regarding marriage, profession or occupation and have developed a well-assessed system of reciprocity and mutuality of obligations.” According to R.N. Mukherjee, “A tribe is that human group, whose members have common interest, territory, language, social law and economic occupation.” Roy Burman describes nominalistic, evolutionary, structural and normative approaches for conceptualising tribes. The term “tribe” originated around the time of the Greek city-states and the early formation of the Roman Empire. According to The Oxford English Dictionary, the word “tribe” is derived from the Latin term “tribus” which means “a group of persons forming a community and claiming descent from a

common ancestor”. With the growth of nationalism in Europe, the term “tribe” came to denote a race of people living within a given territory. Western writers in India known as Orientalists used this term with the same connotation and argued that the tribes of India belonged to three stocks: the Negritos, the Mongoloids and the Mediterranean. The word “tribe” is generally used for a “socially cohesive unit, associated with a territory, the members of which regard them as politically autonomous”. Often a tribe possesses a distinct dialect and distinct cultural traits. The Imperial Gazetteer of India, 1911, defines a tribe as a “collection of families bearing a common name, speaking a common dialect, occupying or professing to occupy a common territory and is not usually endogamous though originally it might have been so”. The conception of the tribe was obvious from the use of criteria that were adopted. Some of these features were:

- geographical isolation
- simple technology and condition of living
- general backwardness
- the practice of animism
- distinct language
- physical features

The problem, however, lay in the fact that they were neither clearly formulated nor systematically applied. One set of criteria was used in one context and quite another in another context. The result is that the list includes groups and communities strikingly different from each other in respect of not only the size of the population but also the level of technology and other characteristics.

The term, however, has gone through a lot of changes. It originally meant a political unit consisting of a number of clans. A tribe occupied a definite geographical area. The permanent settlement gave a geographical identity to a tribe. For that reason, tribes were often named after the area. States such as Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura are named after the Mizo, Naga and

Tripuri tribes, respectively. The Gondwana region is named after the Gonds. The range of meanings, however, has grown even further over the years, for example, “any of various systems of social organisation comprising several local villages, bands, districts, lineages, or other groups and sharing a common ancestry, language, culture, and name” (Morris, 1980). Morris also notes that a tribe is a “group of persons with a common occupation, interest, or “habit”, and “a large family.” Today, the range of groups referred to as tribal is truly enormous. The terms used for tribes in the following Asian countries are:

- Bangladesh, Nepal and Malaysia: tribes
- China: nationalities
- The Philippines: cultural communities.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Note: Write your answers in the space given below.

1) Define indigenization.

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2) Describe various terms used for indigenous people and their meaning.

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Indra Deva discerns the following points which might make a reference to the term in Indian Sociology They are:

- a) A body of concepts and generalization applicable specifically to Indian society and culture.
- b) sociology principles derived from traditional Indian sources.
- c) The study of social structure and special processes in India.
- d) Sociology as it has developed in India.

Y.B. Damle is very particular in regard to sociology in India. He writes: "In order to take cognizance of both stability and change I would suggest the use of the Parsonian frame of references for the study of Indian sociology Patrons view that personality culture and society are atomistic as well as interdependent system and constitute the social system is explained by Damle as relevant for studying Indian society. Later on, he adopted Merton's theory of reference group for analysing social mobility in the caste system in India.

22.3 INDIGENIZATION OF SOCIOLOGY IN INDIA

The objective and discussion on indigenization of Sociology in India, as put in the seminar at M. T. Abu were

- i) What is the disciplinary status of sociology in India?
- ii) How far sociological concept require further re-adaptation and reconceptualization for a scientific study of the Indian society
- iii) What possibilities of inter disciplinary approach and cooperation are available and can be further envisaged?
- iv) What the problem of teaching and research in sociology in India are?
- v) What further improvement can be brought about?
- vi) What is the role of sociology and sociologists in a developing society?
- vii) What theoretical and practical problems must be taken up for research by the

sociologists in India?

Some of the relevant conclusions are :

1. No prescriptive formula for sociological enterprise could be laid down and the practice of sociology should be left to the academic sensibility of individual sociologists themselves
2. There was no antinomy between the use of historic fact and the structural functional approach
3. The discussions also revealed the faith of sociologists in the universalistic character of sociology for India
4. 4. The possibility of a typical and particularistic sociology was rejected.

A.K. Saran in this regard, classify the thinking in India sociology as -

1. Those who totally reject the modern western civilization and advocate the return to the traditional principle.
2. Those who want a synthesis of the two
3. Those who debate the basis of synthesis
 - a) Traditional concepts and institution in terms of modern rationalistic positivistic ideas and
 - b) A value neutral scientific attitude.

We find that India's sociologists were divided on the issue of sociology in India. However, majority of them felt that it should be a part of general sociological theory and there should be synthesis and reinforcement of the general with the 'specific'.

22.4 NEED FOR INDIGENIZATION

According to Y. Atal, on the intellectual front, the key crisis in social science in Asia relates to their indigenization. The native scholarship has begun raising question regarding the applicability and appropriateness of theories and methodology imported from abroad and has started almost a campaign for their replacement by native categories of thought and indigenous techniques of

research.

The understanding of indigenization as said by Y. Atal is varied and central for some it is merely a plea for the introduction and recognition of social science so that native Scholarship can grow and finally a contribution to the nation building process; in some others it is expressed in terms of switch over to the national language as medium of instruction and report writing and curriculum development with biasness towards national needs as also an indicator of indigenisation.

Even the planner and policy makers of the developing countries are finding faults with the western parading of development and social scientists are articulating their dissatisfaction with western theories and methodology. Development strategies are sloganizing the need for endogenous development; social scientists are agonizing about indigenization. Even at the political level indigenization stands for 'localization', control and monitoring of expatriate research and promotion of research on relevant times. Academic have joined the chorus in favour of indigenization In its extreme formulation the demand appears almost like a revolt against the dominance of Western concepts, theories and methodologies. They criticize, on the one hand the quality of work done by foreigners on their societies and on the other the blind imitation of foreign model by local scholars who have been trained abroad.

Some of the positive aspects of indigenization being emphasized by its exponents are:

1. Indigenization is plea for self-awareness and rejection of borrowed consciousness. It emphasizes the need for an inside view.
2. Indigenization advocates the desirability for alternative perspectives on human societies with a view to making the social sciences less parochial and enriching them. This would emancipate the mind and improve the quality of professional praxis so that society can be examined through view lenses.
3. Indigenization draws attention to historical and cultural specificities and argues for the redefinition of focus with a view to developing dynamic perspectives on national problem.

4. Indigenization should not lead to narrow parochialism or to the fragmentation of a single discipline into several insulated system of thought based on geographical boundaries. It is opposed not only to false universalism but also to false nationalism.

22.5 ATTEMPTS FOR INDIGENIZATION

According to Atal, in Asian context the indigenization been pursued along four fronts:

1. **Teaching in national languages and use of local materials:** Several countries of the region are taking steps introduce the national languages as the medium of instruments at higher education. In case of India the problem is further compounded by the fact that the constitution recognizes 18 regional languages and the various states are moving towards the adoption of regional languages for purpose of instruction. Again, the acceptance of a national language as the medium of instruction requires the production literature in that language but most of the books are available in non-Asian language.
2. **Research by Insiders:** One significant step towards indigenization is the promotion of research by the locals but many times the funding and publication of works are not done in favour of insiders.
3. **The questions of Priorities:** One dimensions of indigenization is promotion of research on themes regarded as nationally important and relevant. In the developing countries of Asia, it has pervaded all sectors. But Priorities are attempted in terms of relevance. Both the introduction of social science teaching and the promotion of research are determined in according with these criteria. But even depending on the nature of commitment of social scientists they may side with one or another political group.
4. **Theoretical and methodical reorientation:** Effort is still needed to test the alleged Universality of established theories and models in a variety of setting. It is not so much an alternative which is really needed if one is to pursue the goal of a Universal science.

22.6 LET US SUM UP

The demand for indigenization is an invitation to re-examine the very structure of social sciences and to evolve suitable strategies for their promotion in the differing and challenging situation of modern times. A need exists to distinguish carefully between indigenous and indigenized, between endogenous development and indigenization and between universalistic and particularistic aspect of indigenization. It is also clear from current academic trends that the concern for indigenization is spreading globally. The main aim of which is localization, language shift, paradigm replacement returns to native categories of thought, glorification of tradition and condemnation of foreign academic colonialism.

22.7 GLOSSARY

1. **Theory and context:** Some argue that theory should be related to context, and that Western theory can't be applied to Indian society.
2. **Founding fathers:** Indian founding fathers like Radhakamal Mukerjee, D.P. Mukerji, B.N. Seal, and B.K. Sarkar argued that the dissimilar structure of Indian society cannot be compared to Western society.
3. **Vernacularization:** An essential part of indigenizing social science in India is vernacularization, which is the translation and adaptation of knowledge texts into local and regional languages.
4. **Rammohan Roy:** Indian thinker and reformer Rammohun Roy (1772–1833) was one of the earliest to counter Eurocentric thinking.
5. **Social work:** The social work profession in many developing countries has recognized the problems with the Western model's remedial approaches. The Catholic University of Chile pioneered the movement to create indigenous social work theories and practices based on local values.

6. **Indian sociology:** The call for indigenization of social sciences in the post-colonial era was an invitation to re-examine the structure of social sciences. The demand for indigenization emphasizes de-parochialization of Western social sciences.
7. **Indological discourse:** Indological perspectives provided concepts, theories, and framework for understanding Indian society. However, these perspectives were based on the study of classical texts and literature, such as the Vedas, Upanishads, and the Puranas. This led to a fixed view of Indian society with no regional variation or historical changes.

22.8 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q.1. Briefly discuss on the issue of indigenization in India sociology.

Q.2. How can one approach the process of Indigenization.

Q.3. Discuss indigenization process for building sociology for India.

22.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

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