PREFACE

In a bid to standardise higher education in the country, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has introduced Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) based on five types of courses: core, generic discipline specific elective, and ability/ skill enhancement for graduate students of all programmes at Elective/ Honours level. This brings in the semester pattern, which finds efficacy in tandem with credit system, credit transfer, comprehensive and continuous assessments and a graded pattern of evaluation. The objective is to offer learners ample flexibility to choose from a wide gamut of courses, as also to provide them lateral mobility between various educational institutions in the country where they can carry acquired credits. I am happy to note that the University has been recently accredited by National Assessment and Accreditation Council of India (NAAC) with grade "A".

UGC Open and Distance Learning (ODL) Regulations, 2017 have mandated compliance with CBCS for U.G. programmes for all the HEIs in this mode. Welcoming this paradigm shift in higher education, Netaji Subhas Open University (NSOU) has resolved to adopt CBCS from the academic session 2021-22 at the Under Graduate Degree Programme level. The present syllabus, framed in the spirit of syllabi recommended by UGC, lays due stress on all aspects envisaged in the curricular framework of the apex body on higher education. It will be imparted to learners over the six semesters of the Programme.

Self Learning Materials (SLMs) are the mainstay of Student Support Services (SSS) of an Open University. From a logistic point of view, NSOU has embarked upon CBCS presently with SLMs in English. Eventually, these will be translated into Bengali too, for the benefit of learners. As always, we have requisitioned the services of the best academics in each domain for the preparation of new SLMs, and I am sure they will be of commendable academic support. We look forward to proactive feedback from all stake-holders who will participate in the teaching-learning of these study materials. It has been a very challenging task well executed, and 1 congratulate all concerned in the preparation of these SLMs.

I wish the venture a grand success.

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Vice-Chancellor

Netaji Subhas Open University
Under Graduate Degree Programme
Choice Based Credit System (CBCS)
Honours in Sociology (HSO)
Sociology of India-1
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Module 1

India: An Object of Knowledge

Unit 1 ❏ The Colonial Discourse

Structure

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    (**KEY WORDS :** Colonial, Colonization, Evangelist, Orientalist, Anglicist, East India Company, Imperial.)

1.0 Objectives

The unit introduces learners to

● The colonizers' viewpoints of the society and people of India.

● Diversity of the opinions of the colonial people about the society in India.

● The ways history is constructed and imposed on the people of a less advantageous country from above.

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1.1 Introduction

The Colonial Discourse means the assortment of opinions found in the writings, pronouncements and declarations made by the British colonial officials and administrators. To understand the true spirit of this discourse it is essential to understand the history of colonial rule in the country. The British imperialistic control over the subcontinent was first introduced in the 18th century, designed by the systematized policy of oppression and plundering of resources of a country rich in natural resources for the benefit of the British empire. The British colonial authority wanted to usurp all the natural and human resources to enrich itself and monopolize its control over the vast territory of undivided India and they spared no effort to fulfill their desire. However, they wanted to hide their real intention under the cover of their lofty arguments and ideological camouflage. The Discourse acted as a mechanism of control over the vast Indian subcontinent for a long period of time. It also ushered modernization in the western sense of the term through clever planning, and an encounter between the modern west and the traditional east. In fact, social anthropology and its twin sister sociology emerged in the subcontinent out of the contributions of the colonial administrators and their ethnological endeavours. Risley, Ibbetson. Hutton and many other had played important roles in introducing and strengthening the colonial approach towards the land and people of India.

The main objective of the imperial government was to impose greater control of the colonized territory of India and her people. So, to justify the aggressive control over the land and its people the colonial administrators wanted to project it (India) as a degenerating society that was badly in need of the rescuing touch of the Imperial authority. The main problem was their total unfamiliarity with the social and cultural systems of the land. The village community and its land revenue system, the religious practices and rituals, innumerable languages and their dialects, the structure and functions of the tribal society - everything was unfamiliar to them. This unfamiliarity had misled them to adopt wrongful interpretations of traditional Indian institutions.

The views of the British-Indian officials were primarily based on the principle of utilitarianism of Jeremy Bentham and philosophy of John Stuart Mill who rigidly believed that the colonial rule had contributed in an extremely positive way for the modernization and development of the traditional Indian society. Before the establishment of colonial rule India was basically a rural, agricultural, self -sufficient

society. In the absence of a properly developed market system, the village society used to produce crops and utility goods for its own members only. A very limited amount of the total village produce of crops and artisan goods used to be sold in the local market. The regular exchange of goods used to be conducted on the basis of jajmani system, generating a close family-based relationship among different castes and their clientele. In the town areas there were excellent handicrafts products like fine cotton and silk, textiles, ivory and stone carvings, brass and copper-work, boat and ship-making industry, leather-craft, sword, shield and knife-making industry, etc.with traditional techniques. The vast land of the subcontinent was rich with precious natural and human resources. The colonial efforts at industrialization and modernization had multiple impacts; both positive and negative. But the colonial writers have highlighted the positive aspects only, while ignoring the negative impacts totally as they wanted to justify the interventionist policy of the authority. The utilitarian thinker like James Mill was in charge of the East India Company in London and under his direction utilitarian principles towards India were being applied. James Mill and other Utilitarians rejected all attempts at recognition of any good feature of India. Mill considered India as a 'dark continent' and recommended application of British laws,British -type education, and abolition of inhuman practices like sati and child marriage to bring in changes.

1.2 The Central Issues of the Colonial Discourse

The colonial administrators could feel that the absence of proper understanding of the Indian villages and their people would ultimately create a serious problem for the Raj and frequent occurrences of tribal and peasant revolts were giving such indications to the colonial administration. To nip the buds of such problems the colonial administrators had used ethnology to collect information about India's land and people in great details. They could understand that efficient control of the country would only be possible with garnering of sufficient material about every details of people's life. Thus, from the very beginning sociology and social anthropology became important tools in the hands of the colonial administrators. Colonial officials with anthropological bent of mind used to formulate policies for the rural and tribal people and helped the government with their distorted interpretation of the culture of the land. The ethnographic writings of British administrators, missionaries and anthropologists created long-lasting images of India and her people for the world to see. As ethnologists, most of them were amateurs and indulged in the task of

unearthing information for the benefit of colonial administration; they had classified the complex social organization of an unfamiliar country on the basis of race, level of evolution, civilization etc. From these anthropological-ethnological ventures sociology in India had emerged gradually.

1.3 The Colonial Administrators

The colonialists were responsible for the development of sociology in India, no doubt; but the discipline had entered the subcontinent by following the footsteps of anthropology. British administrators had painstakingly collected detaied information on India's social, cultural and economic systems. It is necessary to discuss their contributions for proper understanding of the implication of the colonial approach in Indian sociology. The leading role was adopted by senior officials like Francis Buchanan, B.H. Baden-Powell, Risley, Nesfield, Crook. Hutton and many others.

Dr. Francis Buchanan, also known as Hamilton-Buchanan was a botanist, surveyor and a surgeon serving the East India Company. He had worked as an assistant surgeon of the Company from 1794 to 1815. This stay of over two decades in Bengal had given him sufficient opportunity to know the country and its flora and fauna from close quarters. In 1798, he was appointed by the Company government to make survey of Chittagong and its surrounding areas to find if those areas could be used for cultivation of crops for export purposes. He did many such surveys after that. For example, he made a survey of Bengal in the period between 1807 -1814, recording every details of the land. As he travelled through the different parts of the country ranging from the Andaman Islands, Burma (Myanmar), Chittagong, Nepal, North Bengal and Bihar, he collected detailed information and prepared reports on them. Being a keen observer of the natural life he collected drawings of plants and animals by local artists from wherever he traveled. He had made important comments on the plant and animals of India. In the period between 1807- 1814 the then government of Bengal entrusted him with the task of conducting surveys on topography, history, relics, conditions of the local people, religion, natural resources and products, local agriculture and agricultural practices including tools, manures, domestic animals, fences, landed property, fine arts artisans' crafts, transportation of goods, exports and imports, weighs and measures and many more of the region. These records and observations prepared by Buchanan are one of the important first-hand accounts of the traditional Indian ways of life. Not only in Bengal, he collected detailed information, statistics and oral histories on a wide

range of topics from the everyday existence of common people from other parts of India too. He presented all his findings with first person narratives accompanied by maps, table and diagrams. His works represented the pioneering survey explorations in different parts of India.

B.H. Baden-Powell, an eminent English civil servant had served in Bengal and Punjab and wrote on the traditional system of India's land tenure, forest conservation and law. His writings on Indian land system, in fact, acted as a handbook and guide for the colonial India's revenue officers. His famous book The Land-Systems of British India has three volumes and contains discussions on India's land-tenure and revenue systems, myriad local systems of village settlements including Rayotwari and other allied systems. The second volume of the book contains detailed discussions on land tenure and revenue systems in Bengal. His book also contains details of different types of villages found among the tribal and non-tribal populations.

Sir Herbert Hope Risley was one of the most well-known British administrators and ethnographer who made extensive studies on the castes and tribes of the Bengal Presidency region. He was also the leading anthropologist of British India. In the 1900 census of Indian population he classified the people of India into several types, i.e. seven main physical types residing in different parts of India starting from the western frontier region and ending at the southern-most region. His observant eyes and an urge for precision to analyse things had recorded the physical features of the inhabitants in great details. He had also defined castes and was the first author to notice the conversion of tribes into castes. His Tribes and Castes of Bengal (1891) had once been acknowledged as a classic, but his theory on caste has also been severly criticized later as one of the most racist accounts. Risley argued that castes represented a hierarchical distinction of the higher, fair-skinned Aryan origin people and the lower dark skinned people of Dravidian origin. He supported his conclusion with the help of 'nasal index' or the shape of the nose and its correlation with social status. In fact, Risley being one of the 'official anthropologists' did introduce 'scientific racism' in his extensive ethnographic studies on the castes and tribes of Bengal Presidency and used his survey findings to justify racial discrimination of the so called racially inferior people in the hands of perpertedly superior white western rulers. Of course, being accused of blatant racism he had written many disclaimers but ultimately concluded that the whites belonged to the 'conquering race'.

Ethnology and anthropology in India by the late Victorian period were developed also by several other colonial administrators like Crooke, Ibbetson, Baines, Nesfield, Hutton, Dalton. William Crooke and Sir Denzil Ibbetson. Crooke had far less exposure to the Indian society as he remained posted during the whole of his career to the North-western provinces of then undivided India, and comprehensively wrote on the native inhabitants, their religions, beliefs, customs, and mentalities. Ibbetson, as the superintendent of the Punjab region made an ethnographic survey of Punjab's castes and tribes and classified them on the basis of occupation and proclaimed that caste system was nothing but the product of the age old traditions of division of labour. Other colonial administrators like Athelstane Baines and John Nesfield also spoke in favour of the occupational origin of caste. Following the instruction of the census commission in 1881 several provincial governments had undertaken surveys on castes and tribes and published handbooks on the basis of the findings. Ethnological studies on castes continued till 1911, but hill and forest tribes of central India and Assam remained the topics of ethnographical analysis till the end of the colonial rule. J.H. Hutton, as an anthropologist and administrator under the colonial government, was posted in Assam where he studied the tribal culture of that region. For his interests in anthropology, he made extensive studies on the tribes of the region and earned the reputation of 'the greatest authority on the Naga Hills in general' for his knowledge. His studies helped the British government to bring the Nagas under its control. He had noticed during his posting in Assam that each tribal villages had some occupational specialization and thus the neighbouring villages used to create some network of interdependence. He had assumed that that practice was being continued since the pre-Aryan period in the country. Hutton's views on caste, tribal life and villages in Bengal had inspired many such studies later.

Another remarkable ethnological work was made by Edward T. Dalton, a mid-level military officer posted in Bengal Presidency who collected enough ethnological material on remote tribes residing in Upper Assam, North-Eastern Frontier and in Chhotanagpura areas of then Bengal. His book, A Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal (1872), published by the government of Bengal was one of the first ethnological works on the indigenous people. He viewed the British control of India from a liberal perspective and was praised by the authority for doing commendable job in managing, or, controlling the tribes in the name of development. Dalton also was in favour of converting tribes to Christianity by the Christian missionaries. Other colonial ideologues and administrative historians had started to write on as a part

of their official duty and extensively used the official documents for their writings. Among them there were other British-Indian officials like Sir Henry Maine ,B .Malleson, James Todd, M.E. Grant Duff, to name a few. As the Governor of Madras Grant Duff had commented in 1887 that British capital investment was essential for a "half-civilized" country like India. John Ruskin, the noted Victorian writer and art critic of his time had an open contempt for all types of Indian art. Some others like George Birdwood would believe that painting and fine art did not exist in the pre-British period.

Thus, the western thinkers, in general, had portrayed India as a country frozen in history, devoid of any civilizational progress for centuries. James Mill, who wrote three volumes of History of British India, William Jones and Henry Maine had nurtured this vision of India devoid of any social, intellectual and technological mobility and innovation and it had received wide publicity among western thinkers.

1.4 The Evangelical Writers

The colonialist viewpoint towards India did not remain limited among the British-Indian officials and historiographers only. The Evangelical writers, too, believed in the superiority of the whites and inherent inferiority of the native Indians. The School of Evangelical writers used to be comprising of missionaries who came to India with the objective of preaching and converting the Indians and thus spreading the message of Christianity among the people of the subcontinent. However, at the initial stages of the Company rule the primary belief of the East India Company was that, neither business nor controlling the docile people of India would be too much of a problem; therefore preaching and conversion were not among their primary objectives. But its stand was changed in 1813 under pressure from Evangelical movement back home and the Company had to open the doors for the missionaries. The Christian missionaries and several missionary societies had taken pioneering role in the spread of English education in the country. By the last decade of the 18th century three Christian missionary societies were established in the country, namely, the Baptist Missionary Society(1792), the London Missionary Society(1795) and the Church Missionary Society (1799). Of all the missionaries William Carey was the first to introduce English education in Bengal. In association with two other fellow missionaries, Joshua Marshman and William Ward, he had established one school for English education and one printing press for supplying reading materials in both English and Bengali. Later in 1818 they established the Serampore

College — the first college in India to offer modern higher education to all. Carey and his companions had established 126 schools to educate about 10,000 Indian students in modern western ideals and values. By that time, Robert May, another Christian missionary of the London Missionary Society had established one school in Chinsurah first, and then 36 more schools in different parts of Bengal. The Christian missionaries did not establish schools and colleges purely as a humanitarian effort, their sometimes open, sometimes hidden, agenda was to spread Christian spiritual and religious messages, to eradicate the Hindu practices of idol worship, polytheism, polygamy, human sacrifice and other superstitious customs which they (the missionaries) considered barbaric. They wanted to sensitize the native population and prove profanity and falsehood of their religions. However, they could not fulfill their goal of religious sensitization as in job-starved India English-education became the essential criterion for securing government employment; and gradually the focus of the education system became success in examinations. The missionaries initially had a slow start because the East India Company was reluctant to interfere with the faith and beliefs of the native people and opposed the entry of the preachers and missionaries. But, several Evangelists like Wilber Force, Macaulay and others had started a serious movement to oppose government ban against the missionaries and finally in 1813 the ban was lifted. Evangelism means preaching of the gospel or message of the Bible to the non-believers. So the Charter of 1813 had opened the floodgate for the missionaries to come to India and to preach and spread of education based on Christian principles and values. Alexander Duff was an eminent missionary who had established the Scottish Mission in Bengal. Like Carey, he, too, had established several schools here to teach English. Of them the most important was the General Assemblies Institution (present-day Scottish Church College). His endeavor for spreading English education and Christian religion among the locals was so successful that the period between 1830-1857 came to be known as the Age of Duff. Both Duff and Macaulay were also known as Anglicists because they were in favour of education in English medium only, to create a new class of Indians who would think and speak in English habitually, who would be proud of their loyalty to the colonial masters and would be totally immersed in the lessons taught by the western scholars, philosophers and ideologues. Christian missionaries like Carey could anticipate that British educators should learn Sanskrit and interpret Sanskrit texts in a manner compatible with the colonial aims. They had little respect for Indian people and their traditions. The colonialists not only opened schools, they

also supplied text books written by English authors who were either highly prejudiced or openly racist in their attitude towards everything Indian. For example, William Carey had no respect for Indian traditions, culture and music. In a similar vein, Charles Grant, too, had despised everything associated with Indian society and religion. Most of them would consider Indians as dishonest, immoral, and untruthful. Christian missionaries were also convinced that India was the worst place to live in. William Wilberforce once commented that it was disgraceful for Britain to allow Indians (meaning Hindus) to follow the grossest and the darkest as well as the most degrading system of idolatrous superstition on earth. Out of this hatred towards the land and its people, the Christian missionaries built up the belief that it was their duty to wean the natives from their 'disgusting and bestial rites.' Like the colonial officials, they too, took upon themselves the task of civilizing the inferior, ignorant people of India. They had even debated over whether the natives needed to be civilized first or to be Christianized. Many of them like James Montogmery genuinely felt that Christianizing was an important tool to civilize the people of India. With preaching and spreading the messages of the Bible the twin task of conversion and civilizing would easily be possible. It is not difficult to conclude that such notions were based on the blind belief in the inferiority of the native Indians and superiority of the whites in general. However, this type of opinion and attitude to their subjects were common among all the European races. The British had borrowed it from the French who had used this to legitimize their colonial control over non-European 'coloured' races. In the nineteenth century the British evangelists had spread their control over the north-eastern part of the country, the area inhabited by hill-tribes. In direct collaboration with the missionaries the British government destroyed their culture and traditional religious practices in the name of civilizing them; and in the process was able to maintain a tight control over these people.

1.5 The Orientalist School

Among the European scholars of the colonial era another school of thought had emerged; it was known as the Orientalist School. The advocates of the School had contributed in many ways for the welfare of the society here in India, even though they were supportive of the exploitative exercises undertaken by the government. The School is known by the name because it was rooted in the principle of 'Orientalism'. Orient means East, the opposite of the West or the Occident. Therefore, Orientalism stands for the study of the eastern societies by the western scholars. The Orientalists

who came to India, had supported the preservation of Indian languages, laws, customs, traditional and ancient institutions and culture of the country. According to Prof. Edward Said, Orientalism is the tradition of looking at the societies of the east (Asia) from the point of European or western experiences. Modern Europe's interest in the Orient and Orientalism could be explained with reference to the fact that several European states including Britain had their richest and oldest colonies in those parts of the world. The most famous of the orientalists during the regime of the East India Company were Sir William Jones, James Prinsep, Sir Charles Wilkins and Dr. Horace Hayman Wilson. Rev. James Long was also a much respected man in the field of orientalism. All of them were brilliant academician and contributed positively and extensively in different areas of knowledge like linguistics, literature ,science and also wanted to make the world aware of India's hidden intellectual treasure. Orientalism also refers to the administrative policy of the East India Company in favour of preserving Indian languages, laws, customs and age-old traditions of the country. The period of Orientalism lasted for over five decades, starting in 1773, when Warren Hastings was appointed the Governor-General of the Company and continued up to 1832, when under the growing influence of the liberal and Evangelical ideas the Company government had to abandon its policy of preservation and made English education compulsory in India. That was the end of the Orientalist phase.

The East India Company had pursued its 'Orientalist' policy not for philanthropic purposes alone; it could realize that for better and more effective control of the colonies a thorough knowledge and clear understanding of the culture and language of the native people was essential. But liberal economists like James Stuart Mill used to consider the colonies as corrupt and stagnant. Even Karl Marx, had identified the Asiatic Mode of Production as unchanging. Christian missionaries, too, used to despise the non-Christian religious traditions as barbaric and evil. In spite of so many criticisms and oppositions from powerful quarters Orientalism had emerged as a distinct academic discipline under the protection and encouragement of western scholars like Max Muller and Eugene Burnoff.

Many accuse Orientalism of romanticizing India in an attempt to legitimize the colonial rule, there were several Orientalists who had truly appreciated Indian culture and civilisation. We should discuss their contributions in brief.

1.5.1 Sir William Jones (1746-1794) was the principal founder of the Asiatic

Society of Bengal and he wanted to know and understand India better than anyone else in England. He was proficient in at least 28 languages, and initiated the study of comparative philology or linguistics. He was also a prolific translator and translated in English many Sanskrit texts like Manu Smriti and Abhigyana Shakuntala. Jones studied Hindu astronomy, botany and literature; worked as a Judge for ten years, and supported the rights of Indian citizens to trial by jury under Indian jurisprudence.

1.5.2 James Prinsep (1799-1840) : Prinsep was another remarkable orientalist who had contributed in many ways to restore and preserve the heritage of India. He had worked at the Benaras and Calcutta Mints for 20 years; and developed the study of the largest Indian coins collection of that time. He was the founder — editor of the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal. As an orientalist he worked on deciphering the Kharosthi and Brahmi Scripts; and he was the first European scholar to decipher the edicts of the Emperor Ashoka.

1.5.3 Sir Charles Wilkins (1749-1836) : A prominent orientalist of his time, was one of the founding - members of the Asiatic Society, the first translator of Bhagabad Gita into English and one of the creators of the first Bengali typeface beside Panchanan Karmakar. Wilkins also designed typeface for publication of books in Persian. He had studied Sanskrit in Benaras under a Brahmin pandit. With strong support from Warren Hastings he had started to translate the Mahabharata but could not complete it. He had interpreted the Gita in a new way by declaring that the Gita's main objective was to promote monotheist Unitarianism against the polytheism supported in the Vedas. He also translated the Heetopodesha and wrote on the Sikh religion. Being deeply interested in religion Wilkins had visited many religious shrines of different faiths.

1.5.4 Horace Hayman Wilson (1786 - 1860) : Horace by profession a doctor, came to India as Assistant-Surgeon of the East India Company. He was a renowned orientalist and was the first person to translate the Rigveda. He also translated The Vishnu Purana in multiple volumes, the Meghaduta by Kalidasa and wrote books on the religions of the Hindus, on Hindu and Mohammedan Law, on Puranas and on many other topics like the history of British India.

Though the British Orientalism has been criticised by the followers of Said line for portraying the India as a stagnant, superstitious, corrupt and magico-religious country, the Orientalists mentioned above have given tremendous service for

understanding the true spirit of India and also to make the whole world aware of that.

1.6 Impact of Colonial Discourse on Sociology in India

Sociology in India has progressed with anthropology and the two disciplines share an intimate relationship. During the colonial period the British administrators and scholars had undertaken several ethnographic surveys to collect intimate knowledge about the land and its people for the benefit of strengthening the colonial control. Another important reason behind such surveys was prevention of rebellion and revolts against the colonial regime. Herbert Risley, a prominent member of the civil services in India had collected monumental data on castes and tribes of Bengal. His book on the findings of his survey, Caste and Tribes of Bengal (1891) has provided ample data for the rulers to understand the system of caste. In this book he has presented an analysis of caste from the point of Brahmanical sociology and the divineness of caste.He has also examined how caste was compatible with politics. Risley was of the belief that caste should be discouraged to get a proper control over the people in India. Following Risley many other ethnographical studies of caste, religion, culture and rituals of the people of India had been undertaken. Such studies not only helped the colonial rulers to gain tight control over the subcontinent and its people, but also prepared the ground for sociology here in India.

Ethnographical researches encouraged western scholars, British administrators and Christian Missionaries to take interest in every details of local culture like local language, literature, folklore, rituals and many other things. Out of their interests a good number of surveys on tribes, caste, village and religious communities, language, etc. had taken place. Oriental scholars and Indologists like William Jones, Max Mueller, Prinsep and others had translated sacred Indian texts like the Gita in English, established research organizations like the Asiatic Society and Anthropological Survey of India. Sir Henry Maine, though was not very favourable to India, had taken interests in the Hindu legal system and village communities. Some of the western sociologists like Max Weber had taken interest in the understanding of the essence of Hindu religion and based his theory of emergence of capitalism on that understanding. Thus, the Indian society and culture had attracted the interests of western scholars and officials of the colonial government with their unique features of land tenure, revenue system, poverty, social and economic structure of the poor but self-sufficient village communities; and out of such diverse interests coming

from academic, missionary, administrative and political quarters, the seeds for the emergence and development of the formal discipline of sociology were sown. The colonial founding fathers of anthropology and sociology in India had collected sufficient ethnological materials needed for both efficient administration and scholarly pursuit. Joan Vincent has observed that British anthropology, from the outset, has helped colonial rulers; and in India anthropology had to depend on data gathered by 'administrators, missionaries, travellers,' (Uberoi, Sundar, Deshpande, 2007:12). This was also true for American anthropology that had a close association with power and control of indigenous people in many parts of the world. Talal Asad has shown that the disciplines like anthropology and history not only enable the western colonisers to know and control their captured territories better but also to reinforce the inequality between the coloniser and the colonised. Edward Said and Bernard Cohn separately have shown that the orientalist scholars and anthropologists, on the basis of their keen observation, have identified several sociological categories like caste, ritual, custom, law and political institutions as the hallmarks of the colonized society. With a very clever intention, the British administration had introduced British type of education in India to colonise the minds of the people of India so that their cultural priorities could be altered. For Indians the introduction of western education was a blessing but it actually helped in the colonization of mind and culture that an eminent philosopher like K.C. Bhattacharya had lamented that Indians could not contribute anything worthwhile independently in the field of culture and modern ideology.

However, not all western scholars were driven by the colonialist spirit; for example, Patrick Geddes, as the architect of sociology department in the University of Bombay, did not bow down to the wishes of the imperial government and had thought of modernization of India following some alternative path. Some of the early anthropologists like S.C.Roy and Verrier Elwin had felt deep empathy and admiration towards the tribes they studied. But some others like L.K. Anantha Krishna Iyer, the revered pioneer anthropologist and M.N. Srinivas would conduct their researches on tribes and villages from the elevated position of their upper-caste, western educated, urbanized self. Yet they never failed to see the 'others' like the tribals, peasants and workers from backward classes as their own and equal members of the society. This shows that the imperial goal of colonization of mind was not fulfilled and a very large section of educated Indians with modern outlook opted for a nationalist approach in their academic and research activities.

1.7 Summary

The colonialist discourse reveals the different shades of views and aspirations in the minds of the colonial scholars, administrators and missionaries who came in this sub-continent with a view to exploit and dominate the 'others' or the people of different ethnic origin, language, culture and religion with disdain. To impose more control more efficiently, they had initiated in ethnographic surveys and explored different aspects of their culture, Out of those efforts, first the birth of anthropology happened in our country and then sociology followed suit, As both the disciplines share many common areas and their institutional difference was of western origin only, in colonial India these two disciplines have enriched each other in many ways. So, we cannot omit the growth and development of anthropology out of any discussion of evolution of sociology in India.

1.8 Model Questions

1. Answer in brief.   **5 Marks.**

  a) What is Discourse? Distinguish it from Critique.

  b) What are the central issues of colonial discourse?

2. Answer in Detail.   **10 Marks.**

  a) Examine the different dimensions of colonial discourse that emerged in British India.

  b) Make a critical assessment of colonial discourse in India.

  c) What is colonialist discourse? Examine its objectives and purposes.

  d) Examine the impact of colonial discourse on sociology in India.

  e) Write a shortnote on the Orientalist School of colonialist discourse.

  f) Discuss, in brief, the Evangelical ideas in colonialist discourse

  g) Write a short note on the need for ethnographic studies in the colonial period.

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Unit 2 ❏ Nationalist Discourse

Structure

(**KEY WORDS:** Nationalism, Nationalistic, Swadeshi, Caste, Hindu, Anthropology.)

2.0 Objectives

The Unit discusses:

- The indigenous sociological ideas inspired by the anti-colonial spirit.

- How modern Indian thinkers combined nationalistic spirit with sociology.

- Visions of the pioneers of sociology in India.

2.1 Introduction

Nationalism is an ideology based on love and respect for one's own country of birth or of choice. On a wider note, it is an amalgamation of countrymen's attitudes, claims, expectations, obligations and patriotic feelings towards the state based on a number of political, moral and cultural values. This feeling urges people to identify with their own country and support and ultimately fight for its own interests. It is both an ideology and a movement for the protection and promotion of the interests of one's own country, establishing its sovereignty and abolition of foreign control over the land and its people. Out of this feeling of nationalism the nationalistic discourse in sociology was born.

The Nationalistic discourse, has given birth to a number of ideas, opinions and narratives regarding the emergence of national identity among the people of a colonized territory. This discourse had emerged in the country under the impulse of anti-colonial sentiments in general and nationalist social and political movements in particular since the late 19th century-early 20th century period; it was instrumental in the creation of a consciousness to develop a new social, political, economic and educational system free from colonial domination. Movements like Swadeshi and Boycott did play important roles in creating an urge for everything made in and controlled by India. Mahatma Gandhi believed that the partition of Bengal in 1905 was a great turning point in the awakening of awareness regarding nationalism. The nationalistic discourse, in general, involves the writings and opinions of Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Dadabhai Naoroji, Swami Vivekananda, Gopal Krishna Gokhale and many others. In the field of sociology the discourse has left its lasting impression in the writings of Benoy Kunar Sarkar, Radhakamal Mukhopadhyay, D. P. Mukherjee, D. N. Majumdar and others who were energized with the thoughts of nation-building. They wanted to counter the prejudiced arguments of the colonialists and believed that ancient India had many things to offer to the world. While Radhakamal had made indepth analysis of India's economic problems under colonial regime, rural poverty and inequality; Dhurjati Prasad, a self-proclaimed Marxologist, was concerned with issues of colonialism like a true blue nationalist. G.S.Ghurye's sociology reflects an understanding of India's civilization and culture based on Hindu/Brahmanical nationalist ideology of cultural unity and nation-building. In this way nationalist discourse in sociology contains multiple views and it deals with multiple issues related to nation-building, creating and strengthening of new national identity.

2.2 Meaning and Definition of Nationalism and Nationalistic Discourse

The Nationalistic discourse has given birth to a number of ideas, opinions and narratives regarding the emergence of national identity among the people of a colonized territory. Here, in India, the nationalist sentiments and the urge for a nation of the peoples' own did emerge under the influence of colonial rule. But nationalism should not necessarily be linked with colonial rule or be considered as a negative anti-colonial concept. It should also be considered from a positive standpoint as it also means creation of a new type of social and political identity in accordance with local mores and environments. Therefore, as a negative concept nationalism means opposition to outside rule and rejection of foreign control and dominance; whereas, in a positive sense it indicates a positive signal towards nation- building. Nationalistic discourse contains all the ideas, beliefs and narratives that emerged during the Raj to glorify India's past and to oppose the colonial regime.

2.3 Nationalism in India

In the context of India, nationalism is a modern phenomenon to envision India as a free country. The idea was introduced during the colonial period by the western educated leaders of India. Dissolution of foreign control became its primary goal and to establish India's identity as a nation-state appeared to be its secondary {but no less important} goal. Inspired by those two goals, a number of nationalist movements had taken place in the country starting from the sepoy mutiny of 1857 ,to the resistance struggle of the native princes against the British imperial power and then to the moderate and extremist movements by different factions of the Congress and other local radical political outfits. Not only did educated middle class participate in the freedom movement, even the illiterate peasantry and tribal populations from different regions, too, took part in the nationalist movement on their own terms. The nationalistic movement and the principle of nationalism in India is often accused for its elitist nature and its failure to integrate the class interests of the peasants.

2.4 Nationalist Discourse in Indian Sociology

The British colonial rule in India not only imposed a for al government had

brought in major changes in the matters of governance, introduced new policies and implemented new laws in the name of development and modernization of a traditional society. All these had taken place in the selfish interests of the Raj. With the introduction of modern western education, educated Indians became aware of the modern ideas and latest developments in the fields of natural and social sciences in the west and they started to initiate a number of public debates and discussions on issues related to governance, customs and practices. Modern men like Ram Mohan Roy, Akshay Kumar Dutta, Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar, Pyari Charan Mitra, Kaliprasanna Sinha, Bhudeb Mukherje, Ramendra Sundar Tribedi and several others had made significant contributions in examining and questioning the then existing social practices. Neither of them was professional sociologist, yet their thought-provoking essays and books had laid the foundation of sociology in India. Many of the modern men the late-nineteenth-early-twentieth period were nationalists in spirit and even actively participated in nationalist movements. They were genuinely interested in the development of India and her people. In their sociological thoughts, therefore, there was a strong undercurrent of nationalism and glorification of India. Benoy Kumar Sarkar, one of the pioneers of sociology in the country, had once commented that extra-university sociological discussions and analyses had always preceded and supplemented academic sociology in India. These extra-university sources or the voluntary organisations and their members were immensely influenced by the ideas and concepts of western scholars like Comte, Herbert Spencer, Toennies, Von Wiese and many others. At the same time, acquaintance with liberal ideas of the modern west made Indian intellectuals aware of the absence of freedom and equality in their own society. While the stereotypes, categories and identities created by foreign political regime in the mid-eighteenth century, it also brought in an era of social reform. Calcutta was the capital of British India in the initial days of the Raj and had experienced a lot of developmental activities. The colonial bureaucrats received general acceptance within the society, a section of the educated Indians had started to look at the society and people around them with a positivist bend of mind. They came from different disciplines of knowledge yet all of them were keen to explore and examine various aspects of Indian society in a positivist way. Though all of them were not professional sociologists their efforts had prepared the ground for sociology to emerge in India. By the mid-nineteenth century social reformers and thinkers with modern education had established a number of learned society and started serious discussions on social issues from a nationalist point of view.

The founding-fathers of sociology in India were intellectual giants like Benoy Kumar Sarkar, Radhakamal Mukherjee, Dhurjati Prasad Mukerji, Patrick Geddes and G.S.Ghurye. They had original visions and ideas about society and sociology with which many of them could overcome the impact of the"colonisation of mind'. Geddes was not an Indian, but he was not the mouthpiece of the Imperial government here. At the core of their heart, early sociologists in India were nationalists who took immense pride in their motherland and aspired for fitting respect for the country from all quarters. With their creative nationalist spirit they presented an image of India that was different from ,but not inferior to the west. To comprehend the nationalist discourse as opposed to the colonialist discourse in sociology we need to examine the roles played by the founding-fathers of sociology in India.

2.4.1 Nationalist Ideas of Benoy Kumar Sarkar (1887-1949) :

Benoy Kumar Sarkar was a great scholar, an original thinker and an excellent teacher devoted to his profession. Since a very young age till to his last he was inspired by the spirit of nationalism and patriotism ; and these two principles had influenced all his thoughts and visions of the world. He was also very much fond of the power of creative idealism for nation-building and believed in man's creative energy for building a new India. For this very reason, his sociology remained forever dedicated to the search for an independent identity of India's culture and civilization beyond the image projected by the western scholars. Much before the formal introduction of academic sociology in the country Sarkar was busy with reinterpretation of India's traditions by challenging the arguments offered by stalwarts from the west like Max Mueller, the Indologist, and Max Weber, the sociologist. As a renowned scholar he visited many academic institutes in different parts of the world, and exchanged ideas with scholars from across the globe. Many of his books were published in countries like Japan, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Yet his mission in life was "to project the image of resurgent India and emerging Asia." (Bhattacharya,1990. B.U,: 17) Sarkar was very optimistic of the future of India and Asia as he had high hopes for his motherland and mother-continent. At the same time, he was deeply pained to see the naked dominance of the west over Asia in general, and India, in particular. Therefore, as a nineteen years old teenager in 1906, Sarkar through his first article in English, titled National Education and the Bengali Nation, published in the Amrita Bazar Patrika, a nationalist daily, had expressed his concerns for his beloved homeland. (Bandyopadhyay, Levant,: 193) Six years later, in 1912, Sadhana, a collection of

essay in Bengali by Sarkar depicted how each and every nationality and society would evolve in its own distinct way. Thus, he concluded, the model for development never could be the same for all the nations.

All these show that Sarkar was a patriot, a nationalist, a Swadeshi from a very young age. His close association with Satish Chandra Mukhopadhyay inspired him to take an active part in the Swadeshi and boycott movements. He was also deeply influenced by what he termed as "the Ramakrishna Movement" and strongly believed that Vivekananda had set a goal for India to conquer the whole world. Guided by the motto of the Swadeshi movement, he became one of the most active participants of the national education movement. To make the movement a success he published numerous books, articles, pamphlets and delivered lectures in support of the movement.

2.4.2 Sociology of Benoy Kumar Sarkar :

Sarkar was an ardent admirer of positivism and believed that the Hindu way of life was full of it. Following the trends of his time he compared the spirituality of the orient with the materialism of the occident and unlike many others he strongly felt that materialism could not safeguard the basic liberty and equality of all. Therefore, the western civilization was inferior to the Indian civilization.He was well acquainted with the positivism of Comte when he wrote his treatise The Positive Background of Hindu Sociology (1914, 1921,1926, 1937) In fact Comte's positivism, religion of humanity, social service ideas had made an impact on the Bengali intellect in as early as 1860s. When he (Sarkar) accidentally came across an ancient Sanskrit text named Sukraniti, or the sacred text of Shukracharyya, he translated it into English and named it The Positive Background of Hindu Sociology. The book was so named because it contained secular, worldly and 'positive elements of Hindu social economy'.(Bhattacharya). Moreover, he had often used the terms 'Hindu' and 'Indian' alternatively and found the history of Hindu aka Indian civilization far more glorious than that of the western civilization. Sukraniti was Nitisastra, Arthasastra, and Dharmasastra all rolled into one with discussions on Dharma or morals, Artha or interests, and Kama or desires. The image of ancient India that was revealed to him through the text of Shukraniti was that of a very pragmatic state that was conversant with the art of warfare, state administration, power, aggression and all other aspects of everyday life. (Bandyopadhyay, :196). Thus, Shukraniti's subject matters were not at all "other worldly" but non-transcendental and non-spiritual in nature. With this observation Sarkar has challenged the carefully-crafted western

image of India. Weber and others like Hegel, Gobineau, Buckle, Senart, Max Weber and Max Mueller had convinced the world that Indian, that is, Hindu civilization was ultra-ascetic, non-industrial sand non-political in spirit. Sarkar, with the help of the Posiitive Background, has counter-argued that the Hindu way of life is nothing but a synthesis of both the worldly and the other-worldly, and of the positive and the transcendental elements in life. He has further narrated in his Chinese Religion through Hindu Eyes (1916) about the characteristics of Asian Positivism. He has earnestly believed that every religion is positivistic and every human being is a positivist, if we relate positivism with humanitarian principles or social duties. He has also spoken of 'Asiatic Positivism' and finds all old and ancient Asian religions like Confucianism, Hinduism and Buddhism positivist. He has clearly mentioned that the secular principles of good citizenship, social service and humanitarianism have always remained parts of Hindu religion and culture; one cannot ignore all these because of the single word 'Nirvana'. The wrongful image that was popularized by the western scholars became parts of the machinations of the colonial and imperialist conspirators. The propagated otherworldly image of the civilization was unscientific, baseless and prejudiced as there was no real difference between the two civilizations. To counter such prejudice Sarkar used the tool of sociology. As both a nationalist and a sociologist he was eager to identify the problems of modern India from a sociological point of view and also opted for curving out India's path to modernity with the help of sociological understanding.

Sarkar was a professor of Economics in the University of Calcutta; but he wrote on many subjects including sociology. his works include books like The Science of History and the Hope of Mankind (1912), The Positive Background of Hindu Sociology(1914), Introduction to Hindu Positivism(1937), The Folk Element in Hindu Culture(1917), The Sociology of Races, Cultures and Human Progress (1937), The Sociology of Population (1936), Villages and Towns as Social Patterns (1941) and many others. Sarkar has observed that in any discussion on sociology, the meaning of the word 'positivism' is to be understood in Comtean terms. Comte has used the word 'positivism' with reference to specialization, generality and scientific experience. According to Comte's three-staged theory of evolution of human intellect and social organization the third stage is the positivist stage where scientific experience reigns supreme. Sarkar himself has admitted that he has not applied Comte's ideas of positivism in full; but for scholarly analyses, experiments, specialization, generalization, scientific enquiries only. He has found positivism in the Vedas

though these are conditioned as religious texts because the Vedic literature considers all practical elements of day to day living like annihilation of enemies, the control of enemy property, the distribution of booty, expansion of one's territory, attainment of the highest position in the society of men, and real-life feelings and emotions like jealousy, ambition, hatred, war, political rivalry etc. He has also urged Indians to pay homage to the cunning of Chanakya, the Kautilya who is known for his creative intelligence, sharp mind and political acumen. With such arguments he has always defended India's past contributions towards social sciences. From his arguments in favour of scientific outlook and logical reasoning in India's ancient texts, it can be assumed that Sarkar's sociological vision was influenced by his association with the Dawn Society, Satish Chandra and Brajendranath Seal. From Seal he came to learn the importance of comparative sociological analysis in understanding India's social institutions.

In 1926 Sarkar joined the Economics Department at the University of Calcutta and he used to teach sociology optional paper within that department. As a teacher he prescribed several topics for the two optional Sociology papers with an aim to make the students aware of the latest trends of social science research in the west. But as a hardcore nationalist in spirit and mind, he always wanted to represent the views of 'young India' during his visits abroad and to learn from the advances in Europe and America. In 1937, Sarkar founded the Bengal Social Science Conference for sociological researches in Bengali language and to bridge the gap between the sociological discourses of the orient and the occident. As a nationalist sociologist, he was concerned with the civilization of both India and Bengal and was always concerned with the socio-economic development of Bengal. Bengal's folk-culture in the form of folk songs and music and folk-dance was dear to his heart. He examined how the Bengali culture and literature embraced both the folk and classical elements of life ; imbibed elements from other cultures and how they represented the creativity, humanism and imagination of the quintessentially Bengali mind.

Thus Sarkar's sociology was shaped up by his nationalist feelings it ultimately became the sociology of national development for India, in general and of Bengal's development in particular.

2.4.3. Radha kamal Mukherjee (1889-1968) :

Professor Radhakamal Mukerjee is well known for his pioneering role in the enrichment of sociology in India. He was a brilliant student and was exposed to the works of all modern European sociologists and political scientists like Comte,

Herbert Spencer, Bagehot, Lester Ward, Hobhouse, Giddings and many others. Like Sarkar, he, too, became associated with the Swadeshi movement during his student days in 1905 - 06. As a young patriot he came to appreciate the value of education for the poor, backward people of the country; so he worked among the slum-dwellers of Calcutta with the motto of spreading education among the poor, adult but illiterate people residing in slums. Like young people of his generation, he was motivated by the spirit of nationalism and philanthropy; and the British government's decision of Bengal partition further ignited the flame of nationalism in him. In 1906, Mukerjee had started an evening class for adult education and wrote simple texts to serve that purpose. His career as a teacher in economics started in 1910, but five years later, in 1915, he was arrested by the police on charges of terrorism and sedition. All his schools had to face closure because of that serious allegation but such adverse experiences could not dim his spirit of nationalism. Though he had chosen the career of college and university teacher, he always remained driven by the spirit of nationalism. He had taught in a number of reputed academic centers, but is most remembered for his association with the Lucknow University that he joined as the Professor and Head of the Department of Economics and Sociology in 1921, on the very day the university started to function, and continued teaching there for the next three decades.

Mukerjee's vision of sociology remained rooted in India's tradition, yet it was universalistic. He believed that a general theory of sociology could be founded; in the context of Indian society that theory could be developed with the help of Indian philosophy and cultural tradition. T.N. Madan has observed that Mukerjee, as an economist, an ecologist and a sociologist, was concerned with the prospect of social reconstruction in connection with renewal of the past rather than any break with it. He has even made attempts ' to locate West's modernity within the endogeneous stream of Hindu culture itself….' (Hegde, 2011 : 50) He (Mukerjee) has further found Indian tradition spiritually modern and self-governing whereas western civilization seemed ailing and uprooting to him. Yet, he dreamt of a synthetic integrated model to retain the Eastern tradition by surpassing the West's modernity. Mukerjee and his colleagues at the Lucknow University, Dhurjati Prasad Mukerji and D.N.Majumdar had founded the Lucknow School of Indian sociology; the School had immense contribution in almost every area of knowledge like sociology, economiocs, culture ,aesthetics, history, development including the area of nation building. One of the major task of the School was to seek remedial measures against the trauma of

partition and jolts from independence the young state had experienced. The School, at the initiative of its founders, strived to present an integrated and comprehensive sociology of values and Indian culture and it had developed its own ideas and analytical ways to examine India's social reality. T. N. Madan has observed that Mukerjee strongly favoured the idea of renewal of India's past and so did not support any break with the past for the benefit of modernization of the society. In matters of social reconstruction in the Asian states, he always insisted on the principle of renewal and adaptation of old habits and impulses to satisfy the complex and larger needs of the modern period. He started thinking of an alternative, non-western socio-economic model of development to suit India's conditions and values in a better way. In fact, Mukerjee always wanted to present sociology in a manner most fitting to Indian society because he was a true nationalist in his mind, soul and work. Like Sarkar, Mukerjee was also inspired by the works of Brajendra Nath Seal who encouraged investigations of the reality of Indian society; so he, too, developed a fondness for field -investigations. He started his research-career with empirical field-work and encouraged his students to undertake field-researches on life and society in India. The love and respect for his own country and its people had motivated Mukerjee to explore the society through investigative field-research. Later, though his sociology turned more towards value-research, the spirit of nationalism never left him.

2.4.4 Dhurjati Prasad Mukherji :

Dhurjati Prasad Mukherji or D.P. (as he is more popularly known) was one of the founders of the Lucknow School at the University of Lucknow. He was born in 1894, and grew up in an environment marked by several important events and influences that shaped the Bengali intellect of that time. The late -nineteenth century-early-twentieth period was marked by several important influences that had taken place in Bengal in particular, like emergence of a new phase of Bengal Renaissance, of several social and religious reform movements (Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj, Ramkrishna-Vivekananda influence, etc), Hindu revivalism, rediscovery of Sanskrit literary tradition, and an overwhelming influence of Rabindranath Tagore.

A few years later, in 1905 Curzon's decision of Bengal Partition had shaken Bengal and then there occurred the Swadeshi Movement. The upgradation of Calcutta University for imparting post-graduate education to Indian students also happened in this period. Most of the Bengali pioneers of sociology like Sarkar, Mukerjee, K.P.Chattopadhyay and D. P. were the products of that turbulent period.

D.P. has often been described as a conservative, Hindu intellectual with superficial ideas of modernity. He of course, never denied his Hindu Brahmin identity and was passionate about classical Hindu views about life, though he rejected the Brahminical religious belief and rituals quiet early in life. D.P. was respectful of the dynamism of Indian classical thoughts like the motto of' Charaiveti, Charaiveti' or 'forward, forward' from the ancient text of Aitareya Brahmana. He always acknowledged the contributions of the Hindus behind the growth of medieval and modern Indian culture and believed that it has amalgamated well with other cultural influences in the country. Like Sarkar he, too, rejected the western belief about Indian minds being totally occupied with religion because he was truly fascinated by the Charvaka line of thought based on hedonism and on states of consciousness as being purely physical. He lamented that Indian sociologists were not interested in history, philosophy ,dynamism and meaningfulness of social life. In the year 1955, as the President of the first Indian Sociological Conference he had addressed the issue with the observation that too much emphasis on empirical social research, particularly in India, seemed meaningless to him as that failed to impart any life-meaning. He was also not, at all, satisfied with the western sociological theory and especially Talcott Parsons' theory of social action, because of their excessive emphasis on the 'individual'

D.P. has dealt with the ideas of progress, equality, social forces and social control in his book Basic Concepts in Sociology and has revealed his concern with 'progress'. To him, progress was not synonymous with growth, it was a movement of freedom, the growth of inner personality of man. For that regular contemplation and retirement from the hectic schedules of life after an age was needed. He found supports in favour such system of contemplation and retirement in the Hindu philosophy. He understands 'progress' as a problem of balancing of values, or the hierarchy of values to determine the fundamental values. To find out a suitable answer to his quest he turned to the values of the Upanishada, that is, the values of shantam or harmony, shivam or welfare and advaitam or unity. By doing this, D.P. has synthesized the principles of Vedanta with the western concept of progress. He was also concerned with the problems Indian society was experiencing like partition and communal violence and suggested that a positive reorientation of Indian culture would work as an essential condition for real progress. If we go through the works of D.P. we find that he never forgot his cultural heritage and tradition and believed in the happy marriage of Indian culture and values with modern western education.

2.3.5. G.S. Ghurey (1893 -1983) :

Like other first generation sociologists in India G. S. Ghurey, too, was the product of his social and cultural environment. He is the founder of the Bombay School of Sociology and for long had tremendous influence in the growth and development of sociological research. As a student of Bombay's Elphinstone College he came into contact with European professors from Oxford and Cambridge from whom he learned about history and literature of Europe. Elphinstone had a reputation for producing western India's modern English educated intellectuals and professionals of that time. Nationalist political leaders like M.G. Ranade, Dadabhai Naoroji and Bal Gangadhar Tilak, too, were the products of the college. It was able to create an intellectual environment of independent thought and rational critique of colonial rule. As studentscame to learn about Europe's social and political history, they became interested in examining similar institutions and ideas in their own country. When in 1862 the first professr of Sanskrit was appointed, students' interest in their ancient past and Hindu philosophy was ignited. When Ghurye took admission in Elphinstone College in 1913, the wave of western intellectual ferment had subsided considerably with an increase in nationalism.

Ghurey's nationalism was ingrained in his academic training as a Sanskritist and also within his chosen field of Indology. He was greatly influenced by the traditions of British and German Orientalism that encouraged the study of Sanskrit texts and respect the Brahminical values and perspectives embodied in them. Just as Swadeshi and Bengal partition issue in 1905 had aroused nationalist feelings among the Bengalees, in the western part of the country social reform movements of the nineteenth century evoked concerns about Indian society. The targets of those social reform movements in Maharastra were values and institutions of a tradition- bound society, eg., Brahminical and patriarchal norms, kinship structures, etc. Western values introduced new norms of behavior and ideas concerning widow remarriage, age of consent, etc.

In 1932 his first major book Caste and Race in India was published and it revealed his deep commitment to Indological approach. He was of the opinion that continuity and change in Indian society should be examined only with reference toto ancient Indian texts.Due to this preference for Indological approach, Ghurye accepted and glorified the Vedic culture, values, traditions and civilisations of ancient period and their continuation in modern times without any question. Like his contemporaries he also acknowledged and valued the contributions of the Renaissance men like Raja Rammohan Roy, Keshab Chandra Sen, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, M.G.Ranade and R.G. Bhandarkar. As a Maharastrian, he used to support

one particular type of regional nationalism for his state, and was proud of Maharastra's cultural heritage, and its distinctive identity. So much so that he was happy when Shiv Sena was formed in the 1960s in Maharastra.

As a sociologist Ghurye primarily focused on cultural nationalism and reconstruction of Indian society and history to examine and understand the origin and emergence of existing institutions. He studied caste in the context of Indian civilization for projecting the unity and characteristics of India's ancient heritage, which, he believed, contained nothing but Hindu society dominated by Brahminical values. In several of his books, Ghurye has revealed the influence of nationalism on him by severely criticizing the tribal policies of the colonial government. Like other nationalists he,too, believed that the British policy of exclusion of the tribal people in the name of protection was actually another form of the strategy of divide and rule. Again, he was of the opinion that the natural process of assimilation and diffusion of various groups and culture was geopardised because of forceful imposition of colonial rule. He was in favour of slow integration of marginalized elements into the mainstream of social life. Ghurye and his colleagues were influenced by the conservative nationalism and initiated a particular brand of sociology with a combination of Indology and anthropology.

Ghurye has viewed Indian society as a product of Brahminical Hinduism being bound together by its unique cultural traditions and social institutions. He, as a sociologist, has worked hard to create an Indological and nationalist image of traditional Indian society based on caste and joint family system, culture and civilization nurtured in the tradition of the Vedic past and connected with the spirit of Brahminical Hinduism. To substantiate that image he has introduced the techniques of anthropological field research and scientific methodology in sociological investigation and research. He never adhered to foreign intellectual standards, nor did he submit himself to foreign research agendas because of his strong nationalist convictions. Like other first generation Indian sociologists Ghurye, too, wanted to exhibit the organic unity of Indian society; hence the legacy of sociology's over-emphasis on caste, kinship, family, religion by side-lining economic and political aspects had started with him. Carol Upadhyay has rightly observed that Ghurye's sociology has combined nationalism, Orientalism, and social reformist ideas to function within the diffusionist and empiricist structure of anthropology of his time. It is important to note that his sociological vision was nurtured by his experiences with colonialism, his respect for India's past glory, and his nationalist aspiration for India's freedom in future.

2.4.6 Partha Chatterjee :

Partha Chatterjee,a Political Scientist by training and a multi-disciplinarian by choice is one of the leading scholars of the contemporary world and a founding-member of the Subaltern Studies group. He has contributed generously in the understanding of India's nationalism. Though his discussions often refer to the perspectives of thinkers and litterateurs of the colonial period he is primarily interested in nationalism and nation-building in India. He has lights on how the newly liberated states welcome the principles of western capitalism by shifting their own age-old values and traditions aside during their strife for building a strong and powerful nation.

Chatterjee has examined the roles of modern Indian intellectuals like Bankimchandra, Mahtma Gandhi, Nehru and their likes. These three icons of modern India came from three distinct regions of the country. Bankimchandra, a nineteenth century writer admired the west's advances in science and economics, but was critical of its failure to fully grasp the rich cultural heritage of India. Mahatma Gandhi, a political leader much younger than Bankimchandra, felt that more than any western ideology, the principles of the Bhagabad Gita should be the foundation of the modern Indian nation. He recommended non-violence to be the only weapon to bring the colonial rule to an end and forwarded the idea of making villages and village-based cottage-industries the life-line of a modern Indian nation. Nehru, a leader much younger than Gandhi, had accepted many of Gandhi's beliefs but summarily rejected his ideas of nation-building as inept. He aspired to create a sovereign, democratic nation-state, governed by revolutionary elites to keep the dissenting groups in control and to use science and technology for all round development including surging economy and social justice for all.

Chatterjee's book, Nationalist Thought and the Colonial World: A Derivative Discourse (1986) has urged the readers to adopt a fresher approach towards nationalism by linking it to the post-Enlightenment liberal-rationalist conceptions of knowledge which was responsible for imposing colonial control over more than half of the world. He has compared the three distinct Indian versions of nationalism that emerged in three different corners of the country, namely, the east, the west and the north. His exploration of nationalism is a critique of Benedict Anderson's theory of imagined nationalism. Anderson believes that nation has only an imagined existence as a political community which is both limited and sovereign in nature. The imagination of nation stays in the minds of the people because even without knowing each other

personally as fellow countrymen they imagine themselves as belonging to the same nation. The nation has a limited existence because it is always territorially bounded.

Chatterjee observes that in spite of its existence in the minds of the people , nationalism's formation and development are aided by several sociological conditions. These are, printing press and publication of books in native language, spread of secondary education family and women's position within it. Thus, Chatterjee's stand on nationalism has posed a challenge to Anderson's 'modular' form of nation that supposedly travelled from the West to the colonies. Under this kind of nationalism colonies were left with no freedom to dwell on their own imagination of nation and makes the imagination of nation colonized. However, Chatterjee finds the spiritual domain missing in the Andersonian concept of 'modular' nationalism; whereas in India's nationalism the spiritual domain remained hidden within the privacy of family. The family was the epicenter of cultural elements needed for imagination of nationalism. Chatterjee has chosen examples, carefully, from culture, drama, school education system, family, women, etc. from the Bengali society to prove his points. A short discussion of these examples will be helpful. Since the end of the 18th century, under the initiative of the East India Company and European missionaries the first books, mostly translations of the Bible, in Bengali began to get published for administrative purposes. By the early years of the nineteenth century prose compositions began to be printed. As the dominance of the Company became stronger, Persian was replaced by English as the language for administrative work. The newly emerging elites of colonial Bengal were educated in modern schools and colleges and were bilingual. They also played important roles in standardizing the written form of the native language outside the purview of the colonial domain. They wrote and published original works in different formats of literature and in the process made language and literature important sources of nationalism.

The other domains of national culture and nationalism in colonial Bengal were secondary schools and family. The elites of the nineteenth century Bengal had turned the modern educational institutions into citadels of nationalism through the curriculum, faculty, funding-everything. Another beholder of nationalistic values and national culture was family. As per western assessments, the Indian culture needed thorough changes, but the middle class, the educated elites of the country, took the task of social reformation upon themselves because they were not ready to allow the colonial state to initiate reform of practices of the 'traditional society'. During the first half of the twentieth century, the position of Indian women also

underwent manifold changes as the nationalistic values spread throughout the social body. They embraced modern ideals, acquired education andoccupation as well; but they did not leave their traditions altogether. Such combinations of tradition and modernity helped in the national imagination, Chatterjee believes. Thus, his observations present a new model of Indian nationalism.

2.5 Summary

From our discussion above we can say that most of the founding-fathers of sociology in India were nationalists in spirit and wanted to project India as one united entity. They were also respectful of India's rich cultural heritage and wanted to proclaim India's cultural equality with the western world by challenging the western perception of the 'other-worldly' or non-materialistic nature of Indian society. While some of India's early sociologists like Benoy Kumar Sarkar and Radhakamal Mukerjee had actively participated in nationalist political movements themselves, others were deeply influenced by the nationalist political and cultural environment of the time. Much of the growth and development of sociology in India depended on the nationalist discourse about Indian society and Indian sociologists were dedicated to the nationalist causes of nation-creating and nation-building, with inspirations from the images of ancient India beheld in the ancient texts. They also wanted to reconstitute the society by combining the traditional elements with modernity; this unique combination became the mainstay of the nationalist discourse in Indian sociology.

2.6 Model Questions

1. Answer in Brief: **5 Marks.**

a) What is meant by Nationalist Discourse?

b) What is the significance of nationalist discourse in sociology?

c) What was the impact of colonial rule on nationalist discourse in sociology

2. Answer in detail :   **10 Marks.**

d) Define nationalist discourse . Examine the contributions of nationalist discourse in Indian sociology.

e) Examine the nationalist ideas of Benoy Kumar Sarkar.

f) Make an assessment of Radhakamal Mukerjee in the study of sociology in India.

g) Do you think Dhurjati Prasad Mukerji was a nationalist sociologist? Give reasons in favor of your arguments.

h) Examine the nationalist perspective in G.S.Ghurye's sociology.

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Unit 3 ❑ Subaltern Perspective

Structure

3.0 Objectives

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    (KEY WORDS: Subaltern. Marginalized. Insurgency. Tribe. Caste. Untouchable. Subjugation.)

3.0 Objectives

- Helps understand the plight of the powerless, marginalized people.

- Discusses movements of resistance and defiance oranised by the poor.

- Focuses on the sociological contributions of subaltern historians and thinkers.

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3.1 Introduction

The term 'Subaltern' conveys a sense of subordination,that is, the position or status that remains perpetually under the control and domination of someone else. The term was first used by the noted Italian Marxist thinker Antonio Gramsci in his famous 'Prison Notebook' to mean, firstly, the proletariats or the working class; and secondly, to mean the marginalized, powerless people who are always dominated and subordinated by the far more powerful, dominating section of the society. The subalterns in a society remain powerless as the class-in-control enjoys exclusive power and authority over them. Gramsci did not confine the 'subalterns' within any specific time-frame like the post-industrial society as this class has remained present in every other phases of history. In the context of Indian societythe term 'Subaltern' is used to mean Dalits, tribal and other ethnic communities, poor peasants and all other impoverished, marginalized sections of population during the colonial period. They were excluded from social institutions and were denied a voice of their own.

The Subaltern Perspective in sociology, along with the discipline of History focuses on the neglected 'underbelly' of the society to get an insight into the roles played by them... So it (Subaltern Studies) is referred as 'history told from the below.' This perspective has emerged and evolved as a critique of the other two long-established schools of thought that view the history of colonial India as the history of power, domination and achievements of a tiny elite group like either the colonial rulers and administrators or the nationalist elites of Indian origin. The perspective originated in England in the late 1970s in the hands of group of Indian historians but it earned popular notice in 1982 only when the mouthpiece The Subaltern Studies, Volume 1 saw the light of the day. The people associated with that movement wanted to alter the common perception of both academics and ordinary people about subalterns as the 'subjects of history. Both the Colonialist and the Nationalist perspectives have totally overlooked the roles played by the subalterns who remain subordinated; yet retain an element of independence of consciousness. They focus their attention on the one-sidedness of elite politics and prefer to highlight the roles of revolts and rebellions of the subalterns; it also looks into the potentials of such classes to attain coherent and self-conscious conception of resistance and insurrections against upper class of rich peasantry, urban traders and colonial revenue administrators. Ranajit Guha has observed in his book Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency In Colonial India (1983: Duke University Press)

that peasant insurgencies cannot be explained simply on the basis of certain economic conditions. Though such incidents may appear to be spontaneous and guided by absurd principles, actually all insurgent acts are guided by proper planning, preparation, organization and certain patterns of political activism. All these remain rooted deep within the independent consciousness of the peasantry. Guha has observed that the study of social movements needs a fresh approach because neither the colonialist approach nor the nationalist approach leaves any room for ethnic politics. This shortcoming was mainly responsible for the birth of the subaltern perspective.

The subaltern perspective has rejected several 'myths' regarding the role of the underclass in the colonial period. Myth no. one is that the dalits, tribal people and the other marginalized sections had joined the freedom movement at the behest of the nationalist elites. Myth no. 2 suggests that the subalterns in India were drawn to freedom-struggle as they came into contact with the nationalist leaders and their ideologies. Facts have claimed both the myths wrong. Sometimes they were drawn to nationalist movements led by Indian political elites, no doubt; but on many other occasions they either did not respond to the elite leadership or retracted even after joining them. All these happened because the political objectives, goals and strategies were distinctly different from those of the elite politics because the nationalistic ideas and aspiration of the two groups were completely different. We must remember here that basic character of the subaltern nationalism remains rooted in everyday experiences of subordination and marginalization. Often those experiences have irrupted into peasant insurgencies. For this very reason Subaltern perspective has extensively studied the history of peasant revolts during the colonial period. It has put the focus on the non-elites as active agents of social and political change. By the 1980s the Subaltern studies methodology and its use of oral history, mythology, folk tales, folk arts, field studies, etc. became integral parts of South Asian historiography. They have also used official reports and records of tribal revolts and peasant insurgencies, but have discovered totally different narratives from these materials. Presently the term 'Subaltern' has a much wider connotation and refers to any person or group of inferior rank or station— who remain subordinated or subjugated because of their race, class, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or religion. The main task of the Subaltern Studies is to present a critique of the mainstream historiography.

It is not that this perspective has a smooth sailing all along; many of its basic proposition has been questioned. Yet in the 1970s-'80s period Subaltern Studies or

'History from the below' became popular in Europe. British Marxist historians like Christofer Hill, Edward Thomson, Erik Hobesbom and many others had started to explore the tragic history of many forgotten communities and their stories of oppression and failed resistance. However the subaltern scholars in India never limited their exploration of the history of the underclass within any fixed pattern.

3.2 Ranajit Guha

Ranajit Guha is one of the most influential scholars of history to pioneer a new genre of research to understand the social position and contributions of the subordinated people. He was born in Buckergunge of Barishal in 1923 in undivided Bengal. In the year 1959 he had migrated to Britain from India for higher studies and research . He was a Reader in History at the University of Sussex when he led a group of scholars to pursue the Subaltern approach. His groundbreaking book, Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India,to chronicle peasant movements in 19th century India, is considered a classic and the founding-stone of the new approach. The Subaltern historiography still remains based on his famous observation that the 'subaltern' is all about "the demographic difference between the total Indian population and all those whom we have described as the 'elite'. Guha and his group of scholars have published a good number of academic essays in several volumes of Subaltern Studies mto define and determine the scope of the subaltern perspective. Apart from his thought-provoking essays in those volumes Guha has also published several books on the subject like — A Rule of Property for Bengal : An Essay on the Idea of Permanent Settlement(1963); Elementary Aspects of Insurgency in Colonial India(1983), etc. Guha has pointed out that the study of history in India has been cleverly regularized to serve political and economic interests of the colonial government. The colonial administrators had collected and recorded all the details of the archaic practices of indigenous agriculture. Later, those data and information, as maintained from the standpoint of the imperialist government, have acted as authentic sources of historical research. Those records represent the elitist approach of the Britsh colonialists; and the Indian aristocrats also were considered as part of the elite circle.

As we have already come to know that the Subaltern Perspective never has never accepted the elitist version of history as the only narrative of modern India In his endeavour to establish a more befitting approach, Guha was concerned with several basic things like establishing a well-rounded definition of the (subaltern)

perspective; the ways and means of earning recognition for the (then) emergent perspective, its central idea and its focus on the incidents of peasant revolts. With a sharp eye to unearth the hidden truth of a semi feudal, colonized society and a keen analytical mind, Guha has pioneered a new genre of history told from the point of the the subalterns. Guha and the other scholars have tried hard to unearth the nature of domination during the colonial period, the roles of the subjugators and of the subjugated, the process to make domination possible etc. Guha was one of the most prolific contributors of the school and published 16 papers out of the 76 papers publishd in the first 10 volumes of the journal Subaltern Studies. Other contributors were Partha Chatterjee, David Arnold, David Hardiman, Gyanendra Pandey, Diptesh Chakrabarty, Goutam Bhadra, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Shahid Amin, Sumit Sarkar and many others.Within a short period, the journal and its perspective both received appreciation from discerning scholars of different areas of social science from across the globe.

Guha could realize that the age-old investigation methodology used in the study of Indian history has lost its relevance and so, a fresher approach was badly needed. It was time tto look at history from the point of the subjugated subalterns, whose life, culture and role in society have remained, so far, unobserved and neglected. In his clarion call to the fellow historians(Subaltern studies, vol 1, chapter 1) Guha has made them aware of the elite bias in the the-existing narratives of history. The peasants, the artisans, and/or the mill-workers never before that period found any mention worth to remember, in the pages of history, For this very reason, Guha felt the need for the all-new subaltern perspective.

3.2.1 Guha\s Observations on Peasant Insurgency :

Both the British colonialists and the Indian Nationalist elites used to view peasant insurgency or up-rise as acts of crime or pathology. Guha has sought to see it from a totally different perspective in his path -breaking work, Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India(1983). With the help of extensive research on the nature and characteristics of peasant revolts and awareness of the peasants' motives, Guha, like a true Marxist feels the need for an altered point of view and a change in consciousness for fresher and better understanding of the situation.He strongly believes that the peasant and tribal insurgents are not mere products of history, they are "the makers of their own history." (Dhanagare, p. 133). He is critical of the manners by which the British administrative machinery has taken anti-insurgency measures to prevent any such occurrence in future.

However, Guha's analytical mind has also understood the failure of the orthodox Marxist historiography to give the peasant and tribal movements their due. He has noticed that social historians, while studying these movements usually focus on the organization, leadership and ideology behind those movements as the key-elements in consciousness building because they are guided by the belief that the insurgent activities in the colonial period were 'pre-political phenomena'. In Guha's opinion this is a serious error of judgment about the merit of those movements. In fact, as he assumes, one should not question whether these movements are pre-political or not, one should better understand such movements with reference to the role of the colonial state in promoting parasitic landlordism and protecting its evil machinations. These practices strengthened oppression of the small farmers or landless peasants and tribal tenants on the one hand, and encouraged them to rebel, on the other. He has observed that the tribal and non-tribal often rebelled against the land-lords, money-lenders and the lower-level government officials. All the protest movements of the 19th century like the Bhumij uprisings, the Kol insurrections, the Santhal revolt(1885), the Indigo Protests(1859-1862) and the Deccan riots (1875) show how the subalterns on their own wanted to break, destroy and alter the then-existing structure of power, authority and control. Guha believes that this is proof enough to consider these movements as much political in nature as the latter-day reformist struggles of the Congress and the class-struggles led by the Leftists in the country. No doubt, these two sets of movements are qualitatively apart; the leadership, aims, programs and ideologies of the uprisings are no match for the maturity and sophistication of the far better organized movements of the 20th century. Yet, as Guha opines, the so-called 'pre-political' movements of the subalterns were no-less significant in leading the long-deprived communities to voice their anger, desperation and protests against the local centers of power., even though those movements remained rather localized and sectarian in nature.

Guha has identified six common forms and general ideas in the consciousness of subaltern insurgents. These are : Negation or formation of negative identity; ambiguity, modality, solidarity, transmission and territoriality. These forms should be examined in detail.

i. Negation or Formation of Negative Identity : By the term negation' Guha means that under the oppressive domination of both the colonial government and the local centers of power, the subordinated, marginalized peasants and tribals had formed a consciousness based on the negation of the properties or characteristics

of their superiors. Following Gramsci, Guha believes that this negative identification of the opposition is nothing but the initial arousal of a class consciousness that enabled the subalterns to apply violent measures and techniques against their perceived enemies. With the strength of that consciousness the subalterns could reject the traditiona l order, the conventional forms of respect, dress-codes, language style,etc as the commonly accepted norms were nothing but the symbols of the feudal nobility and elites who used to maintain social and cultural distance from the subalterns. By rejecting the values and symbols of the elites the subalterns could have a negative assertion of their identity and consciousness.

ii. Ambiguity: Ambiguity, according to Guha, makes insurgency different from a criminal act. Crime is secretive, conspiratorial act committed by either one individual or by ca comparatively small group; whereas, insurgent or revolutionary activities may involve violence; get manifested in public and are backed by certain ideologies or value-laden ideas. The ambiguity lies in the open act of violence based on ideology in insurgency and makes it different from crime.

iii. Modality : It represents the rebels' search for an alternative authority. To validate and sanctify the violence used in insurgent activities, the tribal rebels would often use the practice of paying nazranas to their leaders. They would also resort to plundering of goods and looting of cash for economic gains, would use destruction, wrecking or burning of resources as modalities of rebellion. But killing and bloodshed were of very rare use in tribal insurgency.

iv. Solidarity or formation of the insurgents' own identity is an important part of tribal insurgency. The subalterns would identify themselves on the basis of class and other elements of solidarity like ethnic identity, religious, caste or filial bonds. These elements would overlap often. Guha believes, such over-lappings constitute the duplex character of insurgency. Sometimes class and religion, sometimes class and ethnicity got fused Foe example, in the Kol and the Birsa rebellions, class was the prime factor, whereas in the Santhal revolt ethnic identity was more important than class-identity.

v. Transmission as an aspect of subaltern insurgency, indicates the pattern how insurgency used to be spread. Insurgents used to spread the message of insurgency among other subaltern sections with the use of various symbolic signs and rumours. Prayer-meetings, drum-beatings, blowing of flutes or horns, distribution of 'sal' branches and leaves, passage of a blazing torch, distribution of chapattis, oil or

sindur were the means used by the Kols, the Santhals, the Birsaites and the Moplas to spread the messages of their uprise among their fellow ethnic group members.

vi. Territoriality, in the context of subaltern approach means bonds built on the basis of blood-ties and locality; or on consanguinity and contiguity. In other words, a sense of we-feeling or belongingness is created with the help of a common heritage and shared habitat.

Guha earned popularity and respect for his perspective quiet fast, no doubt, but that has not spared him from criticism. The 'autonomy' of the subaltern consciousness has been questioned on the ground that this can be studied independently, without connecting them with other political processes. Another serious weakness of the perspective is lack of comprehension regarding its meaning and scope. In a broader sense, subalternity may encompass a huge section including the lowest strata of rural population on the one end and the rich and upper- middle class of peasantry on the other.

3.3 David Hardiman

David Hardiman, one of the important founding members of the Subaltern Studies Group, was born in Rawalpindi (Pakistan) in October, 1947 and was brought up in England. As a reknowned scholar of History he has taught in different universities in the UK, including the University of Oxford and at the Centre for Studies in Social Sciences, Calcutta. He has built up a rich resource of subaltern studies like Peasant Nationalists of Gujarat : Kheda District,1917-1934 (1981); The Coming of Devi : Adivasi Assertion in Western India (1987) ; Peasant Resistance in India : 1858-1914(1992) ; Subaltern Studies 8 : Essays in Honour of Ranajit Guha (1994); History for the Subordinated (2006) ,etc. The main focus of his work is on the colonial history of the subcontinent and the effect of colonization on the rural areas of the country power-play between factors, popular basis of Indian nationalism, environmental and medical history, etc. His study on the Devi movement among the tribals of Gujarat may not match the definition of subaltern studies, but it is known as a very important addition to the rich tapestry of subaltern studies.

3.3.1 The Devi movement in South Gujarat : This peaceful mass movement by the native people of that region—has revealed how the local tribals have tried to bring in social reform for the group in the British period. Though this movement was really important for the self-assertion of the local tribal people, nobody-right

from the British government and its administrators, journalists, the Congress nationalists, not even the socialist politicians—had taken any interests in this important event of tribal life. This movement was undertaken by the tribal people of south Gujarat to transform their traditional habits and alter their life-style. The Devi movement was not one of its kind because such movements did take place among almost all advasis from all corners of the country, but the mainstream or non-subaltern sections of population did not take notice of the events of the movements. So there was no documentation, nor any full-length monograph was ever prepared on such important events of tribal life. Even when the nationalist workers had taken a rare notice, they would immediately see the influence of Gandhiji and his principles behind it. The socialist activists and ideologues, too, in a similar fashion, failed to give the tribal people their dues. Hardiman, in course of his analyses of the movement, notices that tribals and other subaltern groups have always been denied credits for either any of their independent initiative or for their ability to decide what was good or bad for them.

In The Coming of Devi Hardiman has shown that the adivasis of Gujarat were able to assert themselves evil machinations of the moneylenders on the strength of this movement. The (Devi) movement was started in 1921 by the fisher folks of Palghar taluk, gradually it spread to other parts of Gujarat. Through this movement the tribal people of that part of the country had attempted to reform themselves socially and culturally. For example, they wanted to get rid of their drinking habit, to resist the highhandedness of big landlords and Parsi liquor-vendors who compelled them into debt-bondage. The Devi movement was based on the belief that the Devi or the goddess would manifest herself through a medium, usually a girl. The medium would pronounce the commands of Devi in front of a crowd. The six-fold commands of would run like this :

1) Drinking of liquor and toddy was to be stopped.

2) Consumption of meat and fish needed to be stopped.

3) Life shold be simple and honest.

4) Personal cleanliness was of great importance and men should take bath twice a day.

5) Women should bathe three times a day.

6) All contacts with the Parsis were to be severed.

The commands sometimes would also ask for abondonement of witch-craft; and sometimes to follow the principles of Gandhi. Once the girl dressed as Devi would finish the commands, she would be offered coins and/ or gifts. The group would then seat for the common feast or bhandara. The movement not only changed their ways of life, but also led to the awakening of their political consciousness and made them politically mobilized. But ultimately such movements could not make them free from all oppressions, because the control of the Parsis over them was replaced by the domination of elite sections of the adivasis over other members of the clan. Still, it cannot be denied that from various other aspects the Devi movement was immensely beneficial for them.

Hardiman has also studied the strange relations between the subaltern classes and the local money-lenders in rural India in his second book Feeding the Baniya. The relationship was based not only on economic dependence of the poor villagers on the usurers but olso on political and cultural undercurrents. The local money lenders, who were basically banias or merchantshad the remarkable quality of bouncing back even after strong oppositions and rebellions by the local villagers.Even in areas where there were branches of government controlled banks to provide finabcial assistance to the villagers at cheaper rates, the villagers would prefer the more exploitative terms and conditions of the local moneylenders. Hardiman's study reveals that due to cultural reasons, the moneylender could continue to maintain his position of domination as a member of the locally dominant sections.

For the purpose of his subaltern enquiries,Hardiman has made field-studies, met with numerous people, has recorded popular stories and folk-songs. His Subaltern Thesis stand on a combination of anthropology and history as he believes that the relationship between the elites and the subalterns is the product of a historical process. His investigation has proved that'

The concept of Devi and her commands had brought in radical changes in the consciousness of the tribes of Palghar region.They gradually became politically mobilized and came out of the clutches of the money-lenders and liquor-vendors ;their standard of living also did improve. True, That movement could not protect them from all kinds of oppression and exploitation; but, it definitely helped them become assertive. At the same time, they learned to be self-reliant and active for their own welfare. Hardiman has looked deep into the relationship between the villagers and the money-lenders to examine the nature of exploitation they (tribal-

villagers) used to experience regularly. He has also noticed that the Baniyas could consolidate their control over the villagers with the help of certain sets of traditional practices and beliefs. Even though the baniyas and the money-lenders used to exploit the rural poor with their never-ending demands and threats, they (the poor) would seek help from their

Abusers rather than from the banks or other such organizations that would offer them better terms and conditions like softer interests for loan. Sometimes as the dominating force, sometime as a clandestine agent for other dominating forces the money-lenders would offer the poor peasants an avenue to connect with the more powerful, ever-growing capitalist world outside their villae.

True, Hardiman's thesis has not offered any solution to the age-old problems of poverty, inequality, exclusion and marginalization of the underclass in India, it has helped us to look at these problems from a new angle. As a sociologically-sensitive historian he has focused on the impact of colonial rure on rural society of India, power relationship at various levels, India's freedom movement and its popular bases, and several other areas of social life. He has minutely examined the participation of peasants in the national movement in Gujarat; and has found that it was quite different from the Gandhian movements in aims and objectives. To do that he has studied how adivasis of Gujarat were uniting against the liquor dealers who, with their monopoly right of supply were exploiting the local tribals.

As a subaltern thinker Hardiman was not only influenced by the path-breaking ideas of Guha, but was alsinspired by the thoughts of Marx, Gramsci, Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu. D.D.Kosambi and several western Marxist historians like E.P. Thompson, Eugene Genovese and Elizabeth Fox- Genovese.

3.4 Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar :

As it has been said earlier, Ambedkar was an admirer of the principle of equality in every sphere of life; like equality of respect, of status, of consideration and equality of dignity; therefore he wanted abolition of the Brahminical arrangement of society that had fragmented the social order into multiple groups. In the early years of civilization, the powerful well-heeled people had engaged the impoverished,powerless people as their servants, watchmen and menial staff. They had their living quarters on the outskirt of the village and eventually became known as the 'antyajas' and 'avarnas' or as people who remained outside the periphery of

the varna system. In this way a huge section of people were excluded and marginalized by the powerful. Ambedkar could realize that Brahminical values and caste practices reinforced each other and started untouchability by utilizing the preachings of ancient texts.

Ambedkar has used the term 'Dalit' ,instead of terms like the 'Depressed Class' or the 'Harijan' to mean the oppressed and exploited sections of the society. Dhananjoy Keer, the biographer of Ambedkar has rightly pointed out that 'Ambedkar was aspiring them (Dalit) 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.' For the promotion of the status of the dalits Ambedkar has advocated five principles: self- improvement, self- progress, self- dependence, self- respect, and self- confidence. He was also in favour of dalit- activism and movement. This is the essence of Ambedkar's subaltern approach. With the help of this approach he has presented an alternative narrative, that is, anti -Hindu and anti-Brahmanical, of nationalism. This version has been reified through the formation of Dalit- Bahujan Samaj and establishment of a critique of the Brahminical social structure.

With the help of his subaltern approach, Ambedkar has upheld the aspirations of the Dalits, their vision of nationalism as opposed to the nationalistic ideas of eminent spokesperson and leaders like Raja Rammohan Roy, B.G.Tilak, Mahatma Gandhi, Nehru and Shyamaprasad Mukhopadhyay on the one hand, and the secular -socialist ideology of the leftist leaders like M.N. Roy, Rajani Palme Datta, E.M.S.Namoodripad, on the other. He has traced the origin and problems of Dalits, origin of caste and untouchability, and has also suggested measures for the eradication of untouchability. We need to discuss all these aspects of to understand his subaltern views.

3.4.1 Origin of Caste :

Ambedkar has traced the origin of the Dalits in the history of ancient India. He believes that in the past the present dalits were known as the 'broken persons'. On the basis of his understanding of history of ancient India he concludes that the primitive society had nomadic tribes who had cattle as their property. As cattle-tenders these tribes had to move from one place to another on a regular basis. With the passage of time people learned cultivation and came to depend more on agriculture for a stable and secured life and gave up their nomadic habits to settle down at one place. Acquisition of land replaced cattle as property. When peole started to settle down,there occured frequent fights with those two groups of people, the settled

and the nomadic tribes. As the nomads often had to face defeats in those fights, they had to break into smaller groups and scattered into different areas to escape captivity. With time those defeated, scattered people came to be known as the Broken Men. They started to work as the watchmen and security guards for the well-settled people in exchange of food and shelter. The Broken Men were considered as outsiders by the settled people as they used to be members of two different communities and had to live outside the boundaries of the village. As the lived on outskirt of the village, they came to be known as the 'antyaja's.

Ambedkar believes that today's dalits are the descendants of the 'broken men' of the past. They are the natives or original inhabitants of the country. Ambedkar's subaltern ideas have been narrated in several of his books like The Untouchables, Who are They? [1948], Who were the Shudras? [1945] Mr Gandhi and the Emancipation of the Untouchables. [1936], Annihilation of caste, etc. He strongly felt that mere legal equality of status could not be sufficient, and wanted to establish equality of consideration as well as equality of dignity as the foundation of an equal society. He had opposed the Brahminical arrangement of society as it had brought fragmentation within the social structure by creating severe divisions and discriminations among the people. The impoverished people were forced to do all sorts of menial jobs, were compelled to stay at the outskirts of the villages and were labeled as 'antyajas' and 'avarnas' or people who were out of the periphery of varna system. This had led to the exclusion and marginalization of the poor, hard working people. Ambedkar came to realize that the Brahminical values and caste practices reinforced each other and had started untouchability with the help of ancient texts like shastras and samhitas.

Ambedkar has used the term 'Dalit' to mean the so called 'untouchables' in the Indian society. Gandhiji had called them 'Harijans. Ambedkar has inspired the dalits to fight for their human rights. As an activist he has led them to action by acting himself. For the promotion of the status of the Dalits, Ambedkar has advocated five principles, namely, self-improvement, self-progress, self-dependence, self-respect and self-confidence. In addition to these he advocates in favour of dalit-activism and movement.

This was the essence of Ambedkar's subaltern approach. With this he has presented an alternative narration i.e an anti-Hindu, anti-Brahminical version of nationalism. t, E.M.S. Namboodiripad, on the other. Ambedkar has strongly hoped that his version of nationalism would bring forth an egalitarian, casteless, classless society

possible. With Ambedkar's vision of a robust caste-less society an awareness about a discrimination-free world has started to emerge. It also marked the beginning of anti-caste movements across India, especially in the western part of the country.

3.5 Summary

The unit on subaltern critique has discussed the definition , meaning and significance of the perspective that has examined the role of the down trodden in the traditional society. Though there are several celebrated authors of the perspective, it has focused on the three of them because of the importance of their thoughts and approaches to create a balance between the roles of the masses and of the elites in social and political arena of life. The perspective, influenced by Marxism had emerged in the field of historiography to understand and rewrite history from the below; but it also has earned an equally important presence in sociology by questioning the popular social concepts that marginalize and ignore communities as archaic, primitive and backward. Thus, the perspective compels people to rethink about the alternative sociabilities and their political roles in self- assertion. The critique does not represent any singleintellectual image, but a number of important academic development in social history. In the opinion of Christpher Lee, this perspective presents constant critique towards the accumulated knowledge in different areas of social science No doubt, it also has faced many questions and debated from different quarters. Critics have pointed out that the term 'subaltern' has not been defined well. It has also been pointed out by some that "subaltern' is a relative concept in the sense that it should be understood with reference to something else. If subalterns belong to somewhere below, then the question obviously is, "Below what"? A subaltern may not always remain a person without power, as Hardiman has observed during his study on the Devi movement that with a little alteration in life style, a tribal leader can assume the role of an exploiter rather than remaining as an exploited person.

3.6 Model Questions

1 Answer in Brief :   **5 Marks.**

   a) What is Subaltern Critique?

   b) How does Subaltern Critique differ from the other established perspectives?

c) Who are the subalterns?

d) What is Ambedkar's view on origin of caste?

2. Discuss in detail : **10 Marks.**

e) Define subaltern critique. Examine its role in introducing a new perspective sociology in India.

f) Examine, in detail, the views of the chief founding father of subaltern critique.

g) Make an assessment of David Hardiman's views on the Devi movement in relation to subaltern perspective in sociology.

h) Do you think Ambedkar is a subaltern thinker? Give your arguments in the light of his views.

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Module-II

Indian Society: Concepts
and Institutions

Unit 4 ❑ Caste: Concept and Critique

Structure

4.0 Objectives

- Focuses on the age-old system of caste in India.
- Points to the various critiques or criticisms against caste .
- Offers deeper understanding of the caste system.

4.1 Introduction

The Indian social structure has a unique social institution-the caste system. It is an ancient system among the Hindus to denote the concept of social stratification. Origin of the caste system is still unknown to mankind. It dates back to time immemorial. This system of stratification is considered to be unique to India as its features are nowhere similar to any other forms of stratification that exists elsewhere.

The word 'caste' is believed to have originated from the Spanish word 'casta', which means 'lineage'. In traditional India, this system of social stratification was not named as the caste system. It was after the British colonization in India, that the phrase 'caste system' got popularized. In traditional India, it was originally the Varna system or the Varnashram. The Rigveda highlights the Chaturvarna system, which means there is the presence of four main varnas in the Indian society-

" The Brahmins who are destined to be priests

" The Kshatriya who were the warriors

" The Vaishyas as the traders and finally,

" The Shudras who were meant to be the servant of the society.

Thus, the colonizers changed the concept of Varna and Jati system to 'the caste system' in order to suit their way of understanding.

Several seminal scholars have tried to define the caste system in their own way. A few of them are:

Firstly, S.V Ketkar mentioned that "a caste is agroup having two characteristics; (i) membership is confined to those who are born of members and includes all persons so born, (ii) the members are forbidden by an inexorable social law to marry outside the group".

Secondly, Sir Herbert Risley defined caste as "a collection of families, bearing a common name, claiming a common descent, from a mythical ancestor, human or divine, professing to follow the same hereditary calling and regarded by those who are competent to give an opinion as forming a single homogenous community".

Thirdly, MacIver and Page opined, "when status is wholly predetermined, so that men are born to their lot without any hope of changing it, then class takes the extreme form of caste."

Different factors have been the reason behind the continued existence of the caste system in the Indian society. A few such factors are as follows:

❖ Geographical Location-India was isolated from the other countries for a long period of time. This helped the Indian tradition, customs, mores and beliefs to grow and become deep seated among the people.

❖ Rural belt-Before the advent of the British in India, it was mostly covered

under the rural social structure category. This static social order and structure helped the caste system to grow in India.

❖ Religious influence-The origin of Hinduism as a religion is unknown to the people. Hinduism is thus referred to as the Sanatana Dharma. It believes in the theory of Karma and reincarnation, which might have helped the caste system to grow in India.

❖ Education-People were mostly religious in nature. They feared to oppose the dictums of religion. Lack of education was one such factor, which made them ignorant to the dogmatic, superstitious beliefs. They went on believing and maintaining the rules and regulations of the caste order, which thereby facilitated the growth of the caste system in India.

Thus, the caste system is an inherent system of social stratification even in the modern century. It had its own changes with the passage of time, but the core factor still remains. It mainly prevailed due to ancestor worship, following the rituals, maintaining colour or racial prejudice and so on.

4.2 Characteristics of the Caste System

The caste system is one of the oldest and most complex forms of social stratification. Govind Sadashiv Ghurye provided six main features of the caste system in his noted work "Caste and Race in India" (1969). The following are the prime features of the caste system-

i. Segmental Division: The caste system is a non-homogenous segmental division of the society. There's a well-maintained social boundary. The members of a caste is given the ascribed status that is the status which is determined by one's birth and is not based on one's achievements in life. No amount of other social accomplishments can change the caste to which one is born into. It is an unattainable and nontransferable position. The caste rank to which one was placed became a way of life for them. Each caste rank came with its own set of rules and regulations. It was the duty of the caste panchayat to take care whether the members of one's caste were obliging to the rules of the caste order or not.

ii. Hierarchical Division: In India, the system of caste has divided the Hindu order into castes and sub-castes. There was a gradational system by which members of the higher castes were deemed to be superior to members from the lower caste rank. The lower caste that is the Shudras were tagged to be the untouchables. They

were considered to be members from the outcaste group. According to the hierarchical division, the Brahmins were the superior most who were followed by the Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras in line.

iii. Restrictions on food and social intercourse: Each member of a specific caste system has their own set of rules and regulations related to food and social relations. Restrictions based on food vary from one caste group to another. For example, the Brahmins can accept kachcha food (uncooked food) from the members of lower caste group but they cannot accept pakka food (cooked food) from the lower caste groups. The foods that are prepared by the Brahmins are acceptable to all caste members. On many occasions, when a Brahmins eats from a plate, the lower caste members believes that if they will food from that particular unwashed plate, then they can attain blessings from God. Consumption of beef is strictly not allowed. Many Brahmins restrain themselves from consuming onion, garlic and so on in order to maintain the caste rules. Similarly, the concept of purity and pollution is also associated with the restrictions related to social intercourse. It is followed in such a strict way that even the touch or shadow of a lower caste can pollute the Brahmins. This is the reason, which has propelled the concept of untouchability in India.This practice has segregated the four caste groups from each other.

iv. Civil and Religious Disabilities: Following the caste rules and regulations, there are several lower sub-caste groups who are compelled to live on the outskirts of one's city or village in order to maintain the purity of the area. Certain lower caste groups follows that they cannot come out of their house before 12 noon. The reason behind this is that before 12 noon, the shadow of a human being falls at his back, which if by mistake falls on an upper caste member's body, then that might pollute him. Many Dalits (the lower caste group) are not allowed to draw water from public well, or visit temple, school, colleges, hotels and so on. The lower caste groups were debarred from getting their basic educational or legal right, or even political representation. The Brahmins are believed to be born pure. They are deemed to be superior. Chanting Vedic mantras were allowed only by the Brahmins and no other lower caste groups.

v. Occupational Choice: The caste system is linked with the occupational gradation too. Each caste group is designated with a specific set of occupation. The members of a caste group cannot change their field of occupation, as it is an ascribed status. For example, the Brahmins were expected to be priests or teachers, the Kshatriyas were meant to be warriors, the Vaishyas are entitled to be the

warriors and the Shudras were meant to do all the menial jobs of the society.

vi. Restrictions on marriage: The Hindu caste system has rigid rules on marriage. Castes are endogamous group, according to which an individual can marry within his or her own caste group. Inter-caste marriage was not allowed by the caste groups. For example, a Brahmin can only marry another Brahmin; a Brahmin cannot marry anyone from the lower caste group. The caste groups follow the concept of Anuloma (Hypergamy) and Pratiloma (Hypogamy). Anuloma means that when a lower caste girl marries a boy from the upper caste group, they she moves up the caste ladder. On the other hand, Pratiloma means when an upper caste girl marries someone from the lower caste group then she suffers from a demotion in the caste ladder. Pratiloma is looked down upon by the society. On several occasions, honor killing is infamously famous in many parts of India. Inter-caste marriage is one such factor, which triggers honor killing.

Therefore, G. S Ghurye made an effort to list out the prime features, which dominates the Indian caste system. These features prove the point that the system of caste promoted inequality among the masses. It completely stood against the concepts of individualization, industrialization, globalization, modernization, westernization and so on.

4.3 Theories on the Origin of the Caste System

There are numerous theories and opinions placed by various scholars related to the origin of the caste system in India. A few such theories which try to bring out the theory behind the origin of the caste system are as follows:

a) Traditional Theory: According to ancient texts, it was believed that the caste system originated due to divine ordinance. The Purushashukta of Rig Veda mentions the existence of the four Varnas. These four Varnas originate from Prajapathi Brahma or the Supreme Being. In accordance to this theory, the Brahmins originated from the mouth of the Supreme Being, the Kshatriyas from the arms, the Vaishyas from the thighs, and the Shudras from the feet. Due to this reason, each caste group qualifies with a special feature. Mouth is considered to be the source of knowledge or speech. Thus, the Brahmins are vested with the task of preaching and teaching. The arms are a symbol of strength, thereby linking the Kshatriyas to the field of being a warrior who can protect the society from external threat. The thing with the other repository organs is closer to the stomach; therefore the Vaishyas

are vested with the duty to take care of the economic wellbeing of its members. The Vaishyas are thus often associated with trading activities. Finally, The Shudras originated from the feet of the Brahman, thus their prime task is to serve the other parts of the body and to do the menial tasks of the society. Their purpose is to clean the society. Though this theory is associated with its own set of criticisms, but it is one of the most popular beliefs on the origin of the caste system in India.

b) Racial Theory: Scholars such as G. S Ghurye, Sir Herbert Risley and Dr. D.N Majumdar were the prime movers of this theory. The pioneers of this theory were of the belief that the concept of castes came into existence due to the long-standing racial differences among the Indian masses. They propounded that it was after the Aryan invasion in India that they started to segregate people on the basis of racial differences. They were fair complexioned, for which they tried to dominate over other groups of people who had different racial features.

c) Occupational Theory: Nesfield proposed the occupational theory behind the origin of the caste system. According to this theory, if a specific group of people follows the same hereditary calling for a specific course of time then there emerges a caste group based on that hereditary calling. In his opinion, the idea of purity and pollution got developed based on the kind of occupation one is associated with in his/her group.

Besides these three propositions on the development of the caste system, there are other theories such as the political theory, which claims that the Brahmins wanted to maintain their supremacy over the other groups of people for which they developed the traditional theory on the origin of the caste system. They associated the development of the caste system with religion, so that people complies without questioning. On the other hand, Sharatchandra Roy provided a notion that the caste system emerged due to the integration and assimilation of different cultures.

4.4 Evolution of the Caste System

There are two main stages, which show the evolution of the caste system in India. They are:

a) Caste in Pre-British Age

b) Caste in Pre-Independence Period

c) Caste in Independent Period (1947 onwards)

4.4.1 Caste in Pre-British Age :

The Pre-British age is largely divided into two main categories that is, firstly, the system of caste in ancient age where the role of the Puranic and Vedic age comes to play. The period upto 1100 A.D comes under the ancient age. Secondly, the system of caste in the medieval period which witnesses the Mughal rule in India. This period entails from 1100 A.D to 1757 A.D.

4.4.2 Caste in Pre-Independence Period:

The East India Company of the British took over the Indian administrative system from the hands of the Mughal emperors and started to rule India as a colony for more than 200 years. After the intrusion of the British way of governing India, a few changes were incorporated within the Hindu caste system. A few of them are as follows:

❖ Decline of the Caste Panchayat-The British incorporated a uniform legal system in India. The powers that were previously enjoyed by the caste councils were now transferred to the civil and criminal courts.

❖ Influence of Social Legislations-The British legal system incorporated a few legal rulings, which inevitably brought a change in the caste system of India. Acts such as The Caste Disabilities Removal Act of 1850 tried to remove the practice of untouchability from the Indian social system. Other Acts such as The Special Marriage Act of 1872 legalized inter-caste and inter-religious marriages. Therefore, the long-standing endogamous principle broke down after the executing this legal Act.

❖ Social Reform Movements-Several social reform movements sprawled up during the British rule in India. These reform movements tried to challenge the age-old inequalities in the Indian traditional social structure. Few reform movements were The Brahma Samaj which was founded by Raja Ram Mohan Roy in 1820 which attacked idol worshipping, caste divisions and so on; The Prarthana Samaj which as initiated by Justice Ranade who spoke strongly in support of inter-caste marriages, widow remarriage and so on; The Arya Samaj which was launched by Swami Dayanand Saraswati in 1875 who protested against caste inequalities and tried to make the Shudras study the Vedas.

❖ Influence of Western Ideas-The British brought with themselves western education in India. Open values such as "liberty, equality and fraternity", democracy, liberalism, secularism and so on were spread through western education among the Indian masses. Due to the spread of this education,

the deprived masses dreamt of a new world without inequality. It led to the rationalization of the Indian thinking process.

❖ Influence of Census System-The concept of a systematic demographic study of the Indian population was initiated by the British rule in India. It sharpened the feeling of caste consciousness among the masses. The grading points of the caste groups created a sense of competition to upheld one's caste spirit in the social ladder.

❖ Influence of Industrialization and Urbanization-The Industrial Revolution in England also had an effect in the Indian socio-economic system. Several industries with modern machineries started to have its mushroom growth in India. Introduction of railways, printing press, and construction of roads helped to improve not only the communication facility among the Indian masses but also the development of new employment opportunities. This resulted into the mingling of all caste members as crowded trains, buses, trams could not make the people follow the norms of purity and pollution. Due to the growth of the cities, people started migrating from rural to urban areas in search of better life opportunities; this in turn led to the development of equal minded individuals which in turn acted as an impetus to eradicate caste based inequalities.

4.4.3 Caste in Independent Period :

After India's independence in 1947, there was a shift in the socio-political structure. The traditional caste structure also witnessed a makeshift. Secularism was becoming the call of the day, thereby attacking the religious notion behind the caste structure. Imposition of several caste based rules and regulations like restriction on food habit, got relaxed. The concept of caste controlling one's hereditary calling, also saw a setback. People were free to choose their own field of occupation rather than following one's caste based occupation. Though the notion of endogamy still prevails but the Brahmin supremacy over the lower caste groups has been curbed down by strict legal intervention. People now give importance to the class system instead of the caste system. Other factors like sanskritization and westernization too helped in changing the traditional notion of caste. Thus, the rigidity of the caste structure has undergone a sweeping change.

4.5 Merits of the Caste System

The Indian caste system has no recorded history of origin. Due to several historical events, the caste system evolved with the passage of time. It is an all-

pervasive system in India, which no Indians can ignore. It has its own influence upon the people. Swami Vivekananda was of the view that the caste system in India brought with itself its own set of advantages. To him, a person's caste was determined by the 'gunas' or the qualities he possesses. To him, as per the original system of caste which was spread by Parashuram and Bhisma, it was quite flexible in nature. People could choose their own field of interest as per their skills and aptitude. He postulated that caste was a system of social order and not a part of any specific religion. Due to gradual evolution of mankind and the introduction of several external cultures in the Indian sub-continent, the caste system started to take a new shape among the masses. A few of its merits are as follows-

❖ The caste system represents a harmonious division of society. It was based on the principle of division of labor and one's hereditary calling. Occupational skills were passed down from one generation to the other.

❖ The caste system provided its member with its own social security and protection. Traditionally, it tried to promote an equalitarian society, which was gradually transformed due to external intrusion in the Indian social system.

❖ The caste system promotes the concept of we feeling. Rich or poor weak or strong it tried to help each caste members to get united in the name of caste. During the monarchical rule in India, the caste system peacefully co-existed with the other groups.

❖ The caste system acts as the rulebook of the Hindu community. It contains the dos and don'ts that a member must abide by. It tries to promote social order and solidarity.

❖ The caste system acts as an agent of socialization too. As it is based on the ascribed status of an individual, thus, the family members pass down the caste rules to the younger members so that they, too, can be accepted members of the society. Caste is a way of life for many. It also acts as a moral restraint within the followers. It contains its own rules and regulations, which helps a member to be in accordance with the social whole.

❖ The system of caste helps to maintain social stability. It encourages the qualities of a member and promotes sympathy and mutual respect for each other.

❖ The system of caste has promoted India's political culture. Due to the

presence of the caste panchayats, the caste system has acted as one of the major units of law. In case of asking for justice, the members of the caste panchayats established their own form of sanction to bring about peaceful existence among the members.

Besides the merits that entails with the caste system, several critiques have criticized the presence of caste system in India.

4.6 Critiques of the Caste System

Besides the merits, the caste system has its own set of demerits. Several critiques have pointed out various perspectives to speak against the system of division that the Indian caste system breeds in the society. One such prominent figure is Dr. B.R Ambedkar. He is regarded as the 'Father of Indian Constitution". He made an effort to fight in favour of the 'depressed class' of the society and enlighten them to stand against discrimination. His socio-political thought to bring about a social reform in the Indian social system was indeed a noble one. He made the people speak up against caste based discrimination and made ways so that the 'dalits' can represent themselves on an equal ground, both politically and socially. Thus, a few such critiques of the caste system are as follows-

❖ Firstly, the caste system created segregation in the society. It was not just a system promoting division of labour but a system, which created division of labourers. The hierarchical feature of the caste system was a key to start grading the people on the basis of their ascribed status and thereby discriminate them on moral and social grounds.

❖ Secondly, an individual's ascribed status cannot be the sole determining factor to judge his social life or dictate his life-based choices. Many scholars deem this system as unnatural as it is not based on individual choice and it creates a system of favouritism in the society.

❖ Thirdly, it destroys the solidarity of the Indian social structure. The caste members are united within their group but they do not encourage the mingling of inter-caste members. This creates feelings of division, aloofness as well as hatred towards one another. It leads to the creation of untouchability. The reason behind this hatefulness of one caste against the other is because of the existence of stringent caste based rules.

❖ Fourthly, the caste system hampers the freedom of speech of an individual.

If a lower caste member wants to voice his opinion against the upper caste member, then he is looked down upon and on many occasion, he/she is subjected to negative sanction by the caste panchayats. It destroys both public spirit and public opinion.

❖ Fifthly, caste is not in favour of economic prosperity of the members. Caste based rules makes one stick to the occupational group that his caste members are entitled to. Therefore, for example, if the son of a Brahmin wants to work in a leather industry, then his social group will look him down upon, because any job associated with leather is clubbed with the lower caste members.

❖ Sixthly, the caste system in India degrades the position of the women in the society. Several caste-based rules are directed towards the women group, which leads to their low social status. It does not encourage women's education, does not make them equal participants in religious ceremonies, a female cannot be a priest who can mediate between God and the followers. They are even discouraged from joining the political activities. Strict endogamous rules are imposed upon them and if anyone debars from following the rules of the caste group, honour killing is the prime sanction imposed upon them by the caste groups.

❖ Seventhly, caste rules discourage the proper growth of a human being as a social being. Caste-based rules and regulations create widespread distinction among the social groups. It creates division and feelings of hatred among the inter-caste groups. It not only affects one's social life but also their personal life too. Several scholars are of the opinion that such stringent rule leads to self-denial, low self-esteem and imbalanced personality among the caste members.

❖ Finally, several eminent individuals stood against the injustice of the caste system in the society. Renowned people like Jyotirao Phule pointed out that if the caste system was the brainchild of Brahma, then it should have been imposed upon the animal kingdom too; Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi stood against the perilous system of caste where the lower caste groups are treated as untouchables and are marginalized from the social whole. He stood up for them and declared the Shudras as "Harijans" or the children of God, so that they too can be a part of the society without any discrimination.

4.7 Summary

Therefore, as evident from the above discussion that the caste system was indeed a complex social system which the Hindus followed since time unknown. The system was only unique to India. Social mobility is practically impossible within the members of the caste system as it is a system based on divine origin. The caste system is a conservative and a complex system whose rules are being transmitted down the generation. Though, the system of caste has changed down the years and people now mostly focus on the class system rather than the caste system; achieved status rather than ascribed status; secular status rather than divine status and so on. Due to the introduction of several policies in independent India, there has been flexibility in the rigid caste system. People are now voicing for equality of the people in the society. It is indeed a challenging question to answer that whether the caste system will survive in the near future or not but it can be claimed that with changing times, the caste system too is making its own set of compromise to include the people as one single community.

Did you know?

1. The caste system was justified in Manu (considered as the father of Hindu Dharma) in his most famous work, Manusmriti. He mentioned that the caste system justifies order and regularity in the social order.

2. Khap panchayats are caste-based panchayats, which are found in the rural areas Northern India. It acts as quasi-judicial bodies, which pronounces harsh crimes on its victims. The verdicts given by Khap panchayats are mainly against the women. They even promote honour killing to secure their caste rules.

3. According to the Human Rights Education Movement of India, every hour three Dalit women are raped, two Dalits are assaulted and two Dalit houses are burned down.

4.8 Model Questions

A. Answer briefly. 5

i) Give any four changes that happened in the caste system in India during the British rule.

ii) Point out any 4 merits of the caste system in India.

   iii) What points did Gandhiji and Jyotirao Phule make on the system of caste in India?

   iv) Who were known as the Harijans?

   v) What is the function of a caste panchayat?

   vi) What do you mean by honour killing in the name of caste?

B. Answer in detail.   **10**

   i) Define caste. Point out the main characteristics of the Indian Caste System.

   ii) Discuss the theories behind the origin of the caste system in India.

   iii) What criticisms are leveled against the system of caste in India?

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Special Notes :

The role of the caste panchayats are to solve cases and to bring out solutions so that the internal regulation of the village stays strong. It promotes solidarity among the members of the village. It is mainly operated by the elderly members of the village.

Sanskritization was coined by M.N Srinivas in his book "Religion and Society among The Coorgs of South India". It is one form of caste based social mobility. According to him, "Sanskritization is a process by which a lower caste or tribe or any other group changes its customs, rituals, ideology and way of life in the direction of a higher or more often twice-born caste."

Parashuram was regarded as the Brahma Warrior. He was believed to be the incarnation of Lord Vishnu as per the Hindu mythology.

One of the most popular Hindu mythology is the Mahabharata. Bhishma was one of the most important figures over there. He was popular for his vow to remain celibate all his life. He was blessed with a boon to have wish-long life. He was one of the unparalleled warriors of his time.

Unit 5 ❑ Varna and Jati

Structure

5.0 Objectives

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5.0 Objectives

- To provide a clear understanding of Varna and Jati.
- To promote a detailed understanding of Varna and Jati.

5.1 Introduction

The Indian social structure has one unique social institution-"Caste". It is one of the most important social institutions, which is unique to only India. The Caste system has stirred several research scholars to come to India and conduct a detailed

study. The Caste system emerged out of the Varna system and its presence in India has been since time immemorial. According to S.V Ketkar (2018), "A caste is a group having two characteristics; (i) membership is confined to those who are born of members and includes all persons so born; (ii) the members are forbidden by an inexorable social law to marry outside the group." The caste system can be found to have unique features such as it creates a segmental division of the Hindu society; it creates a hierarchical division of the society; it imposes restrictions on feeding and social intercourse; the caste members are bound by a few civil and religious disabilities and barred from certain privileges from the other sections of the society; it creates a restriction on the occupational choice of the caste members and lastly, it follows the endogamous restriction on marriage.

After the British colonized India, the caste system underwent several changes, whose effect can be felt even today. But before that, one must be aware about the Indian concept of Varna and Jati from where the caste system emerged.

5.2 Varna

The etymological meaning of the word 'varna' means colour. It is a Sanskrit term. The root word is 'vr' which means to cover or envelop. The origin of the word can be traced to Rigveda, which means the colour or outward appearance of an individual. The Rigveda highlights the Chaturvarna system, which means there is the presence of four main varnas in the Indian society-

❖ The Brahmins who were destined to be priests

❖ The Kshatriyas who were the warriors

❖ The Vaishyas as the traders and finally,

❖ The Shudras who were meant to be the servants of the society.

Any community which belonged to one of the four varnas, were known as 'savarna' and on the other hand people who did not belong to any specific caste rank (such as the Dalits or Scheduled Tribes) they were known as the 'avarnas'. Thus, the varna system was a purely gradational system in the Hindu society.

The history of the emergence of the Varna system can be traced down to the Aryans' invasion in India. The Rigveda refers to the fact that the Aryans were the light complexioned individuals of the then Indian society. These light complexioned

groups of people were contrasted with the dark complexioned non-Aryans (who were referred as the 'dasa' Varna). In addition to the Varna system of creating a gradation in the society, the Vedic literature also spotlights various other groups who lay outside the Varna system such as Ayogava, Chandala, Nishada and Paulkasa. They too were meant to perform the menial tasks of the society and were not given any respect for the tasks they were assigned to perform by birth.

In addition to people, the Varna system also extended itself to the soil composition of Mother Earth. In that fashion, soils can be divided into four main varnas-The white coloured soil is the Brahman soil which smells like pure butter; red colour soils indicate the Kshatriyas who represents blood and tastes bitter; the yellow colour soil (Vichy soil) indicates the Vaishyas which tastes sour and finally the black colour soil which represents the Shudras and tastes like wine.

Therefore, the Rigveda mentions about the existence of the varna system in the society. It is in the tenth mandal of Rigveda under the Purusha Sukta verse. Different scholars give varied opinions about the origin of the Varna system. One such explanation points out that the Varna system originated because of the three basic elements or qualities that the universe is made up of, i.e. the Gunas. The three qualities or gunas are-

1. Satva Guna or Neutral nature

2. Rajo Guna or Passionate nature

3. Tamo Guna or hopeless nature.

Hence, the origin of the Varna system, where Satva Guna indicates white, Rajas indicates Red and Tamas indicate black. The believers of this theory points out that- people with greater intellectual quality (Satt Guna) took the pledge to protect the society and preserve its knowledge. They were known as the Brahmans. Similarly, people with fighting skills (Rajo Guna) took the pledge to defend the nation against all harm-they came to be known as the Kshtariyas. In the same way, people with qualities of both trading and merchanting (Rajo as well as Tamo Guna) were referred to as the Vaishya and finally, people with selfless virtues within their heart and soul, who dedicated their lives to maintain the purity of the society (Tamo Guna) were referred to as the Shudras. Several Hindus started relating the Varna system with the theory of Karma. Karma indicates action of an individual. Each action bears with it, its own consequence, therefore, a positive action of an individual will bear positive Karma and negative action of an individual (which can bring harm

to the society) will bring forth negative Karma to the perpetrator. It is a cause and effect relationship, which many people believed in and maintained that Varna is not related with the ascriptive status of an individual rather it coincides with the type of action he/she is involved with, which finally leads to the allotment of that individual into the Varna hierarchy.

The Varna Dharma promotes two kinds of duties among the people (as mentioned in the Vedas)-

a) Samanya Dharma: The universal dharma, irrespective of one's varna includes universal moral codes such as restraining oneself from violence, maintaining honesty, considering cleanliness is next to godliness and so on.

b) Via esa Dharma: The special duties assigned to members of each specific Varna, such as the Brahmins can only accept kachcha food (raw food) where as the other Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras can accept pakka food (cooked food) from each other.

Therefore, the reality of the Varna system cannot be neglected as several scholars have been going on discussing about the same since time unknown.

5.3 Varna : A Theoretical Overview

Several scholars have tried to present their own viewpoint into explaining the Varna System. A few such theoretical explanations are pointed below:

5.3.1 The Western Theory :

The originators of this theory uphold the view that the Varna system originated with the Aryans coming into India. It was maintained that the original inhabitants of India were the Dashuds, who were defeated by the Aryans. After conquering, the Dashuds (who were dark complexioned) were enslaved and suppressed by the Aryans. Thus, in order to maintain their hold upon the people in India, they started the Varna system where the Dashuds were tagged as the Shudras (due to their dark complexion). The Shudras were also tagged as outcasts and were subjected to perform the menial tasks of the society. Many other scholars reject this theory, as it is not backed by proper evidence.

5.3.2 The Brahminical Theory :

This theory supports the divine origin of the varna system. It refers to the late Rigvedic Purusha Shukta. The Purush or the cosmic being is considered as the Lord of Immortality. All the other existences on this planet are equivalent to nothing when it comes to him. Gods once tried to perform a sacrifice with Purusha as the

peace offering, spring as the butter, summer as the fuel and autumn as the other associated offerings. But, the Purusha along with the other saints was immolated on the sacrificial grass. It was during this offering that from the mouth of the Purusha emerged the Brahmins, from his arms emerged the Kshatriyas, from his thighs emerged the Vaishyas and from his feet emerged the Shudras.

The Bhagvad Gita (the holy book of the Hindus) mentions that the Varna system was not based on hereditary principles rather was based on the law of Karma. It is similar to the concept of retributive punishment where the sin of an individual is determined by the negative actions of his previous life. Many theorists, such as Max Mueller, rejected this theory of the origin of the Varna.

5.3.3 The Marxist Theory :

am Sharan Sharma proposed the Marxists theory on Varna. According to this theory, the early Rigvedic society was based on the lines of primitive communism where society was largely egalitarian in nature. The later Vedic period witnessed the rise of agricultural society where surplus production of crops was used to reward the priests. This pattern led to the development of a social hierarchy. Gradually, with the creation of the surplus produce there came the development of the use of iron plough. This moderate development of the society saw the rise of the Brahminical ideology due to which the society was divided into four main classes (each in accordance to one's own occupation). Though this theory seems to be logical in portraying the Marxist concept of class and class struggle through the lines of Varna, but it is not supported with relevant proofs.

5.3.4 B.R Ambedkar's Theory on the Varna System :

Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar rejected the divine theory of the varna system. He referred to the Varna System as the one which created uncanny division in the society. He argues that only Lord Buddha questioned this hierarchy in the society in the name of Varna gradation. He opined that the Chaturvarna system promoted nothing but division and ill feelings among the people in the society. It preaches class composed society as an ideal one; it gives a legal stamp to all the misdeeds that people used to carry out in the name of religion; it consideres this gradation as sacred in nature.

5.4 Varna System—A Basis for Division of Labour

The Varna system also implies vocational division among the people based on one's Varna. The choice of one's occupation is solely based on one's birth into one's own specific Varna. Therefore, division of labour in the society is based on one's rank in the Varna ladder. It is also highlighted from this viewpoint that in order to avoid chaos and confusion in the society, the Varna system created a pre-ordered vocational guidance into which men fall since their birth. Thus, there is no brawl over the selection of one's favourite occupation. It strived to create a smooth functioning society. This hereditary calling of the people expects the Brahmans to take up the job of being a priest in the society; a Kshatriya to be a warrior; a Vaishya to be a trader and a Shudra to be a selfless server of the society who are designated to do all those activities for maintaining the purity of the society. The Varna Dharma does not call for gradation in the kinds of work one is involved with but it solely ensures that whether the society functions properly or not. If people follow the Varna Dharma and maintain their vocations in that order, it is assumed that the we-feeling of the Hindu community will be maintained properly.

5.5 Jati

The term "Jati" is derived from the Sanskrit root word, which means to be born. It points out to the social birthright of an individual as well as the lineage to which that individual belongs. A Jati is an endogamous group, which indicates that inter-group marriages are not encouraged within a Jati. The members of a Jati group has an ascribed status that is, they are member of a Jati group by virtue of their birth. It is due to this reason that the members of a Jati from a specific village consider themselves as potential kins. It is a hereditary social group where each group has their own name and its related attributes. Each member of a Jati group is expected to follow and abide by the specific Jati attributes. In many places in India, a member's Jati acts as his/her social identity. This notion of social identity as per one's jati maintains a sense of cohesion among the group members. It leads to the creation of a separate social unit.

Members of a village community depend on the other village members to maintain his Jati's style of life. Relations with other Jati members are flexible and not bound with specific Jati rules. The members of a Jati are not bound with their traditional occupational roles. For example, if a Jati's traditional calling is to act as

a priest, it is not necessary that he will restrict himself within that occupational calling. He may involve himself with either farming or being a carpenter. It is on the basis of marital relations that members of Jati are demarcated from each other. Villagers used to interchange ideas from members of other Jatis, and this categorization of members from one Jati with another was known as Jati-Cluster.

5.5.1 Jati Cluster:

Jati cluster was a social category by which members used to distinguish one Jati member from the other. A group of separate Jatis used to class together under one name, which made it easier for them to deal with people in a complex social structure. Through the jati-cluster category finer distinction between Jati members was made possible. Jati-cluster was done keeping in mind that they had similar traditional occupation, jati related practices and relatively similar rank. For example, in Gujarat two main Jati clusters are the Barias and the Patidars who ranked as cultivators as per their traditional calling. The Patidars were ranked higher than the Barias. Both these Jati clusters differ in their ritual practices and it is easier for the people to categorize and relate to one another in that way. It is ascribed in nature, as one cannot change the Jati roles to which one is born into.

Therefore, Jati is a concept that is closely related to the ideas of kinship and lineage. An individual associates oneself with a jati group because his social world is engulfed within it and his identity and existence is a part of the jati's idea of what kind of individual he is. It is both inevitable and considered to be morally proper for an individual to be related to one's Jati.

5.6 Varna and Jati (Caste)—The Difference

Varna and Jati represents two different forms of social stratification in India. Most of the people in the society, mistakenly admit both to be two overlapping concepts, but the distinction between the two notes their stark difference. A few points of differences are as follows:

a) Numerical : The Varna System is four in number where as jatis are innumerable. The Chaturvarna doctrine promotes the concept of people being divided into four main divisions-Brahmins, Kshtariyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. It represents the four-fold division of the society. Each of the four Varnas has its own set of rules and regulations. On the other hand, jatis are large in number. There are more than two thousand and eight hundred castes and sub-castes in India.

b) Status: The Varna system is based on occupation where as the concept of Jati is based on the ascribed status of an individual. For people who are born in which Jati is determined by his birth. For example, a Shudra is a born Shudra. Membership within a Jati is fixed. One cannot change it by any means of wealth, power or prestige. On the other hand, the Varna system was based on the basis of one's occupation or division of labour. It is the Karma of an individual, which determines the Varna he will be entitled to. In Bhagwad Gita Chapter 4, Verse 13, Lord Krishna mentioned that He is the creator of the four categories of occupations based on one's quality and activity.

c) Mobility: The Jati system is closed in nature where as the varna system is much more open or flexible in nature. In this context, in the Varna system, a human being has the chance to change his Varna order. If a man is born Brahmin, he can change it to the KshtariyaVarna if he finds himself to be a good, able bodied warrior. Even the Shudras (who were looked down upon by other caste members) can also be a Brahmin. For example, Dronacharya, Kripacharya, Ashwathama originally belonged to the Brahmin Varna but eventually they pursued the Kshatriya career. On the other hand, the Jati system follows closed social mobility because caste members cannot change their caste later in their life. They have to stick to their own given caste ascribed to them since their birth. Thus, Jati membership is unchangeable in nature.

d) Equality: The Jati system is based on the principle of inequality where as the Varna system is based on the principle of equality among its members. During the Vedic period, members of all the Varna were given equal socio-economic status as well as education and political opportunities. Mobility of all kinds and forms were allowed to the Varna members. On the other hand, the members of a jati had restricted social mobility and an inbound status differentiation. Opportunities were completely non-existent. The upper caste members used to look down upon the members of the lower caste members.

e) Rigidity: Caste system is more rigid than the Varna system. The Varna system was not restricted with several forms of restrictions such as restriction in one's food habit, dressing habit, activities such as educational, political and religious and so on. People had their own freedom to lead a normal social life. In contrast to this, the caste system is more rigid as it places restrictions on each and every social factor. On many occasions, the upper caste members also curb the morals and manners of the lower caste members.

f) Sanction: Hinduism is the sanction of the Varna system where as the caste system does not have any sanction of its own. The origin of the Varna system explains the fact that it was divinely ordained (as the members believe that the four Varnas emerged from Prajapatya Brahma). On the contrary, the caste system is exempted from such divine sanctions. The degenerated version of the ancient Varna system was considered to be the origin of the caste system.

5.7 Summary

Thus, the existence of the Varna model is present in theoretical terms but not in practical existence. Varna as a form of social stratification is now present in the pages of history. It is the Jati system (in the name of caste system), which is in existence in the modern society. Jati helped in the identification of one's own Varna. It is due to this reason that people tend to overlap the two concepts of Varna and Jati in the current period. Jati is the subdivision of the communities, which was broadly divided into the four Varnas-Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras. It was after the British colonization of India, that the concept of Jati got degraded into the concept of the caste system. To conclude, both the Varna and the Jati system are unique to the Indian Hindu society and is an inherent part of the Indian culture since time immemorial.

Did you know?

1. The Caste System was originally known as the varnashram.

2. The confusion of castes through intermarriage is known as varnasamkara. It is looked down upon by the members of the society. A girl can marry an upper caste member but not to a lower caste member because that will lead to the degradation of her caste rank.

3. Varnas are largely considered as supercastes.

4. The Scheduled Castes or the Dalits are a part of the fifth Varna which has got no mention in the Vedas. This fifth Varna is kept out from the Chatur Varna system.

5.8 Model Questions

A. Answer briefly.   **5**

    i)   What is a jati cluster?

    ii)   Why are Jatis considered to be an endogamous group?

    iii) How can you relate the Varna system along with division of labour in the society?

    iv) What do you mean by sanction?

    v)   Give an example of Jati cluster.

    vi) How did B.R Ambedkar refer to the Varna system as?

B. Answer in detail.   **10**

    i) Write a note on the Varna system in the Indian society.

    ii) Give a theoretical overview of the Varna system.

    iii) What do you mean by a Jati? How can you differentiate Jati from Varna?

5.9 References and Suggested Readings

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Unit 6 ❑ Jajmani System

6.0 Objectives

- To offer a deep study of Jajmani Relation in India.

- To understand it as a hierarchical system of division of labour.

- To understand its relevance in society.

- To understand the system as a socio-economic relationship between the service -providers and the service- receivers.

6.1 Introduction

Jajmani system is an age-old system of occupational obligation. It is related with the concept of caste system in India. Caste is an ancient system among the Hindus to denote the concept of social stratification. In the traditional period, people were economically interdependent on each other. Each individual was specialized in their field of occupation as per the caste they were born into. The caste system

followed the ascribed status by which an individual is born into a caste; he cannot change his caste on the basis of his achieved status. This specialization of occupation led to the inculcation of an exchange of service in the village. Two groups formed due to this exchange of services-the servicing group i.e. who provided services to the other group and the serviced group i.e. who received the services of the servicing group. This system of exchange was purely based on the principle of caste. It was mainly followed in the village society. It had a durable relation among the members of the two groups. This system of exchange of services in the lines of caste was known as the Jajmani System.

The etymological meaning of the word 'jajman' is rooted in the Sanskrit word "Yajman" which means an individual who performs a yajna. Yajna is a ritual among the Hindus performed by a group of sages (Brahmin) as a symbol of devotion and worship of the Almighty. In order to perform a yajna, it is the Brahmin of the village who is called for. This tradition of asking the Brahmin to come and offer his service, later on turned into the Jajmani system.

Prof. Yogendra Singh defines the Jajmani System as "a system governed by relationships based on reciprocity in inter-caste relations in village".

According to N.S Reddy, "The service relations which are governed by a hereditary tenure are called Jajman-Praja relations".

In the words of Oscar Lewis, "Under this system each caste group within a village is expected to give certain standardised services to the families of other castes. Each one works for certain family or group of families with whom he is hereditary linked."

Harold Gould mentioned that the jajmani system is based on the principle of super ordination and subordination of one group upon the other. It was generally the high caste groups who used to be the service receiver from the lower caste groups such as the barbers (Nai), washermen (Dhobis), carpenters (Khati) and so on. The service provider was known as the kamin and the service receiver were known as the jajman. The high caste groups were land-owning families, who used to pay the kamins either in cash or kind (i.e. by providing them with pieces of land or clothes or domesticated animals).

The term jajman also refers to that relationship where a Brahmin provides service to members of the caste i.e. by conducting a yajna or puja for the members of the other castes. In this case too, the Brahmin was referred as the kamin and

the service receiver was known as the jajman. Thus, the jajmani system has multiple roles in the society-social, economical as well as moral.

6.2 Features of the Jajmani System

The jajmani system is unique in India. It has several features, which can be listed one after another—

i) The jajmani system is traditional in nature. The origin of the concept of jajmani system is unknown to the people. It is unique to the Hindu group and is closely associated with the caste-based divisions of the Hindu society.

ii) The system of jajmani has an occupational obligation between the caste groups. The long-standing relationship between the kamin and the jajman denotes interdependence and mutual obligation towards one another. The kamins are dependent on the jajmans to fulfill their economic needs and the jajmans are dependent on the kamins to meet their required services.

iii) The system is closely linked with the families. Families of one caste group with the other are tied with on jajmani lines. It creates a close familiarity between the members of two caste groups.

iv) The jajmani system is exclusive in nature. Firstly, it is unique to the Hindu caste system and secondly, if a kamin provides his service to his jajman, then the jajman will seek services from the same service provider. For example, if a barber is providing his service to a particular family, then the service receiving family members will not replace that barber with someone else.

v) The relationship within a jajmani system is durable. Both the caste groups are interdependent on each other. If a priest performs the daily worship of a specific family, then he will continue to give his services till his last breath and the jajmans will make sure that the kamin is not replaced by anyone else.

vi) The jajmani relationship is hereditary in nature. The kamins will go on providing service on a hereditary basis. If a Brahmin gives his service to a specific family member then on the basis of hereditary calling, the future generation of the Brahmin will go on providing services to the future members of that specific family.

vii) The jajmani relationship promotes solidarity. Interdependence among the members intensifies the feelings of solidarity. It promotes vertical solidarity. Different caste groups come closer and develop a deeper bond due to the jajmani system. They continue to stay obligated towards each other.

viii) The jajmani relationship has multiple roles. The jajmani system is not entirely an economic system, it is social and moral too. It reduces caste rifts and brings members of other caste groups closer to one another. People find their own mutual benefit within a caste system.

Therefore, the jajmani system is a long and well-established relationship in the Hindu community. Several scholars have studied the jajmani system in India, only to find that it has its own set of merits and demerits. The system got introduced so that exchange of relationship continues to take place. Though it appears to be a relationship between the caste groups, but in reality it depicts the interdependence of the families till an indefinite period of time.

6.3 Spotlighting the Jajmani Relationship

The jajmani system is also referred to as the traditional form of Indian barter system. The rights of the people involved within the jajmani system are permanent in nature. A kamin can in no way be removed from service by his jajman. This shows the process of mutual dependence upon each other forging social solidarity. The exchange of service that is present within this system is not exclusively economical in nature. Relationships are maintained with the exchange of either cash or kind. In case of any problem confronted by the kamin, the jajman tries his level best to give him a solution. The relationship is not equivalent to that of an employer and his servant but rather one family member helping his other kin in need. But the relationship with two or more castes with each other on the basis of exchanging a few things cannot be regarded as a jajmani relation. A Jajmani relationship is hereditary in nature.

A Jajmani relationship is strengthened on the basis of the rituals and the social support. For example, it is the duty of the servicing class to perform rituals and ceremonies such as birth rites, marriage rituals, funerals, daily worship of one's Kula Devta and so on for his jajman. The servicing class receives help from one's jajman in the form of gifts, food, money, clothes, and plots of land and so on. By this the strength of the relationship is maintained for life.

It is not only the higher castes performing rituals and is acting as the servicing class; the lower castes also perform those tasks which are considered to pollute the higher caste members. For example, a lower caste member can wash the dirty clothes of his jajman. Thereby, professions such as Dhobi (washer man), Nai (barber), Nain or Dai Ma (midwife) and so on are included within the jajmani relations.

The Jajmani relationship denotes the ties between families rather than one's caste. For example, a higher caste family receives services from one particular washer man and not from all the castes who are washer men by profession. Similarly, it is that particular washer man's family who will receive goods and services from his specific jajman and not from any other high caste members. In case of death of a family member, the next generation carries forward the same duties of maintaining Jajmani relationship.

In the works of Orenstein, it was found that specific professions (such as being a watchman), enables the servicing class to maintain relationship with the entire village. The watchmen receive goods and services from all the land owning families in the village. Therefore, the Hindu jajmani system is such a social institution which helps to build up network relations within the members of a specific geographical location. This networked relationship has its own set of legalized norms and regulations, which creates a holistic bond among the masses. It helps in the reduction of antagonistic feelings among the members of the other group. The Jajmani relationship comes with its own set of power and authority but it ultimately unites the society as one social whole.

6.4 Jajmani System-Norms and Regulations

The jajmani system is one of the oldest patterns of relationship that exists within the Indian Hindu community. Several norms and values are associated with the jajmani system. In India, it was mostly during the harvest time when the landowning families used to pay back to their respective kamins. The jajmans used to give them food grains which were considered to be the traditional mode of payment. However, this is not the only method by which the kamins stay dependent on the jajman. For several other factors such as building a house, choosing a plot to build a house, places for animal grazing and so on, the servicing class is dependent on his jajman. On many occasions, the jajman were also entitled to offer loans of money in case of the kamin's emergency.

Harold Gould mentioned in his findings that the magnitude of economic relationship between the jajman and the kamin is huge. For example, if a priest acts as the servicing class in his village, then all the single nuclear units establish separate economic transactions with the kamin. Thereby, a strong chain of power and wealth flow within the jajmani system. Gould in his study (conducted from 1954-1955) found that a barber (Nai) received about 312kgs of grain per year from 15 joint families

The transaction involved between the jajman and the kamin also depends upon the kind of service that is relegated to the jajmans. For example, if a washer man tears a cloth of the jajman, then the jajman can withhold him from giving his kamin sufficient amount goods in exchange. On the other hand, if the kamins see that his jajman does not pay him much with goods or services, then he renders minimum amount of service towards his jajman.

No matter how much flexibility is maintained within the Jajmani relationship, the concept of purity and pollution stays intact as one of the basic feature of the Indian caste system. If the jajman comes from a lower caste group and the kamin from the upper caste group, the rules of ritual purity and pollution are strictly followed. The jajmans from a higher caste group will act as the subordinate member to his kamin who is from the higher caste group. However, the norms of maintaining a healthy relationship between the kamin and the jajman are not overlooked by any means. A jajman is bound to be paternalistic when it comes to looking after his kamin. The kamin too must act as an obedient service provider to his jajman.

Though inequality is evident within the caste system, the Jajmani relationship tries to build a bridge to lessen the widening gaps between the castes. The jajman-kamin relationship is culturally obligated towards one another. The caste panchayats can punish either the kamin or the jajman if they find either of them to be at fault. In the form of punishments, the caste panchayat has the right to withdraw a jajman from receiving services from a specific kamin and vice versa.

Therefore, the jajmani system comes with its own set of merits and demerits. However, the jajmani relationship is still not eradicated from the society. Even in this current century, the jajmani system is widely prominent in India.

6.5 Changes in the Jajmani System

The jajmani system is facing new challenges of the modern society due to which its traditional structure is undergoing both structural and functional changes. Post independence from foreign rule, India's rural structure underwent several socio-economic changes. Several attempts have been taken to improve the condition of the lower caste members and give then their basic right. They are now given the right to vote which is equivalent to the status of the jajmans. Coupled with socio-economic changes, several scientific and technological developments have led to sweeping change in the role of the jajmani system. A few such trending changes are noted below:

1. People in the rural areas no longer depend on their caste system to take up their occupation. The drive of education for all has empowered the rural population, due to which they are focusing more on their achieved status than their ascribed status to choose their field of occupation. This has certainly led to a change in the traditional jajmani system.

2. The importance of cash over kind is making the Jajmani System to fall apart. Traditionally, the jajmans used to lend various things to the kamins for their welfare. But in the recent years the jajmans prefer to give cash in exchange to the services of the kamins. The cash does not always suffice the need of the kamins. Commodity exchange alongside cash used to help the kamins in numerous ways, but the situation has changed with the growing years.

3. Importance of the class system over the caste system has led to the decline of the jajmani system. The status of an individual is judged on the basis of one's class position than one's caste rank. Specially, after the introduction of the British rule in India, the traditional caste rank of an individual to demarcate one's social status has been eroded. Thereby this led to the dissolution of the jajmani relations in the Indian society.

4. Growing industrialization was another important factor to bring about changes in the jajmani relation in India. The British brought the sweeping force of industrialization in India, which made the people to give importance to the class system than the caste system. The growth of English education made the people to realize the evils of the caste system and how it affects the

social order. Jobs in the industrial sector were meted out to those who were qualified for the post. One's caste did not affect the kind of job he/she used to get. Achieved status was given more priority than ascribed status, which led to a change in the traditional jajmani relationship.

5. The rapid growth of urbanization. Urbanization was the movement of the rural people to the urban areas in search of better livelihood. The urban sector had jobs and was freed from the clutches of the evils of the caste system. The lower caste people found educational opportunities and a way to prove their worth and not to stay dependent on the upper castes members throughout their lives. They found jobs, respect and a respectable social status, which ultimately led to the decline of the jajmani relationship in the rural area.

Thus, it can be said that the above mentioned reasons led to the development of a new trend in the Indian society. The implementation of English education, developed communication facilities, growth of the print media and increasing acculturation among the people led to the decline of the traditional jajmani relationship. It led to the formation of a new order in the Indian society. Though the Jajmani System is still present in many parts of India but its impact has now declined.

6.6 Merits of the Jajmani System

The Jajmani System has its own set of advantages and disadvantages. Several scholars are of the opinion that this traditional system of exchange of services that is unique to the Indian caste system has both its own pros and cons. A few such advantages of the jajmani relationship found in India are as follows-

1. Economic security of the kamins is maintained. The jajmani system provides economic security to its members. The servicing class is assured of their economic security by their jajmans. Not only in terms of economy, have the jajmans provided all sorts of necessary help to their kamins in times of crisis.

2. The jajmani system ensures one's security of occupation. As the system of jajmani relation is hereditary in nature, therefore, the kamins are guaranteed of their profession. For example, if a blacksmith (Lohar) provides metal tools to one specific family, then this chain of relationship will continue down the generation from both the service providing and the service receiving class.

3. The jajmani system maintains close and intimate relationship among the members. As it is mentioned earlier, that the relationship between the jajman and the kamin is purely economical in nature, rather it is bound with feelings and a sense of fraternity. The members have a spirit of fellow feeling for which they stand beside each other in terms of crisis. As the relationship is hereditary in nature, the jajmani relation ensures peaceful co-existence with one another.

4. There is a peaceful co-existence among the members within a jajmani relation. The jajmani system is based on the principles of exchange; therefore, the atmosphere of peaceful living is maintained by the members. In case, a servicing class does not provide proper service or the service receiver does not payback properly to the kamins then, the caste panchayats can take decision to ensure the prevalence of peace.

5. The jajmani system regulates division of labour in the society. The demarcation between the servicing class and the service receiver class is wide and clear. Thus, each individual knows what his duty towards one another is. It also helps them to act as a self sufficient community. Each village has their own kamin and a set of jajmans, thus the members do not have to depend on members from the other village to meet their task.

Therefore, the jajmani system is functional in the society. Due to its follow-up advantages, it still prevails in the current century. Due to the passage of time, the structure and roles must have changed but the relationship per se remains even till today in rural and urban India.

6.7 Demerits of the Jajmani System

Several scholars are of the opinion that the jajmani system in India is an exploitative one. Several reasons have been pointed out in support of this statement. A few such reasons are as follows:-

6. Feelings of social inequality are involved within the jajmani system. The jajmani relationship revolves around the feelings of inferiority and superiority. The servicing class is given a low social stature where as the service receiving class is given a high social stature. For example, though the barber is the kamin to his jajman, still he is looked down upon by the

members of other caste, including his jajman. The barber is not given the same social respect which the jajman receives from his community. Due to the feature of hereditary calling within the jajmani system, the future generation of the low caste kamins cannot change their occupation to gain a respectable social status. They do not have any other means to improve their economic condition. On several noted cases, it was found that the jajmans have even humiliated their kamins due to their low caste status.

7. The jajmani system is a source of exploitation. The caste system creates a division in the society. The higher caste member suppresses, dominates, humiliates and even exploits the lower caste members of the society. Though there involves a give and take relationship within the jajmani system, the lower caste members are still subjected to discrimination by the upper caste members.

8. The jajmani system hinders occupational mobility. The kamins and jajmans have a long lasting relationship. The servicing class is bound to provide service to their jajmans for generations after generation. Therefore, it depends upon one's hereditary calling. This system becomes a hindrance for someone's personal development in life. The son of a blacksmith is bound to carry on with that hereditary calling. He cannot choose a separate occupation for himself and make a mark in the society. It is through economic weakness of the lower caste members that the system of dominance is still prominent in the Hindu Caste System.

9. The jajmani system supports the caste system. As mentioned earlier, the hierarchical division inherent in the caste system leads to harassment and trouble between the jajman and kamin relationship.

Therefore, the jajmani system has two sides of the same coin. It has its own set of pros and cons. Though the jajmani system tries to promote interdependence in the social system, it also leads to the projection of power-play of one caste over the other.

6.8 Summary

Therefore, the prime question that can be asked is that-is the Jajmani System an exploitative system? Is the jajmani system nothing more than a power-play relationship of the jajman over his kamin? Several scholars, such as Beidleman

(1959) said that the jajman can be equated as the exploiter and the kamins can be equated as the exploited. People generally conclude that the jajmani relationship is nothing more than a chief instrument of power-play of the jajmans over the kamins. It is a system of coercion and control of the upper caste members over the lower caste. This concept can be equated with that of Karl Marx's class and class struggle, where the haves (i.e. the jajmans) exploits the have nots (i.e. the kamins).

Besides this above understanding, many scholars are of the opinion that the jajmani system is a way by the society maintains its solidarity among the members. It is a way by which people can understand the importance of one another and stay interdependent. Firstly, the kamins are not forced to keep a relationship with their jajmans. They are allowed to sell their goods in case they get better profit margin from another group who may not be his jajman. Secondly, in case of any injustice, the kamins can move the caste panchayat and seek for justice. Similarly, if the jajmans see that the kamin is not maintaining a stable relationship with them, they can easily choose another set of kamins from whom they can receive the service. Therefore, the Jajmani System promotes collective action among the people. Each system that exists in the society has its own set of pros and cons. If the caste system creates a division in the society, the Jajmani System is the thread which makes the members of different castes to stay connected and be dependent on each other. Though, the dominance of the Jajmani System has declined over the years, but its influence is still vibrant in the 21st century.

Did you know?

1. William Henricks Wiser was the first sociologist who used the word jajmani system academically. The name of his book was "The Hindu Jajmani System: A Socio-Economic System Interrelating Members of a Hindu Village Community in Service".

2. Initially, the jajmani system used to indicate the relation between a jajman and the priest ("purohith") but in later years, other services were added onto the list.

6.9 Model Questions

A. Answer briefly. **5**

    i)   Define jajmani system.

    ii)   Point out a few norms and regulations in relation to the jajmani system in India.

    iii) Is the jajmani system exploitative in nature? Discuss.

    iv) Who are referred to as the jajman and kamin?

    v)   Give an example to explain the jajmani system.

    vi) Is the jajmani system still prevalent in India? Give example.

B. Answer in detail. **10**

    i) Write a note on the origin and features of the Jajmani System.

    ii) Discuss the trends which led to the changes in the jajmani system in India.

    iii) What are the merits and demerits of the jajmani system?

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Unit 7 ❑ Dominant Caste

Structure

7.0 Objectives

- Exploration of the concept of dominant caste in India.

- To provide an insight into the workings of traditional and contemporary rural India.

7.1 Introduction

Caste is an ancient system among the Hindus to denote the concept of social stratification. The origin of the caste system dates back to time immemorial. The word 'caste' is believed to have originated from the Spanish word 'casta', which means 'lineage'. The Rigveda highlights the Chaturvarna system, which means there is the presence of four main varnas in the Indian society-

- ❖ The Brahmins who are destined to be priests

- ❖ The Kshatriya who were the warriors

- ❖ The Vaishyas as the traders and finally,

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❖ The Shudras who were meant to be the servant of the society.

MacIver and Page have observed, "when status is wholly predetermined, so that men are born to their lot without any hope of changing it, then class takes the extreme form of caste." Thus, the caste system is an inherent system of social stratification even in the modern century. It had its own changes with the passage of time, but the core factor still remains.

Along with the concept of caste, another noted concept was also attached with it in many parts of India-that is the idea of Dominant Caste. The idea of dominant caste was propounded by an eminent sociologist in India named Mysore Narasimhachar Srinivas. This concept was first mentioned by him in his essay named "The Social System of a Mysore Village". This essay was written after his vivid study of the Rampura village. It was in 1948 that Srinivas worked in Rampura and after a few years came up with his work on the dominant caste.

A caste is believed to be dominant when it has three prime powers in the society-

a) Economic Power

b) Political Power

c) Numeric Power

These powers enable a group to occupy the most powerful authoritative position in the society. Castes with higher ritual ranking were not considered to be the powerful one in the society if they did not possess these three powers. Srinivas made it clear that the concept of dominant caste is not exclusive to the people of Rampura village, but this concept is popular in other states of the country too. For example, Lingayats and Okkaligas were from Mysore villages, Reddys and Kammas were from the villages of Andhra Pradesh, Gounders, Padayachis and Mudaliars are from Tamil Nadu, Patidars are from Gujarat and so on. Thus, M.N Srinivas defined dominant caste as "A caste may be said to be dominant when it preponderates numerically over other castes and when it also wields preponderant economic and political power. A large and powerful caste group can be more easily dominant if its position in the local caste hierarchy is not too low." Srinivas further added that "A caste to be dominant, it should own a sizable amount of the arable land locally available, have strength of numbers and occupy a high place in the local hierarchy. When a caste has all the attributes of dominance, it may be said to enjoy a decisive dominance."

Srinivas pointed out that the Okkaligas (a middle caste peasant group) were numerically the majority in the village out of the 19 jati groups that were present in the village. They were the biggest landowners and exercised their domination over the other caste groups both politically and economically. Despite them being from the lower caste group in the ritual ranking, they acted as the dominant caste in the village. Thus, a dominant caste can exercise their domination over a set of villages which are closely related and not just on one village. On most occasions, a single clan can dominate and control a number of villages at the same time. One branch of the clan resides in each of the villages and thereby by following the superiority of a clan head, domination is exercised in all the villages.

Srinivas also noted that those castes, which had the elements of numerical, economical and political strength, higher ritual status or western education along with better occupational status than the other in the village, could have a decisive dominance over others.

7.2 Dominant Caste: Features

M. N Srinivas noted three prime powers that the dominant castes wield to exercise their dominance over others in the village. These powers are (as mentioned earlier) political, economic and numeric power. Along with these powers, one other prime criterion is for those who occupy the topmost rank in the ritual ranking, for example, the Brahmin, Kshatriyas and the Vaishyas. On the basis of these factors, four prime characteristics can be drawn out in detail-

a) Political and economic power-The power of a caste is largely determined by the amount of land he owns. It is in that way that he can earn more than the rest through his agricultural income. The more land that a specific caste owns, the more will he be able to provide jobs to the landless farmers in the village. This automatically gives rise to the situation of super-ordination and subordination. Yogendra Singh in his study has noticed that most dominant castes have higher authority over the others in the village, in terms of the land they possess. He finds that jati groups such as Okkaligas have control over Wangala, Rajputs controlled Senapur and the Vaghela Rajputs have control over Cassandra village in Gujarat. These big land owning castes give high regards to education. Thus, the more educated they are, the better jobs they have, which thereby leads to them getting better administrative or urban jobs. A better job comes with better pay scales, which thereby lead

to better economic position in the rural areas. This leads to the making of a dominant caste due to economic and political power.

b) High ritual ranking-According to the traditional ritual ranking, the Brahmins and the Rajputs have been the dominant caste since time unknown. They enjoy the topmost rank in the caste hierarchy. The Rajputs were the feudal lords of most villages. They were the owners of large property of land. Thus, the traditional ritual purity of the group gave them a certain form of right to exercise their control over others.

c) Greater numeric strength-The numeric strength of a group implies that the number of followers have given their votes to select them as the leader of their village. Those caste groups who wield the larger number of votes is selected as the winning candidate. A dominant caste doesn't exercise his power in just one single village, rather they rule in more than one village. The dominant caste members are spread across these clusters of villages so that they can exercise their authority over the members of those villages. By this way, people from the other villages will be aware of their existence. This will lead to the building up of networks and will thereby lead to regional dominance of that area.

d) Specific amount of arable lands-In India, landowners occupy bigger portion of lands. In this way, the caste group who will have the larger portion of land will have the authority to exercise their dominance over the others in the village. Power and prestige are not just the two things that they enjoy, they also enjoys people looking up to them as a dominant figure. This is one of the prime reason why in the modern society, people tend to invest in land based properties in order to achieve upward mobility in his group.

Thus, with these powers in hand, the dominant castes can not only exercise their authority over the others in the village, but they can also settle disputes belonging to their own group or from people of other jati groups. The existence of the dominant caste in the village discourages the village members to seek for justice from the government or other official sectors. They generally have their full faith on the decisions taken by the members of the dominant caste. The dominant caste members also acts as the village representative in legal matters related to the village. Thus, the people tend to rely on the existence of the dominant caste in the society, which led to the growth of their power in the local level.

7.3 Sociological Studies in Relation to Dominant Caste

M. N Srinivas was mainly the first sociologist who brought into the light the concept of dominant caste in the academic world. Following him, there were other scholars who conducted studies in rural India and came up with the prevalence of dominant caste in those areas. S.C Dube examined the prime elements of caste dominance by studying four villages in Madhya Pradesh. He opined that a caste group can act as dominant when the power is diffused in the group and is exercised due to the interest of the village at large. The members of the dominant castes were segregated from other villagers in terms of their wielding authority over wealth, power and prestige. In most cases, it was also found that this inequality among the members led them to exploit the non-dominant members of their own group or people from the village.

Kathleen Gough studied a village in Tamil Nadu to report on the existence of Brahmin domination over the other village members. Srinivas noted that the exertion of dominance of the caste groups over the non-dominant village members to preserve the ideals of the village and maintain its virtue and harmony. India received its independence from the British rule in 1947. Elected self-governing local councils (or the popularly known panchayats) were set up to look after the administration of rural India. While electing the Panchayat members, most of them were from the dominant caste. As the dominant castes, kept exercising their authorities for all these years and they have greater hold (both economically and politically) in the society, they formed the members of the Panchayat. Louis Dumont opined that he sole factor behind members acting as the dominant caste in a village is due to one's economic power and not their numeric strength. He claimed that this economic power flows from their large land holdings

Several scholars noticed that on the basis of one's power, property, wealth and prestige, the dominant castes were internally divided into various rival factions. Control over the land by one individual led to the establishment of one single powerful headman to whom the members of the villagers felt subordinated. On the contrary, if the control over land was dispersed among members of a large dominant jati then there was the creation of a vertical flow of power between the segments of the dominant jatis. It can thus be seen that each village had their own set of dominant caste based on the structure of the village and the kind of power the dominant castes wield.

7.4 Functions of The Dominant Castes

There are several functions in relation to the dominant caste that can be found in rural area. A few such functions are noted below:—

a) The dominant castes acted as the reference group for the other lower caste members in the village. This made them to imitate the practices of the dominant caste members-this led to the development of cultural transmission among the members of the villagers.

b) The dominant caste of a village acts as the safeguard of pluralistic culture. They set a normative pattern for the members of the village. For those who violate the norms of the village were given exemplary punishments so that others never repeat it in future. They are the decision-makers of the village, who decides what rewards or punishments to assign for the villagers.

c) The dominant castes act as the power holders of the society. They are the representatives of the village who exercise their political or economic influence so that the interest of the village is maintained. Their actions influence the political process of the village.

d) They act as the pillars of socio-economic development of their village. They sought out ways to better the position of their village in comparison to others. In many cases, they act as the agent of rehabilitation programmes so that the interests of the members of their village are safeguarded.

e) The dominant caste acts as the bridge to the outer world. They are educated, for which they can socialize the members of the village and direct them to better their lives. On most occasions, the members of the dominant caste teach the villagers how to improve their agricultural skills, the importance of using modern technologies to help them in their agricultural activities and so on. They act as the agents of modernization in rural India.

7.5 Dominant Caste: Criticisms

The rule of the dominant castes in the Indian subcontinent has been continuing since time unknown. The existence of the dominant caste has led to the rise of other concepts such as Sanskritization. According to M. N Srinivas, "Sanskritization is a process by which a lower caste or tribe or any other group changes its customs,

rituals, ideology and way of life in the direction of a higher or more often twice-born caste".

Several criticisms have been leveled against the concept of dominant caste. A few such criticisms are as follows-

i) Louis Dumont pointed out that there should be a division between powers related to ritual ranking and secular ranking.

ii) The dominant caste favours the rule of the few over the majority. Power and prestige in the hands of the few are making them act as the dominant caste. This contributes to the growth of social inequality and social antagonism of the subordinated group against the superordinated group.

iii) According to Gardener, dominant castes can have four basic levels or divisions-a) The ruler; b) the regional dominant caste; c) the local dominant caste; and d) dominant caste on the basis of amount of land acquisition. Thus, to him, dominance should not be restricted within the domain of caste only. The concept of dominant caste should be wide ranging.

iv) Dominant castes bring modern forces into the rural social structure by which the traditional structure of rural India is having a structural shift. It leads to the process of a wide cultural change.

v) D. N Majumdar has noted that it is not on the basis of numeric strength that a group is assigned to be the dominant caste of the village; rather it is largely the Brahmins and the Kshatriyas who act as the dominant caste despite being numerically weak.

Out of several scholars who raised questions against the concept of dominant caste in India, we can name T.K Oommen. He has questioned the validity of the concept and has pointed out that Srinivas has not mentioned anything about alternate situations when a numerically weak caste owns most of the village's land, thereby gaining better economic status than the rest in the village; or the other way round that a person or group is numerically strong but economically deprived and falls below the ritually lower caste groups. He has commented that in such situations, the caste members will share the community power. This will lead to the growth of the we-feeling among the community members. He questions the context of dominance as well as the resources available to the members for dominate others. He notices the prevalence of a "multiple power structure" in a multi-caste village.

Srinivas did not point out anything related to this situation. But besides the criticisms leveled against the concept propounded by Srinivas, the basic existence of the dominant forces of caste is still felt in modern India.

7.6 Dominant Caste in Modern India

After India's independence from foreign rule, several socio-economic changes have altered the social structure of India to some extent. The traditional structural pattern and its associated rules and regulations have undergone changes. But the concept of dominant caste still prevails in India. Its nature might have undergone changes currently, but the concept as a whole still exists. The traditional pattern of ranking someone higher in the social structure on the basis of one's ritual purity has undergone changes. New systems like universal adult franchise, electoral politics, and the panchayati raj system have changed the rural social structure in India.

In the modern political system of India, caste based politics have become a common factor. The politicians use caste as a shield to gain the votes of the people. People from the ritually low ranking castes are now coming up to be represented in the face of India's politics. Many are joining the political parties to stop being the marginalized community and work for the uplift of the lower caste groups. These dominant castes are still acting as the representatives of their villages and are bringing up the local issues in front of the national eyes. Few political parties which have come up in the modern Indian politics are-

"The Bahujan Samaj Party of Uttar Pradesh banked on Dalit votes. The Bharatiya Samaj Party emerged with the support of the Pasis and Rajbhars. The Apna Dal became the party of the Kurmis; the Mahan Dal emerged as a party for the Kushwaha caste. In Bihar, the Lok Janshakti Party, the Rashtriya Lok Samata Dal and the Hindustan Awaam Morcha are similar examples."

Therefore, new patterns of development are bringing about new sweeping changes in the Indian social structure. Reservations are now given to the lower or backward caste members so that they can educate themselves and stand neck to neck with the other caste groups in the society. Reservation policies were intended to bring about social equality among the people. But the concept of dominant caste didn't get eroded away from the society at large even till today.

7.7 Summary

Therefore, it can be concluded that the dominancy among the dominant castes was based on dependency and there are several associated factors which help make a caste dominant. The impact of dominant caste can be noticed in all walks of life- in the social, economic as well as the political field. With the growing change in the social structure of India post independence numeric strength has become stronger due to the implication of the adult suffrage in the society. The traditional authority that the dominant castes had over the villagers are now fading away. Despite the decrease in the functioning of the dominant castes over the people, reservation policies coming up for the rights of the lower caste groups, the decentralization of power in the Indian society and the introduction of the Panchayati Raj, the prevalence of the concept of dominant caste can be still felt in the rural structures of India.

Did you know?

1. Though there are numerous laws to protect the lower caste members from any crime or inequality still according to reports, one crime is committed against a Dalit every 18 minutes.

2. 70% of Dalit women are still illiterate in India.

3. In the Hindu law book by Manu (Manusmriti), it is mentioned that "If a shudra mentions the name and class of a twice-born contumely [i.e. without proper respect], an iron nail, ten figures long, shall be thrust into his mouth".

7.8 Model Questions

A. Answer briefly. **5**

  i) Briefly mention about two sociological studies on dominant caste in India.

 ii) Name a few dominant castes found in modern India.

iii) Give any two examples of dominant caste as mentioned by M.N Srinivas.

iv) Define dominant caste.

v) Define caste.

vi) Name the book where Srinivas first mentioned the concept of dominant caste.

vii) How did T. K Oommen criticize Srinivas's concept of dominant caste?

B. Answer in detail.   10

    i)   Write a note on the development of the concept of dominant caste in the academic field.

    ii) List the features of Dominant Caste found in India.

    iii) What are the merits and demerits of dominant caste in India?

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Unit 8 ❑ Caste Mobility: Sanskritization

Structure

8.0 Objectives

8.1 Introduction

8.2 Features of Sanskritization

8.3 Models of Sanskritization

8.4 Factors Promoting Sanskritization

8.5 Factors Affecting Sanskritization

8.6 Merits of Sanskritization

8.7 The Critique of Sanskritization

8.8 Summary

8.9 Model Questions

8.10 References and Suggested Readings.

8.0 Objectives

- Examination of the process of caste mobility in India.

- To understand how castes can better their social status.

- To know it as a matter of positional change and not structural change.

8.1 Introduction

The caste system is one of the most unique gradational systems found only in India. It is a system of social stratification found among the followers of Hinduism. Several scholars are of the opinion that the caste system has its own set of advantages and disadvantages. Membership within a caste system is based on the system of ascribed status. A member is born into a caste. For example, if a man is born as a Shudra, the person cannot change his caste in this lifetime. Several rules and regulations are imposed within the caste system-such as, rules of endogamy, on

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commensality, on social intercourse and so on. The higher caste members of a caste system, tends to look down upon the lower caste members. Thus, the caste system was rigid in nature, and mobility within the caste system was largely not possible.

Social mobility means the movement of one individual from one status to another. Mobility is mainly of two types-

1. Upward social mobility

2. Downward social mobility

When an individual moves from one social status to another social status and with that there is the increase of respect and improvement of one's economic position in the society, it is said to be an example of upward social mobility. For example, when a bank peon is promoted as the bank manager it signifies upward mobility. In the same way, downward social mobility implies the demotion of an individual in the society; for example, if a millionaire gets bankrupt and is left with nothing, then this situation implies downward social mobility. But mobility within the caste groups was thought to be impossible as the caste status is ascribed in nature. It is due to the nature of social and cultural change that M. N Srinivas found examples of caste mobility in India. This process of caste mobility was explained by Srinivas as-Sanskritization.

Sanskritization denotes such a change where the lower caste members try to change their caste status by imitating the practices followed by the upper caste members over a period of time. The lower caste members made the practices of the upper caste members as a way of life. They mainly used to imitate the practices of the dwija born caste or the twice born caste. This paved the way for social mobility among the lower caste members as there used to be a positional change of status in the society.

The concept of Sanskritization was highlighted by Srinivas in his book named- "Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India". He found in his study in Mysore that the lower caste members tried to uplift their caste position by following the practices of the upper caste members over a period of time. This brought about a cultural change among the lower caste members thereby raising their status in the caste hierarchy. As they followed the ideals of the Brahmins to bring about a change in their caste status, Srinivas initially termed this behaviour as-Brahminization. Scholars criticized this use of the term Brahminization, due to which Srinivas

changed it to Sanskritization. The term Brahminization was criticized due to several reason-

i)   Brahminization was a narrower term than Sanskritization. There are divisions even within the category of Brahmin; therefore, the use of the Brahminization would have confused that which Brahmin groups were being referred to.

ii) Many lower caste members followed the ideals of their immediate upper caste members (who may not be Brahmins) in order to change their social status. For example, few low caste members in Mysore followed the Lingayat's way of life. The Lingayats were not Brahmins.

Thus, due to these reasons, Srinivas dropped the Brahminization and instead used the term Sanskritization to denote this pattern of cultural mobility within the caste groups. Therefore, M. N Srinivas defined Sanskritization as-"a process by which a lower caste or tribe or any other group changes its customs, rituals, ideology and way of life in the direction of a higher or more often twice-born caste".

8.2 Features of Sanskritization

The process of Sanskritization has the following set of characteristics:-

i)   Sanskritization is the process of imitating the upper castes so that they can bring about a change in their cultural and social status. The lower caste members used to suffer from various kinds of religious and social disabilities. They were marginalized from the other members of the society. It is due to this reason that they started to practice Sanskritization.

ii) Sanskritization goes hand in hand with the economic and political domination of the local dominant castes. Dominant castes were those groups who had economic, political and numeric power to dominate the other members of the society. If a lower caste has these powers, then despite them being members of the lower caste, they used to dominate the other higher caste members of the society. So, on most occasions, the lower caste members followed the practices of the dominant caste in order to uplift their social status.

iii) Sanskritization also occurred among those groups who were economically and politically well off but lacked the ritual ranking in the society. Thus,

in order to claim their high position, they used to imitate the practices of the upper caste members. This usually led them to have a higher acquisition of social power.

iv) Sanskritization denotes a change in the social position of a lower caste group in the society. It does not denote a change in the hierarchical or structural position of a caste group. The lower caste group, that imitates the practices of the higher caste group, remains to be a member of the lower caste group. It is a positional change and not a structural change in the caste ladder.

v) Economic development is not an essential precondition for Sanskritization to take place. Though on most occasions, development in the spheres of politics, economy, education, leadership leads to Sanskritization among the lower caste groups. But economic development in itself does not lead to Sanskritization of a group in the society.

vi) Sanskritization is not only found among the Hindu lower caste groups, but it is also prevalent among the tribes in India.

vii) Sanskritization implies the mobility of a group and not one specific individual or family. It is the entire group who witnesses the mobility.

viii) The British rule in India has changed the picture behind Sanskritization. Previously, people used to strive for caste based mobility, but after the British rule, people started to focus on vertical mobility based on the class system instead of the caste system.

ix) Achieving Sanskritization takes a few generations. Gaining the status of a higher caste group does not happen overnight. It generally takes two or three generations to take place. Sanskritization is a claim that the lower caste members make in the society. On most occasions, it wasn't accepted by the society.

Therefore, Sanskritization was an essential factor among the lower caste members to change their social status. They used to follow all the regulations of the higher caste members in order to attain that positional change in the society. They adopted all kinds of sanskritic beliefs, duties and values so that their claim for mobility was accepted by the society.

8.3 Models of Sanskritization

Sanskritization is an age old practice in India. It is followed by the lower caste members by imitating the practices of the upper caste members. Harold Gould referred to this practice of Sanskritization and claimed that it is basically a challenge that the lower caste groups have taken up to show that they are nothing less than the higher caste groups. It is the result of an age old domination and subjugation that the upper castes used to do upon the lower castes.

Sanskritization used to transmit in the society with the help of a few mediums. These were known as the models of Sanskritization:-

x) Cultural Model-The ranking of a caste as high or low depends on the cultural features of a caste. Practices such as wearing the sacred thread after the upanayana ceremony, abstaining from alcohol consumption, following endogamy, rejecting widow remarriage, observing all caste based restrictions, worshipping as per the code of law in Hinduism, giving reverence to Hindu mythology are a few parts of a Hindu upper caste culture. It follows several standards of purity and pollution, in order to maintain the sanctity of the Hindu cultural tradition. If any low caste group follows these do's and don'ts then they are believed to be walking on the path of Sanskritization.

xi) Varna Model-The caste system follows the Chaturvarna model. There are four main varnas in Hinduism-Brahmins at the apex, followed by Kshatriya, Vaishyas and the Shudras. The lower caste groups were denied from the basic privileges of the society. They were debarred from numerous social and religious intercourses. The Varna system is thus based on the principle of honour and respect. It is due to this reason that each caste group has their own rank in the caste ladder. The wish to achieve this superior status, that the lower caste members follow the principle of Sanskritization. Thus, the varna model implies how the upper caste groups enjoy the elitist position in the society and how by following the sanskritic beliefs and values, one can achieve a positional change in the society, despite being a member of the lower varna.

xii) Local Model-In the Indian society the concept of dominant caste is largely prevalent. A person can be referred to be a member of the dominant caste if he or she possesses economic power, political power and numeric power within his group. The lower caste members followed the lifestyle pattern of

the local dominant caste so that they can get an uplifted status in the society. They tried to improve their status by following the ideals and behaviours of the dominant caste groups.

It can be said that, Sanskritization is a generation old process. It is the only way by which the lower caste members can achieve caste based mobility in the society.

8.4 Factors Promoting Sanskritization

The process of Sanskritization was made popular in India due to the fact that it acted as a kind of social mobility by which the status of the lower caste members got uplifted once they were completely sanskritized. This process of Sanskritization did not occur overnight. Several factors have promoted the concept of Sanskritization in India. A few such factors are noted below-

Firstly, developed means of communication led to the spread of Sanskritization. People in the remotest part of the country got to know about this process of social mobility. They thereby applied this process in their day to day lives in order to be sanskritized in the process.

Secondly, spread of literacy. As people started to become educated, they understood the process of Sanskritization and the benefits attached with it. They started to imitate the lifestyles of the upper caste members in such a way that after two or three generations, they were referred to be as the members from the high caste groups. In case of following the Brahmin way of life, education helped the lower caste people to read the Shastras and follow them in accordance with the Brahmins. Though the lower caste members were debarred from chanting the Mantras from the Veda but they were allowed to follow the social practices of the upper caste groups.

Though, the factors promoting Sanskritization are not mentioned in the Hindu law books but the changes in the social structure and the attitude of the people towards it have led to the growing awareness about this concept. It is one gateway for the people to raise their social status so that the long lived discrimination and marginalization comes to a halt for a specific period of time.

8.5 Factors Affecting Sanskritization

Sanskritization denotes caste mobility since time unknown. There are several social factors which affect the process of Sanskritization. A few such factors are

as follows-

    i)   Industrialization-this has promoted class based division in the society. People started to favor the achieved status more than the ascribed status of caste. The members of the dominant caste too started getting involved with the forces of industrialization. Thus, people started to fight over class division than one's caste division. This led to the formation of the concept of occupational mobility than caste based mobility.

    ii) Improved means of communication-Increasing interaction among the people led to the wide exchange of ideas which thereby made the people to focus on class based mobility than caste based mobility. Fight for gaining a better ritual ranking was taken over by vertical mobility on economic level.

    iii) Spread of education-Education opened the inner eye of the people. They realized that fight to gain a better status in the caste hierarchy is futile, rather better class position can give them an international standard. The new generations realized that caste mobility was not the call of the day.

    iv) Urbanization-Along with industrialization, urbanization is one such factor which affected the spread of Sanskritization in the modern society. Urbanization implied the movement of the people from rural areas to upper areas in search of better livelihood opportunities. In the urban society, people get influenced by western ideals and values, which thereby leads them to forget about caste based hierarchy. Urbanization influences people to strive for class based mobility rather than caste based mobility in the social system.

    v) Influence of Westernization-After the advent of the British rule in India, Indians were influenced by the pattern of Westernization. Srinivas defined westernization as "the changes in technology, institutions, ideology and values of a non-western society as a result of cultural contact with the western society for a long period". This contact with the western thought pattern, affected the rigidity of the Indian caste system. People realized the importance of class based social ranking more than caste based social rankings.

Therefore, all these aforementioned factors affected the functioning of Sanskritization in India. As the caste system is unique to India, thereby, majority of the Hindu groups in rural and urban areas claimed to go with the flow and start adopting western principles to change their life. The westerners have become the new reference group

of the Indians. It is no longer the Brahmins or the dominant caste that people largely want to imitate to gain a higher social status. Though, the percentage is much smaller in number but change towards that path has already begun.

8.6 Merits of Sanskritization

Several scholars have put forward their own opinion on the merits and demerits of Sanskritization in the society. Eminent figures like Swami Vivekananda propagated the merits of the caste system, similarly there are a few merits in relation to the concept of Sanskritization in India. They are:

i)   The idea of Sanskritization is not restricted to the Brahmins only. It can include any higher caste groups.

ii) There is no harm attached to the concept of Sanskritization. It is a way of life. It is a way by which the lower caste groups imitate the daily life practices of the upper caste groups, which involves no harm to anybody.

iii) The only agenda behind following the concept of Sanskritization is to achieve a higher social status. It assimilates the people as one large social group.

iv) The idea of Sanskritization is one way of protesting against the traditional caste based division in the society. Traditionally, the higher and lower caste groups were segregated from one another. The higher castes used to dominate the lower caste members in various ways. Sanskritization makes the lower caste members to imitate the practices of the upper caste members by which this traditional segregation comes to a halt.

v)   M.N Srinivas pointed out that Sanskritization reduces the widening gap between the secular and ritual ranking. Due to the rising concept of the dominant caste secular ranking took over the concept of ritual ranking. For example, if a lower caste member becomes the dominant caste of the area in terms of gaining political, economical and numerical power, then the ritual ranking ceases to exist in that area and secular ranking takes it over.

Therefore, for every concept that exists in the society, there also exist its hidden reasons to spread among the people. Without certain merits of a system, the concept would not have existed at the first place.

8.7 The Critique of Sanskritization

M. N Srinivas introduced the concept of Sanskritization in the academic world, which was regarded as one of the most significant contribution in this field. He wanted to pint out how mobility within the caste system is creating a social change in the rural areas. Apart from the merits of the concept, there are several demerits that have been pointed out by various scholars. A few such criticisms are noted below:

i) J. F Stall claimed that there is confusion with the term 'Sankritization', as its relation with Sanskrit is not quite clear.

ii) Yogendra Singh pointed out that Sanskritization has failed to be an umbrella concept that is, it did not take into account the aspects related to cultural change both in the past and in the present. He also opined that this concept neglects the non-sanskritic traditions.

iii) Sanskritization was not a universal concept in India. Not all caste groups followed the concept of Sanskritization. In few parts of India, people imitated members from other religions who used to hold power and authority in the society. This was not mentioned by Srinivas in his theory.

iv) In most of the cases, people followed the concept of Sanskritization as a way of protesting against the socio-economic deprivations by the upper caste members. Sanskritization was equivalent to a challenge to fight against the oppression of the lower caste members against the upper caste members. This basically leads to inter-caste hostility in the society.

v) Sanskritization highlights hierarchy in the society. As if, the lower caste groups must imitate the upper caste groups to create a mark in the society. It looks upon the cultural practices of the lower caste groups in a negative light.

Therefore, there were a few fallacies in Srinivas' concept of Sanskritization. He failed to point out whether it is the Sanskritized families who face caste mobility or the entire lower caste group attains the mobility. Besides all the criticism leveled against the concept, it can be rightly said that no one else before Srinivas, highlighted the concept of caste- based mobility among the people. The Indian caste system is thought to be a rigid one where no sign of mobility was noticed whatsoever.

Srinivas made an effort to bring out this concept and discuss it within the sociological parlance.

8.8 Summary

It can be concluded by mentioning that M. N Srinivas tried to explain the concept of cultural change in the caste lines. He wanted to point out that how this concept of caste based mobility is bringing a change in the Indian social structure. New forces of westernization, modernization are also affecting the Indian cultural pattern due to the advent of the British rule in India. But these new forces of social change did not change the overall traditional concept of the caste system. The rigidity of the system must have lessened due to ongoing social changes, but the system per se still continues to exist in the society.

Did you know?

a) Caste has an impact on the economic mobility of India. It is due to the reason that occupational and spatial mobility has largely been the result of the Indian caste system.

b) In most parts of northern India, especially in places like Punjab, Islamic traditions were considered to be the basis for cultural imitation. People did not follow the upper caste members to sanskritize.

c) D N Majumdar notes in his study of the Mohan village in Uttar Pradesh that if a lower caste member such as a cobbler wears a tilak or bibhuti on his forehead and wears a dhoti, then he is not regarded as a member from the higher caste in this village. Thus, Sanskritization is not universal in India.

8.9 Model Questions

A. Answer briefly. **(5 Marks)**

i) How do you differentiate between Sanskritization and Brahminization?

ii) Give two examples of Sanskritization in the Indian Village System.

iii) Give a critical review of the caste system in India?

iv) Define Sanskritization.

v) What is Westernization?

vi) List down a few factors which led to the promotion of Sanskritization in the Indian society.

B. Answer in detail. **(10 Marks)**

i) Write a note on the concept of Sanskritization with relevant examples.

ii) Point out the features of Sanskritization.

iii) List the advantages and disadvantages of the concept of Sanskritization, with proper examples.

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Module III
Socal Groups in India: Urban, Rural & Tribal (I)

Unit 9 ❑ Agrarian Classes

Structure

9.0 Objectives

The objective of this unit is to examine and understand

- The structure of Indian agrarian system

- The nature of agrarian classes.

● The nature and purpose of land reform in India.

● Impact of globalization on agriculture.

9.1 Introduction

India is one of the most complex countries socially. It has a continuity of history and culture which extends back to millennium. India next to China is the world's most populous country. According to the 1951 Census, it has a population of 35,68,29,485 humans. (Desai,2000.pp.l06). Majority of the Indian population lives in rural areas. Out of 35.7 crores of people living in India, 29.5 crores or 82.7% lives in Indian villages. Agriculture is the main occupation of these people. There studying the Agrarian class structure become significant from Sociological point of view. Without understanding their structure, culture and lifestyle the total overview of the country will remain unclear.

The rural class structure reveals that how the agrarian India has founded on a balanced self sufficient village economy on the basis of equilibrium and artisan industry. These functions with the help of the village panchayat, caste councils and joint family till the advent of the British rule. The British rule has brought about many qualitative changes and transformations in the rural setting. A.R.Desai points out that the available land per capita is only 9 acres. This highlights an enormous pressure of population on land. New class of creditors and traders were in a rise in the underdeveloped village economy which was changing from the production of subsistence to that of market. However after the British rule structure underwent enormous changes.

A.R. Desai gives a picture of the rural class structure after the withdrawal of the British rule from the country. The structure is as follows -

❖ Agricultural Landowners - 22.2%

❖ Agricultural Tenants - 27.2%

❖ Agricultural Labourers - 30.4%

❖ Non-Agriculturist - 20.2% (Desai, 2000.)

9.2 Indian Agrarian Structure

India is a land of soils. Majority of the people are associated with it. Daniel

Thorner aimed to describe and analyse the network of relationship among the various groups of persons who draw their livelihood from the soil. The consequences of such patterns of relationships are important for the analysis of the economy of the country as a whole. Thorner has attempted to reduce the social arrangements on land in different parts of India, into well- defined, precise categories on the basis of three following criterions.

1. Type of income obtained from soil -

    a) Rent

    b) Fruits of own income

    c) Wages.

2. Nature of Rights -

    a) Proprietary or Ownership

    b) Tenancy

    c) No right at all.

3. The extent of field work actually performed

    a) Absentee, who does not work at all.

    b) Those who perform partial work.

    c) Total work done by actual cultivators with family labourers.

    d) Where work is done entirely for others to earn wages. (Thorner, 1956.)

Dhangare has put forward Thorners model of the Agrarian class structure in India, as follows-

I. **Malik -** whose income is derived primarily from property rights in the soil and those common interests is to keep the level of rent up while keeping the wage level low. The rent is collected from the tenants, subtenants and the share croppers.

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a) **Big Landlords -** holds large tracts of land extending over several villages. They are generally absentee owners or renters with absolutely no interest to land management or improvement.

b) **Rich Landlords -** proprietors with considerable holdings but usually in same villages. They don't perform any field work but engage in supervising cultivation and takes personal interest in the improvement or management of land when and if necessary.

II. Kisans - working peasants, having property interest in the land but no actual rights as those of their maliks.

a) Small Landowners - having holdings sufficient to support a family, who cultivate land with family labour and who do not either employee outside labour (accept in harvest) or receive rent.

b) Substantial Tenants - tenants holding leases under either Ia or Ib tenure rights fairly secure, usually above sufficient level. The rest is IIa.

III. Mazdurs - this group generally belongs to those whose earnings are primarily from working on others' land or others' plots.

a) Poor Tenants - having tenancy rights but less secure, holdings too small to suffice for a family maintenance and income derived from land often less than that earned by wage labours.

b) Share Croppers - either tenant at will leases without security, cultivating land for others on share cropping basis and having least agricultural implements.

c) Landless Labourers - those without land. (Edi.Gupta.2012.PP 271-272).

9.3 Nature of the Agrarian Classes in India

Roughly there are three principal groups who are termed as proprietors, working peasants and labourers or popularly the malik, kisan and mazdur. Daniel Thorner has discussed the nature of each of these classes and their sub groups.

Malik - Malik or proprietors are those groups of people whose agricultural income are derived primarily from property rights from the soil. The family members may have other form of income but the main source of income would be share of produce from agriculture. Typically this share is generated from rent. Usually the rent is in the form of money but it may also be in the form of kind if the tenants are on crop sharing basis. The proprietor always does not rent his land he may also sometimes hire labourers to work for him. He may also sometimes hire a manager to look at the labourers or do by himself. However he will enjoy the status of being a malik if the rent collected from land is more than that of what he himself produce. The malik generally enjoys a high property right inn the soil however this may always not be the case. He may hold directly under the government or may be a superior tenant. Within this group there are two sub groups -

(i) Large Absentee Landlords - who typically have holdings in more than one village.

(ii)Smaller Proprietor - who resides personally in the village, in which they hold land.

Socially, the resident maliks and money lenders form a small and quite distinctive

group, within the village. They typically belong to the upper class structure, mainly Brahmins and Thakurs. They live in big houses, wear fine clothes and eat better than the entire villagers. They use all luxuries which are beyond the compass of the debt ridden Kisans.

9.4. Land Reform in India

As the Indian Agrarian Structure is based on land, it is important to have a look at the major land reforms, brought it by the British rule as it has a enormous impact on the present Agrarian structure of the country. Land reforms is often connected with re-distribution of agricultural land and hence it is related with agrarian reforms too. In India, there was a practice of land holdings from historic times and it was distributed in a highly unequal manner and have always been used as a source of social power. To get secure access to land for the poor and landless, policies of land reform were implemented to benefit poorer section of society since independence. After that a number of land reforms have been done by the government such as abolition of 'Zamindari' or middlemen as revenue collectors, imposing ceiling on landholdings and awarding of the surplus land's rights to landless, and tenancy reforms (Mearns, 1998). Land reform is described as redistribution of land from the rich to the poor. More broadly, it comprises of regulation of ownership, operation, leasing, sales, and inheritance of land (indeed, the redistribution of land itself requires legal changes). In an agricultural economy such as India with great dearth, and an unequal distribution, of land, coupled with a large mass of the rural population below the poverty line, there are enthralling financial and political opinions for land reform. Purpose of land reforms is efficient use of scarce land resource, redistributing agricultural land in favour of the less privileged class in general & cultivating class in particular.

9.4.1. Historical Review of Land Reforms in India: Land program in post-Independence India has evolved through different phases. During the Mughal period, before the arrival of the British there were numerous changes in the system of land taxation or revenue. Peasants continued to enjoy customary rights over land they occupied and generally could not be evicted unless they failed to pay the required land revenue (land tax) to the state. The task of collecting land revenue was assigned to a class of agents called zamindars (Bhaumik, 1993).

When the East India Company (EIC) established in the Seventeenth Century, the agricultural structure underwent fundamental change. The EIC first purchased the right to receive the collected land revenue and later, under the Permanent Settlement introduced in 1793, declared the Zamindars to be proprietors of land in exchange for the payment of land revenue fixed in perpetuity. Zamindars, or those to whom they sold their proprietary rights, typically delegated revenue collection to a series of middlemen. The increasing layers of intermediaries meant that there was considerable increase in rent extracted from the tillers and failure to pay this increased amount resulted in large-scale evictions, widespread disturbance, and declining agricultural production (Bhaumik, 1993). The British sought to stabilize the situation through legislated tenancy reform.

The Bengal Rent Act of 1859 placed restrictions on the power of landlords' to increase rent or evict tenants. However, the Act only protected fixed-rent tenants and did not protect bargadars or agricultural labourers. But it only protected those fixed-rent tenants who could prove they had cultivated the land for 12 consecutive years. Constant cultivation was difficult to prove due to poor records and the Act resulted in an increase in evictions by Zamindars to prevent tenants from possessing land for the required time period (Bhaumik, 1993). The 1885 Bengal Tenancy Act also sought to protect long-standing tenants, and was similarly ineffective. During this period, another form of landholder emerged in Bengal. The Jotedars were a rich class of peasants who reclaimed and gained control of large quantities of uncultivated forests and wetlands outside the territory governed by the Permanent Settlement (Bhaumik, 1993). The Jotedars refined some of this land through the direct supervision of hired labour or servants. Nevertheless, the bulk of the Jotedars' land, like much of the land in Bengal, was cultivated by Bargadars.

Rural tensions over the dilemma of Bargadars were common in the decades prior to and after Independence. In the 1940s, the Tebhaga movement called for a smaller crop share payment and also created the slogan, "He who tills the land, owns the land." The movement is given credit for shaping post-Independence land reform legislation in West Bengal (Datta, 1988). At the time of Independence, this matter was of great significance. In the decades following independence India passed a significant body of land reform legislation. The 1949 Constitution left the adoption and implementation of land and tenancy reforms to state governments. This led to a lot of dissimilarity in the implementation of these reforms across

states and over time. After India's independence, the government took major step to eradicate the systems of zamindaris and Jagirdari, to remove intermediaries between state and peasant. This was the first legislature taken by almost all the states called as Abolition of Jamindari / Jagirdari systems Act.

9.4.2 The Main Objectives of the Land Reforms:

These are as follows -

1. To make redistribution of Land to make a socialistic pattern of society. Such an effort will reduce the inequalities in ownership of land.

2. To ensure land ceiling and take away the surplus land to be distributed among the small and marginal farmers.

3. To legitimize tenancy with the ceiling limit.

4. To register all the tenancy with the village Panchayats.

5. To establish relation between tenancy and ceiling.

6. To remove rural poverty.

7. Proliferating socialist development to lessen social inequality

8. Empowerment of women in the traditionally male driven society.

9. To increase productivity of agriculture.

10. To see that everyone can have a right on a piece of land.

11. Protection of tribal by not allowing outsiders to take their land.

Land reform legislation in India is categorized in to four main sections that include abolition of intermediaries who were rent collectors under the pre-Independence land revenue system, tenancy regulation that attempts to improve the contractual terms faced by tenants, including crop shares and security of tenure, a ceiling on landholdings with a view to redistributing surplus land to the landless and lastly, attempts to consolidate disparate landholdings.

Abolition of intermediaries is generally established to be effective land reforms that has been relatively successful. The record in terms of the other components is mixed and varies across states and over time. Landowners naturally resisted the implementation of these reforms by directly using their political influence and also

by using various methods of evasion and coercion, which included registering their own land under names of different relatives to bypass the ceiling, and shuffling tenants around different plots of land, so that they would not acquire incumbency rights as stipulated in the tenancy law. The success of land reform was driven by the political will of particular state administrations, the prominent achievers being the left-wing administrations in Kerala and West Bengal.

a) Tenancy Systems of Land: At the time of independence, there existed many types of proprietary land tenures in the country.

1. Ryotwari:

It was started in Madras since 1772 and was later extended to other states. Under this system, the responsibility of paying land revenue to the Government was of the cultivator himself and there was no intermediary between him and the state. The Ryot had full right regarding sale, transfer and leasing of land and could not be evicted from the land as long as he pays the land revenue. But the settlement of land revenue under Ryotwari system was done on temporary basis and was periodic after 20, 30 or 40 years. It was extended to Bombay Presidency.

2. Mahalwari:

This system was initiated by William Bentinck in Agra and Oudh and was later extended to Madhya Pradesh and Punjab. Under this system, the village communities held the village lands commonly and it was joint responsibility of these communities to make payments of the land revenue. The land ownership is held as joint ownership with the village body. The land can be cultivated by tenants who can pay cash / kind / share.

3. Zamindari:

Lord Cornwallis gave birth to Zamindari system in India. He introduced this system for the first time in 1793 in West Bengal and was later adopted in other states as well. Under this system, the land was held by a person who was responsible for the payment of land revenue. They could obtain the land mostly free of charge from the government during the British rule and it is called estate. Landlords never cultivated the land they owned and rented them out to the cultivators. The amount of land revenue may either be fixed once one for all when it was called permanent settlement or settlement with regard to land revenue may only be temporary and

may, therefore, be revised after every 30-40 years, as the practice may be. The Zamindari system is known as absentee landlordism. Under this system the whole village was under one landlord. The persons interested can work in the zamindar's land as tenant / labourer based on the agreement with the zamindar. The zamindari system was known to be more exploitive, as the zaminder used to fix / hike the prices of land according to his desire.

4. Jagirdari:

It is similar to zamindari system. The jagirdar is powered to control the unproductive masses of village by engaging them in agricultural activities. Because land is controlled by state in India and the relationship between production and land tenure varies from state to state, the national policy recommendations resulted in differing tenancy reform laws in each state.

Tenancy is completely banned in some states but completely free in others. Punjab and Haryana have not forbidden tenancy whereas Karnataka has a near complete ban on tenancy. Some states have discussed ownership rights on tenant cultivators except for sharecroppers, whereas West Bengal chose to provide owner-like rights only to the sharecroppers. Tenancy reforms may have indirect effects in the form of reduced tenancy shares if poorly implemented. Most tenancy reform laws also contained provisions concerning the ability of tenants to surrender the land back to the landlord voluntarily. These provisions were used by landlords to wane the impact of the laws. In most states the surrender of land falls under the jurisdiction of the revenue authorities.

9.4.3 Impact of Land Reform in India: Following ere the outcomes of Land Reforms in India.

1. Abolition of Zamindars and Jagirdars:

The powerful Zamindars and Jagirdars have become inexistent.

The abolition of intermediaries has stopped exploitation.

Transfer of land to peasants from intermediaries has reduced disparities.

The new proprietorship has given scope for innovation in Land Reforms.

The ex-jagirdars and ex-zamindars have engaged themselves actively in other work thus contributing for National Growth.

The abolishment of these systems has increased to the new land owners thus adding revenue to the state governments.

2. Land Ceiling: Land is a source of Income in rural India land and it provides employment opportunities. Therefore it is important for the marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, and small farmers. The concept 'ceiling on land holdings' denotes to the legally stipulated maximum size beyond which no individual farmer or farm household can hold any land. The objective of such ceiling is to promote economic growth with social justice.

Land Ceiling should be imposed on all kinds of lands such as Fallow, Uncultivable, irrigated and Cultivable land. All the mentioned are inclusive of ceiling Act. The ceiling act varies from state to state on ceiling on two crops a year land. However in most of the places the ceiling is 18 Acres.

3. Land possession and social power: It is observed that the land is not only the source of production but also for generating power in the community. In the Indian system, the land is often transferred from one generation to another generation. However all this lack the documentation of possession of land. In this framework, the government had made it mandatory to register all tenancy arrangements.

To summarize, Land reform is the major step of government to assist people living under adverse conditions. It is basically redistribution of land from those who have excess of land to those who do not possess with the objective of increasing the income and bargaining power of the rural poor. The purpose of land reform is to help weaker section of society and do justice in land distribution. Government land policies are implemented to make more rational use of the scarce land resources by affecting conditions of holdings, imposing ceilings and grounds on holdings so that cultivation can be done in the most economical manner.

9.5 Globalisation and Crisis in Indian Agriculture

The structural adjustment programme and WTO trade regime in the decade of the 90s, have brought about a new crisis of rural livelihoods. The new economic regime, in a way, has taken us back to the colonial era, where the process of surplus accumulation and utilisation is once again to be mediated by metropolitan capital.

a) Withdrawal of State : The state withdrew from its earlier declared role of intervening in the market processes to protect economic space of domestic producers

and among them that of small producers and weaker sections. The elaborate structure of controls on domestic and international trade and on investment has been dismantled rapidly. The Essential Commodity Act, Agricultural Produce Marketing Act and Small Scale Industry Reservation Act, restricting movement, storage, marketing and processing of agricultural produce have been modified. The multinationals and big domestic units are now allowed to enter into these activities.

Exim policy in the post-liberalisation period has removed import controls on agricultural commodities rapidly - sometimes much ahead of WTO stipulated phase out period. Trade liberalisation has taken place in the background of extremely unfavourable global market conditions for primary commodities. The prices of all primary commodities (including wheat and rice) have fallen dramatically since mid 90s.

Falling prices of primary products in US dollars (USD per ton.)

Commodity	1988	1995	1997	1999	2001
Wheat (US HW)	167.0	216.0	142.0	-	133.0
Rice (US)	265.7	-	439.0	-	291.0
Cotton (US cents per lb)	63.5	98.2	77.5	-	49.1
Groundnut Oil	590.0	991.0	1010.0	788.0	-
Palm Oil	437.0	626.0	93.5	74.7	-
Soya bean Oil	464.0	479.0	625.0	71.4	-
Soya bean Seeds	297.0	273.0	262.0	-	178.0

Source: Utna Patnaik Agrarian Crisis and Global Deflationism

Social Scientist Jan.-Feb. 2002

The infrastructure facilities provided by the government are on the decline. A number of minor and medium size irrigation network projects are left incomplete, not because they are controversial but because of paucity of funds. The last decade saw the privatisation of power sector and the agenda for the coming decade is to privatise water. The ramifications for Indian agriculture will be wide spread. It may shatter the viability of even medium level farmers.

The changed priority of the banking sector has slashed down the direct advances to agriculture made by commercial as well as cooperative banks. Schemes to facilitate

the credit needs of small and marginal farmers are completely eroded. This has led to an aggressive growth of informal credit markets. Apart from traditional moneylenders, traders of new technology, inputs and equipments have entered these markets.

Fertilizer subsidies have been cut down in annual budget exercises and the government has handed over the task of providing seeds to the multinationals and private companies.

Finally, in the current parlance the term 'land reform' is being used for advocating removal of land ceiling and tenancy regulations. This would allow the corporate sector to enter into direct farm operations. The big farmers would be able to negotiate profitable deals with the corporate sector and MNCs. Some states like Maharashtra and Karnataka have made significant moves in this direction.

b) Entrenchment of Corporate Sector (MNCs) into Indian Agriculture

The most fundamental shift in the structure of international political economy of food has been the emergence of transnational agro-food corporations, attempting to organise the production and consumption in national economics geared to their investment and marketing goals.

In India, the corporate sector has been prevented from entering direct farm production because of the land ceiling laws. The low ceiling limits do not allow scale intensive farming in which companies are interested. Only the plantation sector has been exempted from the land ceiling regulations. Capitalist farms controlled by foreign companies have existed in this sector since before independence. The average size of large farms in Assam is 88.80 hectares and in Kerala 59.33 hectares. Under the new definition of 'land reform' there is an increasing pressure to allow companies to undertake direct farm production especially in the areas of horticulture, floriculture and agro-forestry. The demand is to substantially extend the land ceiling limit or to remove it altogether. As already mentioned many state governments are prepared to concede this demand. Maharashtra government has already taken the initiative to grant exemption in landholding act to trusts, companies and cooperatives for horticulture purposes, Fallow, waste or khar lands can be purchased by such entities and land under cultivation can be taken on lease. The farm size can be large as 1000 acres.

In the meanwhile companies have been acquiring vast tracts of land in Orissa and Southern states for aquaculture. A large number of small and marginal farmers

have been uprooted in this process. Several companies are entering agro forestry (teak-planting) circumventing the land ceiling regulations. They buy the land and allot it to individuals on payment of substantial sums and in turn promise them attractive returns.

However, the design of agribusiness to control the surplus of the farm sector is far more ambitious than what can be achieved through direct farm cultivation. Agribusiness is fast acquiring control on the input and output flows of the farm sector with the acquiescence of Indian state. The design is to alter the land use pattern geared to their profit interests.

The agrarian transition under the state led industrialisation of Indian economy reached an impasse. Concentration of resources both in agriculture and industry led to an industrial growth where space for labour was scarce. Agriculture obliged by containing the unskilled and marginalised mass of workforce within itself.

In the 21st century the neo-liberal global regime has brought about inexorable changes world over. The global circuits of production, exchange and finance have qualitatively changed the functioning of national economies. The agrarian question in India is now being resolved in its own ruthless manner by the globalisation process.

The increasing control of agribusiness over input and output flows of agriculture will necessarily result in a massive debouching workforce from this sector. Such a trend is already discernable. The workforce, debouched from agriculture, just does not have space outside. Manufacturing and service sector together are quite incapable of accommodating it. The situation admits no other solution but a radical restructuring of the entire production base.

For those of us, who owe allegiance to an equitable society ensuring dignified human existence, the 'agrarian question' can then be looked at only in its first layer of meaning - namely to seek the support of uprooted peasantry for overthrowing the existing regime.

The trend of agrarian unrest in India can be traced to the period of British rule when the nationalist mass movements took place on a fairly large scale in 1920-22 and 1930-34.

The movement in the 1930s was the result of the economic depression caused by World Weir II which worsened the conditions of the peasants in India. The

peasants and workers were actively involved in the struggle for independence during the Civil Disobedience Movement and also due to the emergence of the Left. The first All-India Kisan Sabha was set up in 1936 under the leadership of Swami Sahajanand Saraswati.

The period between 1945-47 saw a steep increase in agrarian movements mainly due to the expectations from independence and the dreams of changes in agrarian relations.

During the post-independence period, agrarian unrest of various types have taken place, ranging from the legendary Telengana movement and the PEPSU tenant movement to the Naxalite movement.

Other lesser known struggles are the Kharwar tribal movement in Madhya Pradesh and Bihar during 1957-58, the Bhil movement in Dhulia (Maharashtra) during 1967-75, the Warlis movement under the leadership of Kashtakad Sangathana headed by Marxist Jesuit Pradeep Prabhu since 1978. The Communist Party of India set up the Bharatiya Khet Mazdoor Union in 1968.

9.6 Important Peasant Movements in India

Some of the well-known peasant movements in post-independent India are discussed below.

9.6.1 Telengana Movement:

The Telengana peasant movement was strongly associated with the emergence of Communists in Andhra Pradesh in 1942 after the ruling British government lifted the ban on the Communist Party of India because of its pro-war stand.

The cause of unrest was rooted in the feudal oppression which the peasants had to suffer at the hands of jagirdars and deshmukhs. The Communists organised the farmers against the British policy of forced grain levy collection. Gradually, the movement started spreading all over Telengana.

The Communists achieved greater success when the Nizam of Hyderabad endorsed the decision to stay out of the Indian Union; the Communists organised the anti-Nizam and pro-integration movement in the Warangal, Nalgonda and Khammam districts. It was in this period that the lands taken over by landlords in lieu of debt repayments, during the economic depression of the thirties, were redistributed among farmers.

The uncultivated land and forests owned by the government were also distributed to the landless. Minimum wages were increased, and measures were taken against social ills like wife-beating. Even after the success of the armed intervention by the Nehru government against the Nizam, the Communists did not give up their anti-government stance. A bitter confrontation took place between the peasants led by the Communists and the government in which the peasants were subjugated.

However, the government responded to the issues raised by the movement. The Jagirdari Abolition Regulation was abandoned in 1949 and the Hyderabad Tenancy and Agricultural Lands Act was passed in 1950. More than 6,00,000 tenants occupying over one-quarter of the agricultural land were declared 'protected' tenants with the right to purchase land on easy conditions. As a consequence of the movement, land reforms were well implemented in the Telengana region.

9.6.2 Patiala Muzara Movement:

The Muzara movement had its origin in the late 19th century, when the princely state of Patiala suffered oppression by the Maharaja of Patiala. The biswedars (local landlords) enjoyed proprieta ry rights on land but the tenants felt these landlords had no legitimate right to the land. The grievance of the tenant found an outlet in the movements such as the Akali and Praja Mandal movements during the 1920s.

During the 1930s, a somewhat liberal atmosphere enabled the Congress party to gain hold in many provinces. By then, the Communists were actively involved with the movement from British-ruled Punjab and soon they became the nerve centre of the Muzara movement. By the end of 1948, small armed groups, each comprising 30 to 40 people, used to protect muzaras against the onslaught of the landlords.

With the formation of the Congress ministry in 1951, there was a fresh wave of political resurgence. The Agrarian Reforms Enquiry Committee was set up to recommend measures to tackle the issue. The PEPSU Tenancy (Temporary Provision) Act was formulated in 1952 which sought to protect tenants against eviction. After the fall of Rarewala's Congress ministry, President's Rule was imposed.

The President issued the PEPSU Occupancy Tenants (Vesting of Proprietary Rights) Act in 1953. The Act enabled the peasants to become owners provided they paid compensation twelve times the land revenue. The Communists condemned the

legislation since the lands owned by biswedars were not confiscated without compensation. The Communists, however, gradually lost their complete hold over the peasants.

9.6.3 Naxalbari Movement of West Bengal:

After the formation of the first non-Congress United Front government in West Bengal in 1967, the government decided to distribute surplus land among the landless peasants. The initiative raised enthusiasm among the poor whereas the middle and small land owners were not happy that their land would be distributed among sharecroppers. But soon the ruling coalition faced some legal constraints in the grant of pattas, verification of claims, etc.

The Communists belonging to Darjeeling district in North Bengal had been organising sharecroppers and tea estate labourers-mostly Santhals, Oraons and Rajbanshi tribals-since the early 1950s. They now argued that land reform was not possible through legal means, so they believed in seizing land through violent means.

All the villages of Naxalbari came under their umbrella in 1967, and about 20,000 peasants became full time activists under the leadership of Charu Majumdar. Most of the leaders of the movement belonged to dissident groups differing from the ruling Communists. The differences between Communists and Naxalites (as they came to be known) grew at an alarming pace.

Clashes took place between the Naxalite elements and the police. The Communist Party Marxist (CPM) left the ruling coalition and pursued a mediator's role by endorsing the Naxalites and persuading the UF government for an amicable settlement. However, continued police repression led to the end of the Naxalbari movement; all the leaders were either shot down in encounters or jailed.

9.6.4 New Farmers' Movement:

A fresh farmers' movement started in 1980 with road-rail roko in Nasik (Maharashtra) under the leadership of the Shetkari Sangathan led by Sharad Joshi. The immediate demand of the farmers was higher prices for sugarcane and onions.

Then came Mahinder Singh Tikait, a Jat leader, who organised lakhs of villagers and compelled the then chief minister of Uttar Pradesh to accept their demand for reducing electricity charges to the previous level.

The movements which have been able to mobilise rural peasants were Vivasayigal

Sangam in Tamil Nadu, the Rajya Ryothu Sangha in Karnataka, Kisan Sangh and Khedut Samaj in Gujarat, and the Bharatiya Kisan Union in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab.

Most of these peasant movements occurred due to the government policy of paying low agricultural prices for controlling the price of food and raw- materials. As a result the farmers felt victimised in the cause of serving urban interests.

The new farmers' movements have attracted media attention on some glaring issues such as remunerative prices for agricultural goods, reduction or elimination of government dues such as electricity charges, canal water charges, interest rate, etc. Indeed, after the Green Revolution, the farmers' movements have become political weapons for securing more power and money.

Although these peasant movements are branded as 'new' non-class or supra-class social movements, in reality, these new peasant movements are least interested in societal issues like educational, environmental, or gender-related problems. Most of these 'new' peasant movements have narrow caste-based mobilisation for getting political mileage.

9.7 Summary

India is known as an agricultural country since about70% of its population is involved in different types of farming or related activities. The agrarian class structure is comprised of several classes like landowners, tenants, labourers and non-agriculturists. Of the labourers, a considerable section consisted of bonded labourers and marginal farmers. The Government of india has taken measures to free people from debt-bondage. Land reform has also been undertaken by some state governments. The government of West Bengal had adopted a number of measures to improve the lot of thika tenants and marginal farmers. Post -1990s, globalization has also thrown several challenges at the agrarian system in India.

9.8 Model Questions

Write Short Notes on the Following.   **(5 Marks Each)**

1. New farmer's movement.

2. Characteristics and composition of the Malik Kisan and Mazdoor.

3. Globalization and agriculture.

4. Naxalbari movements.

5. Main objectives of land reforms in India.

6. How are peasant movements different from that of the agrarian movements.

Long Questions: **(10 Marks Each)**

1. Explain the nature if Agrarian class structure of India.

2. Explain the various Indian Agrarian Movements.

3. Explain the nature of land reforms in India and point out its impact on the agrarian class structure of India.

4. Explain Telengana movement as an Agrarian unrest.

5. Explain the impact of globalization on the agrarian class structure of India.

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Unit 10 ❑ City and Urban Life

Structure

10.0 Objectives

This unit will give the students some insight into :

- The rise and transformation of Indian towns and cities.

- The nature of traditional cities.

- Trends of urbanization in India and challenges of city life.

- The issues of rural-urban continuum.

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10.1 Introduction

A city is a place which satisfies the needs of the citizens in the best possible way through social and residential arrangements like housing, governing, protecting the society, and division of labor which helps in reaching its goals. Paul Bairoch in his book: Cities and Economic Development said that a place can be quantified as a city, in its true sense only when it supports trade systems and opportunities. As a human invention, cities are scarcely 10,000 years old, but as centuries have passed they have become both much larger and far more numerous. (Macionis and Parrillo, 2015).

The Rise of the Cities :

Although scattered cities such as Jericho and Catal Huyuk thrived in the period between 7000 and 4000 B.C.E, it was not until about 3500 B.C.E that urban development accelerated to a point where large numbers of cities flourished. To the east of Mesopotamia, along with Indus River of present day India and Pakistan, was a favourable are where early cities emerged. Trade routes linked the Indus cities with Mesopotamian cities through other outposts, such as Tepe Yahya, midway between the two areas. It is also likely that trading in such products as jade linked this area with Central Asia to the east. (Magee 2005).

Excavations have shown the remains of two highly developed cities that were centers of a regional civilization beginning about 2500 B.C.E. Both were prominent in Urban history until about 1500 B.C.E. Mohenjo-Daro was situated on the Indus River about 175 miles from the Arabian Sea, Harappa was about 350 miles further north, on one of Indus River tributaries. Each had a population as high as 40,000 and represented an urban civilisation district in many ways. Unlike other Mesopotamia or Egypt for example Mohenjo Daro does not show evidence of a single, all powerful leader or a pre-occupation with temples and god monuments but it does show evidence of existence "good living".Manjhi Taro would have seemed familiar to a modern visitor with the same grid run pattern common to most western cities today. It's remarkable structure of mud baked bricks and burnt wood framing were up to two-storied high and included and elaborate, will built bath area with a layer of natural tar to keep it from leaking. Remarkably it even had a building with an underground furnace, like the Roman hypocausts for heating bathing. Other city- features were a central market place, a large common well, and a settle or administrative centre that may have included a granary for storage of food surplus.

Until the mid 20th century it was commonly thought that Mesopotamia, Egypt and the Indus Valley contain the cities from which all later once took their pattern. Archaeological research since then however showed otherwise. Apparently cities emerged in many places around the world independent of one another to other regions where this occurred where China and America.

10.3 Indian Towns and Cities

While there has been no obvious cultural link between the Indus cities and the contemporary ones, there is some continuity between the Indo-Aryan cities and the present day cities. In the Vastu Shastra, The signs of town planning a differentiation is made between several kinds of towns according to their main functions such as trade, commerce, manufacturing, administration and military marches (DUTT, 1924, pp.272-85). A Nagara was an ordinary fortified town where inland trade was an important activity, whereas at Pattana was a large commercial port situated on the bank of a river or sea. It was a city of trading castes, the Vaishyas, and was replete with jewels, wealth, silk, perfume and other articles. Drona Mukhi was also a market town lying on the delta of a river or sea shore, frequented by traders. It was also a small marketing centre in the midst of 400 villages. Kheta was a small walled town situated on the plain, near a river or a forest, lying in the midst of villages and having facilities of communication. If a Kheta was combined with local industries such as mining, it was known as Sakhanagara. Kharvata was similar Kheta but was and inland town lying in the midst of above 200 villages. Nee Gama was also a market town but mainly consisting of artisans. It was also a resting place for traders and caravans. Thus it is seen that the different kinds of towns where organised around both inland and marine trade and commerce. The Royal capital Rajdhani was another distinct type of town which was elaborately planned. It had a belt of walls and ramparts circumscribed by ditches and military outposts. Within the Metropolis, separate places where assigned to the palace, Royal officers, the Army, citizens quarters and shops. It had tanks, Wells, Gardens, temples, taverans, and brothels. Durga was a fortified town equipped with an Arsenal and well stored it with food stuff. It was both a seat of chiefs and Kings and a military town. Several military encampments were also distinguished. Thus Sivira was the encampment of a king's army out on a conquest. Senamukha was a military base which was also a serve urban town, a little away from the main city and guarding it. Shaniya was a local fortified town which was the seat of the king with garrison and police. It was not however a permanent capital.

Another type of town was organised around education, the university town, called Martha or Vihara, consisting of students and teachers. The town was defended from external attacks and the food supplies where insured. A classic example of a university town was Nalanda which was developed, During Harsha's rule, as the centre of Buddhist learning and educational activities (Puri, 1966, PP. 52-56). The Monks numbered several thousands. The city had symmetrical rows of Monasteries. It had a large campus with lecture halls and residential quarters. Taxila was also a centre of academic traditions, although it combined various other political and commercial interest.

Temple towns formed another category with their own characteristic features. They had several successive rings of circumambulatory paths to go around the central lots where the temples where are situated. A number of minors shrines where also set up in these towns temple. A temple town, such as Srirangam, Tirupati, Kashi Or Puri, was the centre of diverse cultural activities.

Besides temple towns, There was sacred cities which attracted pilgrims. While somewhere all India pilgrim centers others where regional ones. The former includes Haridwar, Gaya, Nasik, Ujjain, Pushkar and Mathura. All these cities formed part of the sacred Geography of the Hindus, and derived their sacred character from the epics and mythologies.

10.4 Old Capital Cities

Of all the different type of cities, the capital is where most vulnerable to extraneous forces. The rise and fall of the cities where closely connected with the political and cultural history of India. Pataliputra, according to Megasthenes, was the greatest city in India at the time of Mayuras. The area of the city was 20 square miles. The fortification had 570 towers and 460 gates. It remained the capital and Metropole is under successive dynasties for about a century and, under the Buddhist influence, it also remained a seat of learning. Ghurye estimates that its population at the time of Chandragupta was a little more than 1 million. His army alone was six lakh strong.

The Hindu Gupta Dynasty had, for most of the time, its capital in Ayodhya which hardly came up to the standard of Pataliputra. The Sakas ruled from Ujjain, which was considered a religious centre by the Hindus, the Buddhists and the Jains.

In South India, Kanchipuram was the capital of Pallavas and the Cholas. It was the home of many different faiths - the Vaishnavites, Saivites, Jains and Buddhists. It

was also a set of literary and artistic development. Madura was the capital of the Pandyas. The Metropolis of Vijayanagara rose to prominence in the early years of the 15th century. Portuguese and Italian travellers have given a detailed account of this fortified city. They considered it the best provided city in the world with ample storage, gardens and orchids.

10.4.1. Cities in Islamic Civilization :

To the civilisational complex, which was reflected in the urban centers, was added the Islamic civilization. This meant, among other things, the introduction of a new and different style of urbanism. The Muslims emerged as imperial rulers, and by the end of the 13th century Delhi began to develop as their administrative centers. However, Lahore surpassed Delhi in population.

Delhi remained the capital for rulers of many Muslim dynasties in the 17th century it had a population of above half 1 million. During the Muslim period cities of Delhi had been built. While Qutub-UD-DIN built Lalkot, Allauddin Khilji established the city of Siri. The Tughlaqs built cities like Jahan- pana and Firozabad. The Sayyids and Lodis built their capital in Agra. But with the Moguls, Delhi once again became the seat of imperial power.

The imperial city of Shahjahanabad had a population of about 1 1/2 lakhs. The city grew up to the west of Red Fort. Three main roads radiated from it. Trade and commerce flourished in the city and margins came from distant places. The fair was held on every important festival, where fine muslin, rich brocades and other goods were sold. The city was also the centre of literary and cultural activities. The Urdu language developed in the courts of Delhi.

During the Muslim rule many more provincial cities came into prominence, principal among them were Ahmedabad, Lucknow and Hyderabad. The city was the centre of trade in food grains coming from the first fertile district of Kiara. It also traded in drugs and Indigo.

10.5 Cities and Civilizations

The concept of civilisation is particularly helpful in the context of analysing the features of traditional urbanism and urbanization. Ghurye (1949) elaborated the Geddesian proposition that a city is the concrete image of a civilisation in his Marathi book Samaja Shastra. Redfield and Singer (1954) worked out in detail the process of

primary and secondary urbanization, which was also known as little tradition and great tradition. Little tradition developed into the great tradition with its special intellectual class, administrative officers and rules closely derived from the moral and religious life of the local culture and advanced economic institutions. Milton Singer (1964) elaborated Redfields idea of social organization of tradition with reference to Indian civilisation. He emphasises the conception of Indian civilisation as a coherent structure of rurall networks and urban centers which also acts as a medium for mutual communication of great and little traditions and of other cultural differences between and among tribes and castes, linguistic regions, towns and countries

B.S.Cohn and McKim. Marriot (1977) understanding of the cultural role of cities is significant. He argues that cities exist in societies which are organized into states whether they are literate or non-literate. He then considered two coordinate axes of economy and state power to differentiate the cultural roles of the primary urban types. While the variation on the axis of urban economy was from dependent to autonomous, those of State power used to vary from segmentary to bureaucucratic to differentiate the cultural roles of the primary urban types. While the variation on the axis of urban economy was from dependent to autonomous, those of state power are from segmentary to bureaucratic. The primary urban types depending on those two axes are:

1. Regal-ritual city is characterised by dependent urban economy and segment to re-state power for forming an ideological role.

2. Sunshine city state had autonomous urban economy and segment to the state power performing more central role

3. Administrative and colonial cities which are characterized by dependent urban economy and bureaucratic state power having administrative role, and

4. Industrial cities with features of autonomous urban economy and bureaucratic state power for forming an industrial roll.

10.6 Nature of Traditional Cities

More or less every traditional city shares some basic commonalities in its functioning and elements no matter which ever civilisation belong to. When observed keenly, it is seen that power was mainly vested in the hands of the rulers, the kings and the monarchial governments who asserted their power through laws and rules but primarily through defence. The center of a city generally included a centre place like a pulpit

or a market or a building of importance and surrounded by a second wall to depict the idea of that place being a special area to the onlooker. Main buildings and structures usually were made for religious purposes like places of worship or for political purposes like courts and places. Social interactions were not very common. Living arrangements for the ruling class were elaborate and luxurious in comparison to the common people who dwelt in small houses and shanties. Traditional cities were seen to be divided by class differentiations.

Divisions were also based in ethnicity and religious groups but not imposed on living conditions as such. Perhaps, at the most, residential areas were allocated differently for different groups. The concepts like work culture was very different from what exists today. Work gave pleasure to the workers. Kin relations and family had much more importance then what one witnesses today. People were well knitted in to the kin web and bonds were much stronger than what is observed today..

The development of education was limited only among the knowledgeable in terms of arts and science. Writing and symbolic art forms were in full growth at the time. However, its impact over the rural areas were very less. Only a few among the lot were the reapers of the benefits. The majority remained illiterate throughout their life unlike the people in modern cities where education has become a necessity for good. Intra-city communication or travelling across cities for work purposes was limited only between cities sharing friendly relations.

Urbanism was not growing at the rate which was witnessed after industrialization or during it. Industrialization introduced a whole new concept of urbanism that led to the dilapidation of entire traditional structure as such, giving rise to new ethos which were alien to traditional man.

10.6.1. Modern Ethos :

Modernization took birth at the wake of industrialization. Countries facing industrialization like the UK came across modernization right at its beginning leaving behind traditional practices and concepts, industrialization impacted the cities with shades of modernity. Modernization is the process of transformation of the traditional society to a whole new method of technology, industry, economic, political, social and secularist tenets. Modernity introduced a liberal though process among thinkers and freeing the mind from traditional beliefs and arm- chair philosophies.

Urban life has increasingly raised the number of city dwellers in industrial countries

and developing countries as well. For example, in 1975 around 40% of the world population lived in urban areas, it is guessed that around 15 to 20 years from now this will rise to a considerable extent. India's approximate urban dwellers were studied to be 10.6% in 1921 which increased to 18% in 1951. (Kar.2013). industrialization being a prime force in population mobility from rural to urban areas, had also led to population increase in cities of Britain, Unites States and most other European countries. Modernity and Urbanization has become a major influence in the social and cultural life in every country.

10.7 Nature of City Life

Right from the beginning of industrialization, city and its development in the social, cultural as well as economic aspects have been a major topic of discussion among urban and social researchers. The city is in a way bigger settlement than a village or a town and therefore, it forms a bigger web of personal, impersonal, formal or informal relationships all together. Large populations started migrating industrialization from the Rural areas to the cities for better jobs and livelihood options. City life made people severe their ties from the countryside lives and fall for the flashy, city life.

However that does not imply that cities were not present in the pre industrialization period. Cities generally flourish due to trading purposes, growing around harbors or near riverbanks to ease trading practices. Development of modern cities has gone through both encouragement and partial condemnation post industrial revolution. While Conservatives like Burke and Corbett despised industrial life for threat of crime, loss of community ties, alienation and mental isolation, radical social thinkers like Marx were weary of the blessings of capitalism and technological advancement to an extent which was barely visible before.

10.8 Urbanization in India

Urbanisation is one of the common characteristics of economic development. With the gradual growth of the economy, the process of urbanisation depends on the shift of surplus population from rural to urban areas along-with the growth of some industrialised urban centers. Due to social and economic pressures, people from backward villages started to move towards urbanised centres in search of job, where newly established industries and ancillary activities continuously offered job opportunities to those people migrating to cities.

The pace of urbanisation is fast if the industrial growth is fast. The pace of urbanisation gradually declines only when the proportion of urban population to total population of the country becomes too high.

10.8.1 Trends of Urbanisation in India :

In India, an increasing trend towards urbanisation has been recorded from the very beginning of this present century. The census data on the rural-urban composition reveal a continuous rise in the rate of urbanisation in India and more particularly during the second half of the present 21st century.

The proportion of urban population to total population which was only 11 per cent in 1911 slowly increased to 11.3 per cent in 1921 and then gradually rose to 14 per cent in 1941.

With a liberal definition of urban area adopted in 1951, the proportion of urban population suddenly rose to 17.6 per cent. But with a slightly strict definition, the proportion of urban population recorded a small increase to 18.3 per cent in 1961. In the 1971 census, a new definition of an urban unit was adopted and that definition was continued in 1981 census.

This definition was as follows:

(a) All places with a municipality, corporation, cantonment board or notified town area committee etc.

(b) All other places which satisfy the following criteria:

(i) Minimum population of 5,000;

(ii) At least 75 per cent of male working population engaged in non-agricultural pursuits; and

(iii) A density of population of at least 400 persons per sq km (1,000 persons per sq mile).

The definition of an urban unit in 1961 census was also similar to the above mentioned definition. Thus the data on rural-urban distribution during the last three censuses are comparable. The proportion of urban population to total population of India as per this new definition was estimated at 20.2 per cent in 1971 census and then marginally rose to 23.7 per cent in 1981.

Again in 2001, the total size of urban population in India increased to 285 million as compared to that of 217 million in 1991. This shows that the proportion of urban

population to total population of India has increased from 25.8 per cent in 1991 to 27.8 per cent in 2001.

The provisional figure of total urban population of India in 2011 is estimated at 377 million which is estimated at 31.16 per cent of the total population of the country. Moreover, the total number of towns in India which was only 1627, gradually rose to 3060 in 1951, 3126 in 1971, 4029 in 1981 and then to 5166 in 2001.

In India, towns are classified into six different classes. From the census data, it has been observed that in Class I town (having a population of over 1 lakh) the proportion of urban population concentration has increased from 25.7 per cent in 1901 to 60.4 per cent in 1981. Thus there is an increasing trend towards huge concentration of population in the bigger towns.

In Class II and Class III towns together, the proportion of urban population remained almost constant at the level of 26 to 28 per cent during the period 1901-81. But in the remaining Class IV, Class V and Class VI towns together, the relative proportion of urban population concentration declined sharply from 47.2 per cent in 1901 to only 13.6 per cent in 1981.

Besides continuation of urbanisation process, a number of Class II towns have been transformed into a Class I town and the number of Class I towns has thus increased from 74 in 1951 to 216 in 1981.

Accordingly, the total population of Class I towns also increased from 273 lakhs in 1951 to 943 lakh in 1981 showing an increase of nearly 245 per cent. During the same period, the number of Class II towns has increased from 95 to 270 and that of Class III towns increased from 330 to 739 in 1981.

Total population of Class II and Class III towns increased from 330 to 739 in 1981. Total population of Class II and Class III towns increased by 130 per cent, i.e., from 97 lakh in 1951 to 224 lakh in 1981. While the number of class IV towns has increased from 85 lakh to 149 lakh, the number of Class V and class VI towns and their total population declined sharply during the same period.

Again the number of big cities with million plus population has increased from 12 in 1981 to 27 in 2001 and their total population also increased from 42.1 million in 1981 to 73.0 million in 2001. As per 2001 census the size of population of four-cities of India are 11.9 million for Mumbai, 4.58 million for Kolkata, 9.8 million for Delhi and 4.2 million in Chennai.

Causes of Rapid Urbanisation in India:

Rapid urbanisation is taking place in different parts of the country in and around some big cities and towns of the country. The growing trend of urbanisation as reflected in growing concentration of major proportion of urban population in some big cities.

The factors which are largely responsible for such rapid urbanisation are mentioned below:

(i) Natural Increase in Population: Rapid unbanisation is taking place as a result of high rate of natural increase in population. Natural increase is taking place when the birth rate in urban areas exceeds the death rate. The natural growth rate of urban population is higher than that of rural due to higher net survival rate arising out of better health and medical facilities.Improvement in health and medical facilities, drinking water supply and sanitation facilities have reduced the incidence of water-borne diseases, communicable diseases etc.

Accordingly, the birth rate in urban areas in 1971 was estimated at 30.1 per thousand as compared to the death rate of 9.7 per thousand which subsequently reduced to 24.3 and 7.1 per thousand in 1991. Thus the natural growth rate is stated too high because of large difference between birth and death rates. The death rate in urban areas declined considerably due to better availability of medical and health service, safe drinking water supply and improved sanitation facilities.

This natural increase in population is largely responsible for phenomenal growth of population in urban areas i.e. 46 per cent in 1971-81 and 36 per cent in 1980-91 decade as compared to that of 19 per cent and 20 per cent growth rate attained in rural areas of India during these two decades.

(ii) Migrations: Rural-urban migration is considered another important factor responsible for rapid urbanisation in India. The rural to urban migrations have been resulted due to many factors during the post independence period. Creation of many activities of manufacturing and trading as a result of industrial development has resulted migration of rural people to urban areas for seeking jobs and higher incomes as well. After the partition of the country in 1947 rural uprooted people started to settle down in urban areas. Poor living conditions and negligible arrangement in respect of education and health have also attracted large number of rural people to migrate and settle in urban areas in search of good education, health facilities, better living conditions and securities of life.

As a result of heavy public investments in industry and mining, huge industrial development and sustained agricultural development urbanisation takes place. These "pull factors", compel large number of rural people to migrate to urban areas.

However there are certain "push factors" where due to worse economic conditions a number of rural people are pushed out of villages due to economic compulsions. Thus in the current phase of urbanisation both the "pull factors" and "push factors" are very much operational.

(iii) Expansion of Industry and Trade: In recent years, urbanisation takes place with the growing expansion of industry and trade in a particular state of region. Growth of an industry with its ancillaries along with localisation of industry would always create a favourable situation for the growth of an urban set up.

Similarly, growth of business and trade along with establishment of an active market always provides adequate support toward growing urbanisation in those places related to the development of industry and trade.

(iv) Boundary Changes of Towns: With the extension of the boundaries of cities and towns, more and more rural areas are gradually being included in rural areas. Although life in these newly extended areas remains rural initially but the inclusion of these areas into these towns and cities necessarily increases the number of urban population.

Consequences of Rapid Urbanisation: The rapid urbanisation is subjected to both healthy and unhealthy consequences and aspects.

(i) Healthy Aspects: Rapid industrialisation results the development and setting up of many industrial cities. Along with manufacturing units, ancillaries and service sector started to grow in those urban areas. Secondly, new and additional employment opportunities are created in the urban areas in its newly expanding manufacturing and service sector units.

This would result rural-urban migration and "industrialisation- urbanisation process" to set in. Thirdly, growth of cities can give rise to external economies so as to reap the benefit of economies of scale for various services and activities.

Finally, urbanisation results changes in attitudes and mind set of the urban people resulting modernisation in behaviour and proper motivation which indirectly helps the country to attain faster economic development.

(ii) Unhealthy Aspects: Although development of the economy are very much associated with urbanisaition but it has resulted some serious problems. Firstly, growing urbanisation is largely responsible for increasing congestion in the urban areas. Too much congestion has resulted problems like traffic jams, too much concentration of population, the management of which is gradually becoming very difficult and costly.

Secondly, too much of population is another unhealthy aspect of urbanisation which creates urban chaos related to housing, education, medical facilities, growth of slums, unemployment, violence, overcrowding etc. All these would result in deterioration in the quality of human life.

Finally, as a result of urbanisation, large scale migration takes place from rural to urban areas. Such large scale migration of active population from rural areas would result loss of productivity in rural areas, leading to poor conditions in village economy. Thus urbanisation, beyond a certain point, would result in unhealthy consequences.

(iii) Urban Policy Measures: Considering unhealthy consequences of rapid urbanisation, it is quite important to formulate an urban policy which can provide urban development with minimum undesirable effects.

The measures which can be largely followed include:

(i)   Integrating urbanisation process with the development plans of the country for developing non-agricultural activities like manufacturing services and infrastructure leading to attainment of external economies,

(ii) Making arrangement for selective urban development so as to minimise the disadvantages of these large sized towns,

(iii) To develop rural districts, by developing towns in highly rural districts,

(iv) To develop satellite townships in and around large cities; and

(v) Relieving pressure on large urban centres by developing urban amenities in adequate quantities so as to make urban living peaceful.

10.9 Concept of Rural-Urban Continuum

a. Conceptual Framework:

Rural Urban Continuum is a concept of sociology and settlement geography. The concept that, the size of continuum varies according to the size of town or city. This concept suggests that the population size, depends on the population density and the

number of settlement. The continuum at the rural end of the continuum is envisaged as being close knit, highly stable, integrating and homogenous in composition. At the urban end it is supposed to be loose in association, unstable, characterized by great social mobility and has a tendency for inter-individual contacts. The continuum is seen as marking a process of social change. Here social change can occur without any growth of settlement or increase in population, i.e. through the replacement of an original rural population simply by commuters or new settler. It is also possible to find rural societies in urban settings, and urban societies in rural settings. The association between these two setting is not entirely perfect, although the continuum concept still has some validity.

b. Definition:

❖ Tonnies' (1887) has given the idea of Gemeinschaft (rural) and Gesellschaft (urban) and discussed the difference between tradition and modernity.

❖ According to Durkheim, David Emile (1893), "Rural community is based on mechanical solidarity whereas urban community is characterized by organic solidarity".

❖ According to Maclver, (1917) "Between the two, there is no sharp demarcation to tell where the city ends and country begins".

❖ According to Gist and Halbert, (1945) "The familiar dichotomy between rural and urban is more of a theoretical concept than division based upon the facts of community life". 9 ? Kingsley (1945) has said "the city effects are wider than the city itself".

❖ According to Queen and Carpenter (1953) "there is a continuous gradation from rural to urban rather than a simple rural-urban dichotomy".

❖ Mukherjee, (1963) prefers the continuum model by taking the degree of urbanization as an useful conceptual tool for understanding rural-urban relations.

❖ Frankenberg, (1966) differentiates rural from urban by means of the concepts of rate and network. According to him, in urban areas, there is much greater differentiation of roles and the network of social relationships is less dense.

❖ Rao, (1970) points out in the Indian context that although both village and town formed part of the same civilization characterized by institution of

kinship and caste system in pre-British India, there were certain specific institutional forms and organizational ways distinguishing social and cultural life in towns form that in village.

c. Dynamic Characteristics of Continuum:

The dynamic characteristics of rural urban continuum are directly made on the following relations: 1. Agricultural Relations; 2. Business and Financial Relations; 3. Educational and Health Relations; 4. Transport and Communication Relations; 5. Administrative and Political Relations; 6. Social and Cultural Relations; 7. Industrial Relations.

1. Agricultural relations: Near the urban centers the intensity of agricultural activities is generally high, and this tendency is decreased with the increasing distance towards peripheral areas.

2. Trade and financial relation: Retail trade, wholesale trade and other trade related services located in urban centers develop relation between the urban and rural areas.

3. Educational and health relations: The urban centres generally have educational centres in the form of schools, college, technical schools and sometimes post graduate level educations. People from rural areas come to urban areas and make a relationship. Relationship also develops for providing health facility to the surrounding villages.

4. Transport and communication relations: Urban centres act as a convergence point for different modes of transport routes. Urban centres are connected with transport and communication with the neighbouring villages. Urban centres also act as nerve centres, of transportation lines. Roads radiate like spokes of a wheel in different directions from the city centres. So, a relationship is developed between urban and rural areas.

5. Administrative and political relations: Urban centres may act as a place of state capital, district headquarter, subdivisional headquarters. These centres, pull people every day from surrounding areas and create relation between rural and urban areas. Urban centres are the centres of political party offices. People also come to urban areas for political reasons.

6. Social and Cultural Relations: Cultural functions, religions festivals, sports and games fall under social and cultural items of entertainment which are mostly

undertaken in urban areas. People both from urban and rural areas take part and establish social and cultural relations.

7. Industrial relations: Industries are mostly located in urban areas or at the periphery of urban areas. But they receive raw materials from rural areas and labourers from both urban areas and surrounding areas. Thus people commute from rural to urban areas or vice-versa. Daily movement establishes a mutual relationship between rural and urban areas. The zone or belt, where commuters move is known as commuter belt.

10.10 Challenges of City Life

Living in a city can be very complex to be honest. Here are some of the challenges u can face when living in a city.

1. If you are not very good at conversing with people, living in a city will be hard. You have to constantly deal with various types of people. If not, city life is really hard.

2. Air Pollution: Air Pollution too is becoming a big challenge. Living in city means living between cars and their smoke. If you are not used to a life where you have to constantly deal with smoke and dust, Living in a city is challenging.

3. Joblessness:

   ❖ High levels of unemployment and underemployment

   ❖ Urban labour markets are incapable of absorbing the expanding number of job seekers

   ❖ The result of urban poverty and social exclusion

   ❖ Creates an informal sector

   Housing Problems:

   ❖ In mega cities of the developing world, population growth is always ahead of housing supply. This create slums or squatter settlements.

   ❖ For example, 50% of Mexico City's population live in slums or squatter settlements.

   ❖ Strategies for meeting housing needs include upgrading projects and core housing projects.

Water and Sewerage Problems:

❖ Sewerage facilities are often ancient and inadequate. For example, only 11% of Manila's population are connected to the sewerage system.

❖ Providing the infrastructure for the collection and treatment of solid and liquid waste is often beyond the resources of many mega cities.

Health and Nutrition Problems: Increased poverty leads to a decline in living standards and leads to infectious and parasitic diseases, deficiencies in the physical environment.

10.11 Summary

India is an ancient civilization and towns and bigger urban centers were in existence since time immemorial. Cities have come up as centers of commercial activities, political capitals and pilgrimage centers . However, modern cities had come up in the colonial period when nmodern business and commercial activities began and modern modes of transport became available. The rate of urbanization then accelerated first after independence ,and again , in the 1990s ,under the impact of globalization. Rapid economic development, better infrastructural facilities, growth of private sector and employment opportunities in cities facilitate urbanization everywhere and India is no exception. There are thus many push and pull factors to drive people out of rural areas and to bring them to the cities. Rapid and unplanned urbanization often have negative impacts on the environment and rural-urban migration poses big challenges to city life.

10.12 Model Questions

A. Write Short Notes on the Following.: **(5 Marks Each)**

1. Challenges of city life

2. Rural urban continuum

3. Nature of traditional cities

4. Characteristics of a city.

B. Long Questions: **(10 Marks Each)**

1. Explain the challenges of city life in India.

2. Examine the history of the rise of the urban industrial cities.

3. What is urbanization. What are its impact.

4. Explain the nature of urbanization in India.

5. Explain the nature of rural-urban continuum in the context of India.

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Unit 11 ❑ Industry and Labour

Structure

11.0 Objectives

- This unit examines the characteristics of industrialization in India.

- It also looks into the emergence of working class and its movements in India.

- It also discusses the history of working class movements in the colonial period in a nut shell.

11.1 Introduction

Society refers to a group of people who live in a definable community and share the same culture. On a boarder scale, society consists of people and institutions around us, our shared beliefs and our cultural ideas. Typically, more-advanced societies also share a political authority. The term society has been derived from the Latin word 'socius' which means a companion, association or fellowship.

Sociologist Gerhard Lenski (1924-) defined societies in terms of their technological sophistication. So, societies with rudimentary technology depends on fluctuations of their environments, while industrialized societies have more control over the impact

of their surroundings and thus develop different cultural features. This distinction is so important that sociologist generally classify societies along a spectrum of their level of industrialization from preindustrial to industrial to postindustrial. Under pre industrialized societies are hunting and gathering societies, pastoral societies began around 12,000 years ago; under developing societies we can see horticultural societies emerged between 10,000 and 12,000 years ago, agricultural societies. Then comes industrial societies emerged in 1700, also known as modern societies.

11.2 Nature of Industrial Society

One of the major characteristics of our modern era is that we witness a qualitative change in our economic and industrial life. There have some massive development in communication and the electronic reproduction of sound, image and text. Television is central to this rapid change over. All this has not come overnight. It was some time during 18th century that there came industrial revolution in Europe. It was steam power and steam engine which gave emergence to modern society. (Doshi)

Before coming up of modernity in the west, there was renaissance followed by enlightenment. Both these movements stood for social justice. For an ordinary person, modernity means industrialization. It means technology, invention, mass production and innovations.

One of the feature of traditional civilization, was that most people were engaged in working on land. By contrast, an important feature of industrial societies today is that a large majority of employed population work in factories, offices or shop rather than in agriculture. (Giddens) Traditions gradually got weakened at the hands of modernity. Religion and religious practices received the first blow, follows by the death of monarchy and feudalism. It is for the first time in traditional societies that the importance of cities increased. There were cities in these societies bit they were the centre of administration and pilgrimage. The new cities which emerged from industrialization and urbanization.(Doshi) Large scale organisation, such as business corporation or government agencies come to influence the lives of virtually everyone. Most jobs are to be found new job opportunities are created

Major changes were brought in political systems rather than developing new political systems which are more advanced and intensive or differed substantially from the traditional form of political systems, which have been developed due to modernization. In traditional societies, political authorities were the monarchs and

emperors had little direct influence on the customs and habits of most of their subjects, who lived in fairly self contained local villages.

Industrialization also facilitated transportation and communication making a more integrated 'national' community. The industrial societies were the first nation states to come into existence. Nation states are political communities, divided from each other by clearly delimited border rather than the vague frontier areas that used to separate traditional states.(Giddens)

The application of industrial technology has by no means been limited to peaceful processes of economic development. From the earliest phases of industrialization, modern production process have been put to military use, and this has radically altered ways of waging war, creating weaponry and modes of military organisation much more advanced than those of non- industrial cultures. Together, superior economic strength, political cohesion and military superiority account for the seemingly irresistible spread of western ways of life across the world over the past two centuries.(Giddens)

Another perspective of modernity besides urban, industrial and democratically created nation states, transport and communication is of development and progress. The founding theorists of sociology are the production of industrialization and modernization. Emile Durkheim (1858), Max Weber (1864) and Karl Marx (1841) belonged to the same European generation. They all witnessed the consequences of modernity.

Durkheim in his argument says that in the long run modernity would create differentiation would help the mechanical society to transform into organic society. Social density and social contract, in the long run, would hold society together. Weber has a different interpretation for industrialization and modernity. To him, the industrial society would be a bureaucratic rational society. Marx was of the view that ultimate progress lies in the attainment of socialism.(Doshi)

Some of the important processes which led to the development of modernity are (Doshi)

❖ Enlightenment (the age of reason): according to social scientists society can be explained scientifically.

❖ Hegemony of profiteering: industrialization had come with the ideology of capitalism. Profiteering intensified the desire for building capital empires.

- ❖ Political revolutions: there was decline of monarchy and feudalism due to French and industrial revolution.

- ❖ Intersection of national and international conditions and processes.

- ❖ Birth of counter culture of socialism to capitalism

- ❖ The triumph of liberalism

Thus, the idea of modernity is intimately tied to the development of Europe. In its initial stage it developed in art. It was Weber who separated it from religion and metaphysics.(Doshi)

11.3 History of Labour Movement and Industrialization

Industrialization in India had began during 1850s when the English East India Company operated few workshops .But the insurrection of 1857 had posed a major challenge to colonial rule. The railway introduced during this time was considered as the harbinger of modern industry in India. In 1862, the British Govt. had formulated "stores purchase policy" for purchasing limited and selected goods from local industries. But the most difficulty at this time was the availability of labour force. During the latter half of 19th century, the labour policy of the govt. had found several ways to compel workers to provide labour for a fixed period of time.

Worksmen Breach of Contract Act (1859) was the first labour law in India. It made the breach of contract of employment an offence. Employees and Workmen (Dispute) Act (1860) rendered workers liable to punishment under the Indian Penal Code for breaching contract of employment. The Transport of Native Labourers Act (1863) of Bengal allowed the private contractors to recruit and transport labourers for plantation works.

a) 1881 to 1900 : During this period, textile industries had developed in India. In 1854, there was only one textile mill but in 1881, there were 47 mills and by 1900 there were 193 textile mills. During this time, the British Parliament passed the Factories Act. Under the Indian Factories Act (1881) the working hours of children were regulated, provisions were extended to women and basic safety measures were also introduced. But during this time, there were no trade unions. Organizations such as the Servants of India Society had absorbed the Indian labour force into anti-British movement?

b) 1900 to 1913 : The most important aspect of this phase was the establishment of mining industries. The enactment of Mines Act (1901) andInland Emigration Act (1901) ensured the safety, welfare and security of labourers.

c) 1914 to 1938 : During this time the industries had spread out in many centers of India and expanded in terms of productivity, technology and international markets. The wartime requirement of Britain had disrupted the communication between Britain and India which had consolidated Indian industries to greater self confidence among the capitalists and rapid growth of Indian working class. Labour welfare was introduced by Works'men Compensation Act (1923). In 1936 Payment of Wages Actwas passed which was only confined to manufacturing industries.

d) 1939 to 1945 : The needs of the war resulted in the development of industries in India. The state regulation of industries through licenses was established, which was known as "License Quota Permit Raj". The Bombay Plan of 1944 was the blueprint of Indian industrial development which underlined the importance of govt. policies directed towards not only safeguarding industries by licensing also to protect labour by ensuring fair wages and reasonable working conditions. The Defense of Indian Rules contained the provisions for reconciling industrial disputes, prevention of strikes and lockouts and reference of disputes to arbitration and to set up regular machinery for adjusting disputes.

e) First Five Years Plan : Industrial adjudication came during this period. Principles of fixed wage and job classification were established. The first Pay Commission was appointed to recommend fixed wages for civil servants. During this time, many Industrial Training Institutes were established.

f) Second Five Years Plan : This period envisaged large investment in public sector in order to lay foundation of industrial infrastructure and mobilization of resources. Employees Provident Fund Act (1952) was passed in this period which required both the employer and employee to contribute 8.33% of wages as statutory fund. The Second Five Years Plan undertook numerous schemes to stabilize labour market like Employment Market Information Programme, National Classification of Occupation and Vocational Guidance programme etc. Finally, the Employment Exchange Act was enacted under provision of which notifications of all vacancies were made compulsory.

11.4 History of Working Class Movement in India.

Post-War colonized India, the advent of Industrialization lead to the emergence and growth of manufacturing and Industries with western technology. Started with building of Railways linking Calcutta, Bombay, Baroda and Raniganj (coal mining center) spread to first textile mill in Bombay, Jute factory in Calcutta, Iron and Steel plant in Jamshedpur and large scale tea plantations. Economists, Socioloists and Plannists have classified non-agricultural workers into organized and unorganized or formal or informal workers, where unorganized could not be sufficiently explained by them. Earlier workers were determined by their condition and capital but now their conditions are being determined by wages, security and other laws provided by the firm. Meanwhile, workers in organized sector can be divided into white and blue collared workers. Strikes by industrial sector workers started in the nineteenth century, Bombay strike marked the beginning followed by strikes by jute, textile, plantation, railway workers on Calcutta, Ahmedabad, Bombay and Madras.

Some works by researchers who sought to study working class movements of colonial period are discussed. Panchanan Saha analyse the cause and effect of strikes; how parties help organising workers to lead the strike and how the government dissolves them. Colonial Bombay saw the rise of working class movements made way beside the bourgeoisie nationalist movement. The main concern was, "To what extent did the workers, particularly in Bombay Presidency constitute a working class, which at a political level was at a position to operate independently from the upper classes?" (Georges Lieten, 1983). Eaman Murphy studies the strikes in southern part of India focusing on how worker's origin and recruitment pattern. Rajni Bakshi's study saw role of different leaders and political parties in the strike. His works were also used for further studies.

Mukhopadhyay, Joshi, Ghosh and Datta covered various industrial movements and classified them onto 3 categories: (1) descriptive and statistical accounts (2) analysis from the management's perspective and (3) analysis from socio-economic and political perspective.

Ramaswamy typified strikes based on issues involved, into six categories; (1) caused by the dispute over rules; (2) the wildcat strike, which is without the sanction of the union; (3) the rite-of-passage strike which is for demanding recognition of the union; (4) the inter union dispute; (5) the tedium-relieving strike; (5) the political strike; and (6) the bread and-butter strike.

Strikes in India's factories began to take place initially in an unorganized way since the 1870s. In 1870, one of the first strikes occurred in 1877 at a Nagpur mill (empress Mills) over wages. Then a series of strikes (25 strikes) took place in quick succession between1882-1890. On many occasions the main reason of such strikes was not solely the workers' professional interst, but for nationalist causes as well. For example, in 1908 workers did participate in the six day political mass strike in Bombay in protesr of Tilak's imprisonment. The workers' awakening of their oppression and rights opened the door for modern labour movement in India in 1918 the entire textile mills sector was swept by the demands and movements of the workers. R.P. Dutt has reported (India Today, p. 406) that in the first six months of 1920 there were 120 strikes involving about 150 million workers. Starting from the year 1921 and upto 1945 thousands of strikes and lock-outs took place involving crores of workers altogether.

. Wage issue indicates more pay against wage cuts, non-payment on sundays and gazetted holidays, dearness allowance etc.Bonus being another important reason along with more holidays and better infrastructure facilities. Women industrial workers have their own additional issues related to discrimination like victimisation, 'manhandling by workers, ill-treatment along with the other set of issues which all workers face. Inter-union and intra-union rivalry triggers agitation turning into strikes.

Infering from a new field of study, Industrial sociology, workers are merely reduced to objects catering to material needs, having no power over any means of production.

11.5 Summary

Under the colonial rule the Indian labour class movement steadfastly organized itself to be free of both bourgeois oppression and colonial control. Thus it became the symbol of national emancipation and freedom from capitalistic control. The Indian working class had emerged in the second half of the nineteenth century due to the emergence of various modern industries and modern means of transport. The early nationalists had combined the working class agenda with their nationalist programmes; but trade unions started to be formed since the second decade of the lasr century. In 1926, the British Government had passed the trade union act for recognizing trade unions as legal organizations. Within a short period after that the control of the trade unions was taken over by the newly established Communist Party of India. The labour unions worked relentlessly for increase of wages, improvement of work environment and basic amenities, prevention of child labour, equal wage for equal pay benefits, etc.

11.6 Model Questions

A. Write short notes on the following. (5 marks)

1. Five years plan

2. Industrial society.

3. Post Industrial Society.

4. Industrialization.

5. Impact of industrialization.

B. Long questions. (10 marks).

1. Explain the nature of Industrial society.

2. Analyse the history of the working class movement in India.

3. Explain the nature of working class movement in India.

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Unit 12 ❏ Tribe : Profile and Location

Structure

12.0 Objectives

After you have read this unit you should be able to describe

- The Definition of Tribe.

- Name of different Tribes in India

- Distinctive features of Tribal community

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- ● Geographical distribution of Indian Tribes

- ● Problems of Tribal community

- ● Solution to the Tribal problems

12.1 Introduction

The Indian society comprises of individuals belonging to different castes, creeds, races, ethnicities, religious groups and socio-economic backgrounds. Individuals practice their own traditions, cultures and norms. The distribution of the Indian society is on the basis of urban, rural and tribal areas. India is a country where people have come to obtain numerous characteristics, based on region, language, religion and so forth. There are many aspects within the Indian society that create a linkage between individuals belonging to diverse backgrounds. The main purpose of this module is to understand Indian society, with regards to, rural and tribal characteristics, factors contributing to the unity within the Indian society and structure of the Indian society. Primarily the research paper focuses upon the traditional aspects of the Indian society, but in the present existence, there have been changes with the advent of technology and use of modern and innovative techniques and methods.

The tribals are the autochthonous people of the land who are believed to be the earliest settlers in Indian Peninsula. They are generally called the adivasis, implying original inhabitants. A tribe is a homogeneous and self contained unit without any hierarchical discrimination. Each tribe enjoyed equal status. Each tribe had its own system of administration. There was decentralization of authority among the tribes. In this unit, an outline of the Indian tribes, particularly their geographical classification, linguistic classification, racial, economic and cultural divisions is given.

Tribal people form a major segment of the world population. They are found all over the world. They are called by different names such as 'primitive', 'tribal,' 'indigenous,' 'aboriginal,' 'native,' and so on. India has a large number of tribal people. According to the census of 2001, India is the home to the largest tribal population in the world, a total 104281034 tribal people live in India. In India indigenous people are known as "Tribal people" or "Tribals", they are at the lowest rung of the social hierarchy; they are the poorest and the most marginalized, oppressed and deprived people in the country (Nathan and Kekar, 2004; Rath, 2006). Tribes of this land are heterogeneous and diversified in respect of size of the population, life style, culture and language. National Tribal Policy (Govt. Of India) 2006, identifies 698 tribal communities in

India. Scheduled Tribe communities in India are found in different parts of the country. They occupy nearly 15% of the total land of the country and basically they live in the forest and hilly areas, though some of them also live in the plains. On the basis of ecological, social, economical, administrative and ethnic factors they are divided into five regional categories (Tribal Community Report 2014) such as 1. Himalayan Region. 2. Middle Region. 3. Southern Region. 4. Western Region. 5. Island Region. According to the census of 2011, 5.79% of the total population of West Bengal is Scheduled Tribes and 40 different types of tribal community reside in West Bengal. Most of them are found in the Southern, Western and Northern part of the state.

12.2 Who are the Tribes?

According to The Oxford English Dictionary the word 'tribe' is derived from the Latin term 'tribus' which was applied to the three divisions of the early people of Rome. The term however has gone through a lot of changes. It meant a political unit consisting of a number of clans. A tribe occupied a definite geographical area. Permanent settlement gave a geographical identity to a tribe. For that reason, tribes were often named after the area. Our country is named after a tribe called 'Bharata.' Even today states like Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura are named after the Mizo, Naga and Tripuri tribes respectively.

Some western anthropologists and sociologists argued that the tribes of India belonged to three stocks-the Negritos, the Mongoloids and the Mediterranean. The Negritos are believed to be the earliest inhabitants of the Indian Peninsula, but they have almost disappeared. Some believe that they are still found among the tribes of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, known as the Onges, Great Andamanese, the Sentinelese and the Peniyans. The Mongoloid race is represented by the tribal people in the sub-Himalayan region. They may be divided into two categories, namely the Palaeo Mongoloids and the Tibeto Mongoloids. The Palaeo Mongoloids are represented by the tribes living in Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Manipur. The Tibeto Mongoloids are represented by the tribes living in Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. They are believed to have migrated from Tibet. The Mediterranean people form a bulk of the tribal population and are generally known as the Dravidians. Verma says: "Dravidians are again divided into two parts [groups]-Kolarians who speak a dialect called Mundari, and the Dravidians proper". It is believed that with the advent of the Aryans, there was a protracted struggle between the Aryansand the Dravidians, then referred to as the 'Dasyus.' The conquered Dravidians were reduced to a servile status

and regarded as 'Sudras.' A section of the Dravidians who escaped defeat and did not surrender to the Aryans continued to maintain their independent existence in the remote hills and forests. They are believed to be "the forerunners of the various tribes in India"

The term 'tribe' has also been variously understood as 'nation', 'society', 'race' etc. A tribe is ideally characterized as a socially homogeneous, non-hierarchical and non-differentiated, un-stratified unit; having its own dialect, political and cultural institutions. So we have described the tribe as a society with a political, linguistic and somewhat vaguely defined cultural boundary; further as a society based upon kinship where social stratification is absent. But in contemporary India, the 'tribe' of an anthropologist's ideal type can be rarely found, and so some scholars have preferred to consider it as a thing of the past and instead drawn our attention to tribes in transition (Bose, 1981: 191). Beteille for example observes that, like so many definitions of social categories, tribe is also the definition of an ideal type. In India hardly any of the tribes exist as a separate society. They have been absorbed, in varying degrees, into the wider society of India (1977: 13).

12.3 Popular Names of Indian Tribes

The tribes of India live in the forest hills and naturally isolated regions and are known as a rule by different names, meaning either the people of forest and hill or the original inhabitants, and so on. The popular names are:Vanyajati (castes of forest), Vanvasi (inhabitants of forest), Pahari (hill-dwellers),Adimjati (original communities), Adivasi (first settlers), Janjati (folk people),Anusuchit janjati (scheduled tribe) and so on. Among all these tribes the term Adivasi is the most popular term. In India, tribes are generally called adivasis, implying original inhabitants. The ancient and medieval Indian literature mention a large number of tribes living in India. Before the introduction of the caste system during the Brahminic Age, people were divided into various tribes. Government of India has specified 427 communities and has included them in the schedule of tribes. These tribes are known as scheduled tribes. They are entitled to special protection and priviledges under the constitution of India. Numerically, the three most important tribes are the Gonds, the Bhils and the Santhals, each having a population of more than 30 lakh. Next to them are the Minas, the Mundas, the Oraons each having a population of more than 5 lakh. Then there are 42 tribes each having a population between one and five lakh. The tribal people of India, who come under the category of Scheduled Tribes (ST's) in terms of the provisions of the constitution

of India, constitutes 8.2 percent of the population of the country according to 2001 census.

12.4 Distinctive Features of Tribal Community

The characteristics of the tribal society have been stated as follows:.

Tribal people generally live in forests and hilly areas. They usually have a geographically well demarcated territory. They earn their living by being dependent upon the natural resources on a large scale. They live by hunting and gathering of fruits, tubers and edible roots. The only traces left by the tribal people of the Palaeolethic Age are the stones that they made use of on the surface of many parts of the Deccan (Von Furer-Haimendorf, Christoph, 1982). These individuals were dependent upon the forests on a large scale for meeting their needs and requirements. The tribal people do not possess much assets, their belongings consists primarily of tools, instruments and some clothing.

Amongst the tribal communities, there is no existence of financial economy. They usually practice the barter system. Economically they are self-sufficient and are able to sustain their needs. Their economy is based on the subsistence level, where there is no surplus. They make use of primitive technical methods and do not possess awareness regarding the usage of modern technology and innovative methods. The barter system is when goods are exchanged for goods, for instance, when they give one product, they obtain the other one. Through this system, the tribal communities are able to sustain their living by trading commodities for commodities.

Tribal communities have their own language and not any kind of script. The communication amongst the tribal communities takes place on the basis of their own language. The tribal people enjoy a strong sense of freedom and personal independence. They are free to migrate and transfer from one place to another. They are not bound by any rules and regulations and have their own customs, traditions and cultures. The differences between them are characterised by material and intellectual development (Von Furer-Haimendorf, Christoph, 1982). They may differ from each other on the basis of cultures, norms, values and practices.

The tribal communities have their own political system. There are two kinds of political systems that are found within the tribal communities. These are both stateless and state. In the earlier period, there was prevalence of the stateless system, it is when there is not any tribal chief. In the stateless system, the law and order within the

community was managed through family and kinship ties. The head of the family was responsible and authority was bestowed upon him. Later on, came the state system, when the tribals nominated and elected their own chiefs. In the present existence, this autonomy is not available and they have become part of the local administration.

The tribal communities have their own religion. Religious beliefs are considered to be imperative amongst them and they worship their own deities. Their forms of religions are known as animism, which means worshipping of the souls or the ancestors, animatism, which worshipping of any non-living object, such as a stone or wood, totemism, which means worshipping of the tree or any animal, as they possess the belief that their ancestor has assumed the form of a tree, and naturism, in this, they worship objects of nature, such as, river, stream, sun, moon, forest, lake, water bodies, natural resources and so forth. These individuals possess this belief that worshipping of the natural resources will make their living productive.

The basic unit of the tribal communities is the nuclear family. The families consist of husband, wife and their children. For carrying out day to day operations of the households and other concerns, husband and wife are equal partners with equal rights. This equality of status means, that family may live with either the husband's or the wife's tribal group. The men usually consult women in case of making of any kinds of decisions, they usually involve women to express their ideas and give suggestions (Von Furer-Haimendorf, Christoph, 1982).The tribal individuals possess a strong sense of belonging to their family and community, they possess this viewpoint that they are the sons of the soil and possess a strong ethnic identity.

The tribal individuals are dependent upon the forests and the natural resources to meet their nutrition and health care requirements. In case of illnesses and diseases, they usually obtain medicinal roots and plants from the forests and provide cure to their illnesses and health problems. Proper medical and health care facilities are lacking amongst the tribal communities. Their abilities to get involved in indigenous medicine and magical practices have been productive in the past. But in the present existence, the prevention and cure of illnesses and diseases require specialized medical treatment and consultation with professionals. The tribal communities are gradually possessing awareness regarding advanced and innovative medical and health care facilities.

There has been prevalence of agriculture amongst the tribal communities. The kind of agriculture that is prevalent amongst them is known as primitive agriculture. It is known mainly as shifting or slash and burn cultivation. In the present existence,

these individuals are leaving these types of agricultural practices. The tribal communities of south India, depended to a great extent upon slash and burn cultivation. The cultivation of products such as, various types of millets, maize, pulses and vegetables were common amongst them. The dwellings of the tribal communities consisted of thatched huts during rains and cold weather and in hot weather conditions, they lived in camps in the open, under overhanging rocks or in temporary leaf shelters (Von Furer-Haimendorf, Christoph, 1982).

12.5 Geographical Distribution of the Tribes

The tribes of India, on the basis of geography of India and tribal demography can be classified regionally. Guha (1951, 1955) demarcated three tribal zones. They are (i) northern and northeastern area, (ii) the Central belt and (iii) the Peninsular India. Majumdar and Madan (1956) also refer to these zones and present a somewhat similar distribution. They have called them Northern and North-Eastern Zone, the Central or Middle Zone, and the Southern Zone. Dube (1960) has classified the geographical regions of the tribals into four zones, the North and North-Eastern Zone, the Middle Zone, the South Zone and the West Zone. Again Roy Burman (1971) divided the tribal communities living in different regions into five territorial groups. Taking into consideration the geographical, ecological, social, economic, administrative, ethnic, and racial factors, Vidyarthi and Rai (1976) proposed a four-fold geographical region along with one distinct sub-region of the islands. These are:

a) **North Zone :** This zone covers Himachal Pradesh, Punjab, sub-Himalayan Uttar Pradesh, Bihar. The prominent tribes here are Khasa, Tharu, Bhoksa, Bhotias, Gujjars and the Jaunsaris. Khasas are a polyandrous tribe. Bhotias make carpets and are involved in the Indo-china border trade. The Gujjars are a pastoral tribe. The major problems of the tribes of this zone are inaccessibilty, lack of communication, poverty, illiteracy and land alienation.

b) **North-Eastern Zone :** This zone includes seven north-eastern states, and the major tribal groups here are Nagas, Khasi, Garo, Mishing, Miri, Karbi and the Apatauis. Ecological degradation because of shifting cultivation and inaccessibility due to lack of communication facilities are two major problems of these tribes. Because of a high degree of isolation, the tribes of this sector have not really shared history with the mainstream Indians and have instead shared history with the neighbouring communities. This explains why there is an element of hostility of these tribes with the mainstream.

c) Central Zone : This zone has maximum concentration of tribal population. It stretches from southern MadhyaPradesh to South Bihar across northern Orissa. The major tribes lying in this zone are theSanthals, HO, Baiga, Abhujanaria, Muria, Munda and Birhor. The major problems facedby the tribes of this region are land alienation, indebtedness. Among the tribes of this region, the Santhals have discovered a script of their own, called ole chiki. Baigas are a prominent shifting cultivation tribe. Birhors are a very backward tribe of this region and because of extreme backwardness and no secure means of livelihood, they are threatened with extinction.

d) Southern Zone : This zone comprises the Nilgiris together with the adjoining hilly regions in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. It is the smallest, the most backward and the most isolated tribal communities on the mainland. Tribes of this region are Toda, Koya, Chenchu and Allars. Todas are a pastoral people who practise buffalo herding. Allars are cave dwellers, who also live on tree tops. Chencus are a very backward tribe who survive mainly on hunting- gathering. The major problem of these tribes are shifting cultivation, economic backwardness, isolation, lack of communication and threat of extinction of langauges.

e) Eastern Zone : This zone includes West Bengal, Bihar and Orissa with tribes such as Paraja, Kondhas, Bondas, Bhuniya, Gadabas, Bhuinyas and Saoras. The major problems of the tribes of this zone are economic backwardness, exploitation by forest officials and contractors, land alienation, prevalence of disease and displacement due to industrial projects.

f) Western Zone : Rajasthan and Gujarat are included in this zone. Tribes which are found here are Bhils, Garasiya and Meenas. Among them, Meenas are a very advanced and well educated tribe.

g) Island Region : Andaman and Nicobar islands, lakshadweep and Daman and Diu included in this zone. Great Andamanese, Santinelese, Jarwas, Onges, Nicobaris and Shampen are tribes of this region. Some of these tribes are extremely backward and are struggling to come out of the stone age mode of livelihood. Most of these tribes are classified as minor tribes which face the threat of extinction. Apart from the problem of survival, prevalence of disease and malnutrition are some other problems of the tribes of this region.

The basic strategy of the government for the tribal region is aimed at providing protection to the tribals and bringing about their economic development. The tribal strategy initiated during the Fifth five year plan is a comprehensive, well-knit and

integrated programme. Its objective is elimination of exploitation of tribes, protection of their socio-economic development, bridging the gap in development vis-a-vis other areas, improvement of quality of life etc.

12.6 Problems in Tribal Society

Over the last 20 - 25 years, the tribal community has been incessantly trying to draw the attention of the world's leading power blocks to save them from perennial miseries. The World Health organisation (WHO) has emphasised that indigenous people have higher rates of infant mortality, lower life expectancy and more cases of chronic illness than the non indigenous populations in their home countries. It is argued that the indigenous people are among the poorest of the poor. They suffer from extreme discrimination and lead a life of misery and destitution. The development discourse, therefore, needs to concentrate on finding an effective strategy to mitigate these crises. Some of the major problems which present day tribal people face can be categorised as problems of poverty, health problems and social problems like lack of education. However, it is more pertinent to look at each categories in greater details by carefully taking into account the nuances of a problem.

It is observed that certain types of tribals emerged with their contact with the outsider. Before the Muslim rule, tribals lived fairly in isolation, but during the muslim rule process of revenue collection started. However, the Muslim rulers did not interfere with the tribal customs and traditions. Exploitative contact started during the British rule. This was found mainly because of three reasons: (a) The colonizers wanted to rule over the tribal land (b) they wanted to syphon off resources from tribal areas, which were rich in minerals resources (c) they wanted to preach Christianity under the pretext of rationality. In the post British rule, the non tribals started exploiting the indigenous people in various ways. The basic problems faced by the tribal community in the 21st century are as follows :

12.6.1. Land Alienation:

Land as a prime resource has been a source of problem in tribal life because of two related reasons, first, dependency, i.e. tribal dependency on land and second, improper planning from government agencies. Tribal people in India can be classified on the basis of their economic pursuits in the following ways: Foragers, Pastoral, Handicraft makers, Agriculturists, Shifting hill cultivators, Labourers and Business pursuers. All of these occupations involve direct or indirect dependency on land. Land

rights and changes in rules go unnoticed. Tribal people are unaware or are made unaware about the rules which govern India's land rights. They do not have access to land records, not even the Record of Rights. This lends them to a higher probability of getting exploited, by the non-tribals and in some cases by the local officials. Wherever lands are given yet the pattas are not given, or pattas handed over yet the land is not shown. There is a discrepancy in demarcation of Scheduled Areas. In some places it is village wise and in some places it is area wise. There should be a clear village-wise demarcation of the Scheduled Area to avoid ambiguities and exploitation of tribal lands. Some of the tribal villages surrounding the Scheduled Areas are administratively called the Tribal Sub-Plan Areas, where land alienation is high and has numerous pending cases.

Land alienation within tribes is a serious problem. A special protection should be provided for the local tribes by a process of categorization of tribes both for the purpose of preventing land alienation from lesser-developed tribes, and for a more equal distribution of reservations and other constitutional provisions. As commoners are difficult to manage, tribal people have frequently been denied from their rights over land. Their compulsion led to a situation where tribal people purchased seeds and other components from local money lenders against loan which ultimately caused chronic indebtedness and displacement from land. The unsatisfactory state of land records contributed a lot to the problem of land alienation. The tribal people were never legally recognized as owners of the lands which they cultivated. The second form of land alienation is reported to have taken place due to 'benami' transfers. Another form of land alienation is related to the leasing or mortgaging of the land. To raise loans for various needs they have to give their land as mortgage to the local moneylenders or to the rich farmers. Encroachment is another form of dispossessing them of their lands and this is done by the new entrants in all the places where there were no proper land records. Bribing the local Patwari for manipulating the date of settlement of land disputes, ante-dating etc., are resorted to claim the tribal lands.

However, being the natural owners of forests and its adjoining lands the tribal people are being deprived of their rights to own them. They have been relegated from their earlier 'self-reliant' status to a 'dependent' one. Coupled with the exploitation by the non-tribes, the State legislations also proved detrimental to their interests. Therefore, to understand the root causes behind the land alienation process of the tribal communities, its relationship with the changes in the socio-economic structures have to be understood properly.

12.6.2 Bonded Labour :

Slavery convention (1926) and International Labour Organisation (ILO) (1930) argue that forced labour, bonded labour, etc. are to be defined on the basis of labour and services extracted from a person as a penalty where the person was not involved voluntarily. United Nations Organization sees bonded labour as a special kind of forced labour (1956). However in India bonded labour is characteristically more complex. Major reasons behind bonded labour are link between caste,social structure and bondage, traditional feudal social relations and bonded labour. Small scale and localised quarrying and mining invite labourers from nomadic tribes and rural poor. They are irregularly paid and they remain bonded without proper work place protection. Instances are reported from Haryana, U.P, M.P, Rajasthan, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

India has a strong and substantial Bonded Labour System Abolition act of 1976. It recognises: a) overlap between forced and bonded labour, b) contract labour and interstate migration issues, c) embeddedness within social customs. However, since states showed reluctance, it is challenging to identify bonded labours and accordingly, the Supreme Court has tasked National Human Rights Commission for monitoring the implementation of the act.

12.6.3 Issues Related to Health :

Malnutrition, as expected, is the most common health problem among tribal people. In addition, communicable diseases such as tuberculosis, malaria, and STDs are major public health problems. Some tribal groups are also at high risk for sickle cell anemia. Generally tribal diets are seen to be deficient in protein, iron, iodine, and vitamins. According to the NFHS-3survey 47% of tribal women are having chronic energy deficiency (CED) compared to 35%among the general population. The most common diseases seen among them are respiratory tract infections and diarrheal disorders. 21% of children suffer at least two bouts of diarrhea every year and 22% suffer from at least two attacks of respiratory infections. Tribal population accounts for 25% of all malaria cases occurring in India and 15% of all falciparum cases like intestinal helminthiasis or worm infection is widely prevalent among tribal children (up to 50% in Orissa and 75% in MP).Skin infections such as tinea and scabies are seen among tribal people due to poor personal hygiene. Sexually transmitted diseases are relatively more common (7.2% prevalence of syphilis among Kolli hills tribals of Tamil Nadu). The prevalence of tuberculosis is high, especially in Orissa. Sickle cell trait prevalence varies from 0.5% to 45%, disease prevalence is around 10%. It is

mostly seen among the tribes of central and southern India, not reported in North-East; the prevalence of tobacco use is 44.9% among tribal men and 24% among tribal women.

Those who live in remote places and are shy of mixing with the larger community are often the worst sufferers of health hazards. The per capita health expenditure among tribal is higher than regular population. The available health infrastructure, i.e. the number of health care centres, professionals, and the distance is considered to be the determinants of the quality of health care facilities available. However, many recent studies have shown that sometimes even if health care facilities are available, tribal people tend to depend on their traditional system. The World Health Report (2000) has put stress on the importance of healthy delivery and in healthy outcomes, also stressing on the awareness of the generation about hygiene and available health infrastructure. The role of indirect intervention was removal of chronic poverty and a culture change, which was thought to be the prime factor for improvement in health and hygiene.

At the time of independence the government system of health care was wholly urban centred. The rural areas depended on traditional faith-healers and voluntary agencies run by the missionaries. The importance lies in making health service facilities available at micro level with more emphasis on this section. As a result the health issues are dealt by clubbing them together with nutrition, sanitation, family planning, health education, awareness generation etc. The village community health workers chosen by village people now follow a decentralized agenda.

12.6.4 Education :

Traditionally tribal communities have undergone drastic changes due to large scale migration, encroachment by outsiders and increasing vulnerability of the resources on which they have traditionally depended. Though many measures like scheduling of tribal areas, increasing land transfer and recognition of the rights over resources is encouraged by the Government of India. Yet, these people are facing problems like land alienation, displacement, indebtedness and bonded labour. Many of the problems are rooted in their increasing attachment with dominant culture and lack of basic competence in education. Nehru advocated for adopting a non-isolation strategy for the tribes, but failed to build capacity for them to cope with challenges put forth by modern culture. The capacity building initiatives quite clearly must involve a high emphasis on the education sector, i.e. education for tribal population to gain the

power and self reliance and to cope with and transform their material reality. The universalization of primary education in India since 1950 is emphasised but remains underperformed. In recent decades a number of incentives are provided, e.g. Sarva Siksha Mission in 2003 - providing elementary education to all children in the age group of 6 - 14 by the year 2010. Mid-day meal scheme of 2001, provides mid-day meal to school going children and has dramatically increased the enrollment rate. However, in the 9th plan special provisions including pre and post matric scholarship and hostel facilities are initiated exclusively for tribal students..

12.7 Solutions to the Problems of Tribal Community

Various solutions have been presented for dealing effectively with the tribal problems. The tribal problems have been approached from three viewpoints. They are as follows:

a) Assimilation: Assimilation is one of the ways of dealing with the tribal problems. According to this approach, we cannot deal with tribal problems on the basis of tribal culture and life but should change them to fit the frame of new community. According to this solution advocated by the social reformers and voluntary organizations, assisting and encouraging the tribes to assimilate them with the mainstream of national life, can alone permanently solve the tribal problems. The Christian missionaries on the one hand, and the Hindu social reformers like Thakkar Bapa on the other, have been trying to assimilate them into Christian and Hindu community respectively. This approach has its own limitations as complete assimilation by giving up all of their traditional tribal beliefs, practices and ideas is a difficult task. Any attempt to impose the external cultural practices on them, creates in them guilt feelings, confusions and mental conflicts. This solution may even create economic, religious and moral degradation among them.

b) Isolation: Elwin have suggested that they must be kept at a distance from the rest of the society. Keeping them in isolation in some "National Parks" or "reserved areas" would solve two problems: (a) the tribals would be in a position to maintain their independent identity; (b) they would be free from the exploitation of outsiders. The champions of this approach are of the view that sufficient time must be given to the tribal groups to assimilate themselves with the rest of the community. The limitation of this approach is that once they are kept in isolation they are likely to develop vested interests and keep themselves permanently away from others.

c) Integration: The third view, which is actively followed in the recent years, is that of integration. The policy of isolation is neither possible nor desirable, and that of assimilation would mean imposition. Hence integration alone can make available to the tribes the benefits of modern society and yet retain their separate identity. This view recommends the rehabilitation of the tribes on the plains along with the mainstream population, but away from their native places such as hills, mountains, forests, etc. This suggestion has also been criticized as this has often been advocated to further the interests of industrialists and capitalists.

This solution is not appreciated on the ground that it may create economic and moral decadence to those who are separated from their beloved land to plains. Still, the policy of integration which aims at developing a creative adjustment between tribes and non-tribes has been supported by thinkers and writers like Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru in 1957 in his foreword to Verrier Elwin's "The Philosophy for NEFA", has laid down five principles, that is, "Panchasheela", the policy of integration. The tribal "Panchasheela" or five principles as has been enunciated by him are as follows:

(i) Nothing should be imposed on the tribal people. They must be allowed to develop along the lines of their own genius. We should try to encourage in every way their own traditional arts and culture.

(ii) Tribal rights in land and forests should be respected.

(iii) Attempt must be made to train and build up a team of their own people to the work of administration and development. Some technical personnel from outside will be of great help for them in the beginning. But too many outsiders must not be sent to the tribal territory.

(iv) Over-administering the tribal areas or overwhelming them with too many schemes must be avoided. We should not work against their own social and cultural institutions.

(v) The results of the work must be adjudged by the quality of the human character that is evolved and not by statistics or the amount of money spent. The policy of isolation is neither possible nor desirable, and that of assimilation would mean imposition. Hence integration alone can make available to the tribes the benefits of modern society and yet retain their separate identity .The policy of integration which aims at developing a creative adjustment between tribes and non-tribes has been supported by thinkers and writers.

12.8 Linguistic Classification Among Tribes in India

Most of the tribal communities speak non- Aryan languages which are divided into four linguistic families:

(a) Austro-Asiatic - Khasi, Nicobari, Santhali, HO, Mundari

(b) Tibeto-chinese - Bhotia, Lepcha, Abor, Miri, Dafla, Garo, Naga

(c) Dravidian-Korwa, Badaga, Toda, Kui, Kota, Gondi, Maler, Oraon,

(d) Indio-European - Hajong, Bhili.

12.9 Summary

The tribes of different parts of India are passing through an accelerated phase of transformation and have greatly disturbed the equilibrium in the traditional society. As a result of their long and continuous contacts with the regional Hindu castes, many tribal groups have long been assimilated as castes in the regional caste hierarchy. Numerous other tribes have undergone selective acculturation and have added selected traits or features of the regional Hindu castes. In this process, they have failed to occupy any rank in the caste hierarchy. The spread of Christianity through the Western missionaries succeeded in bringing about a marked change in the sacred, social, educational and economic status of the converted tribal groups. In recent years, urbanization and industrialization have brought about revolutionary changes in some parts of tribal India. These have led to the development of communications within the tribal areas and with the outside world, introduced monetized economy, spread formal and modern education, led to the extension of facilities like medical and administrative aids and introduction of advanced technology to exploit the mineral, forest, power and other industrial resources. But the rate of change evidently differs among different types of tribes. Moreover, they have retained the traditional elements of their ways of life, though these are modified to a greater or lesser extent.

12.10 Model Questions

1. Short type question **(5 marks)**

A. Define tribes.

B. Write down the popular names of Indian tribes.

C. Briefly discuss the geographical distribution of Indian tribes.

D. Briefly discuss the economical problems of Indian tribes.

E. Write down the linguistic classification among the Indian tribes.

2. Answer in detail (10 marks)

A. Discuss the major problems faced by Indian tribes.

B. Classify the Indian tribes on regional basis.

C. Discuss the basic features of Indian tribes.

D. Disscuss the major approaches to solve the tribal problems in India.

E. Discuss the major problems and the solution of Indian tribes.

F. Define tribes. Dicuss the major feature of Indian tribes.

G. Discuss the popular names and geographical distribution of Indian tribes.

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Module IV
Socal Groups in India: Urban, Rural & Tribal (II)

Unit 13 ❏ Tribes : Culture, Economy and Polity

Structure

13.0 Objectives

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13.0 Objectives

After you have read this unit you should be able to describe

●   Cultural traits of Indian Tribes

●   Linguistic pattern of Indian tribes

●   Economical structure of Indian Tribes

●   Tribal polity.

13.1 Introduction

The word "tribe" is generally used for a socially cohesive unit, associated with a distinct territory, and considered as politically autonomous. Different tribes have their own cultures, dialects, life styles, social structures, rituals, values, etc. The forest occupies a central position in tribal culture and economy. The tribal way of life is very much dictated by the forest right from birth to death. It is ironical that the poorest people of India are living in the areas of richest natural resources. Historically, tribes have been pushed to corners owing to economic interests of various dominant groups. The tribes are a part of the Indian society and general problems of consciously changing or modernizing Indian society are applicable to them. Before independence, tribes enjoyed an almost untrammeled control over forestland and its produce for their survival. Forest offered fodder for their cattle, firewood to warm their hearths, and above all a vital source of day-to-day sustenance. The wonderful equation between man and nature demolished after independence with the encroachment of rapacious contractors on tribal land and the indiscriminate destruction of forest in the name of development.

13.2 Culture

A tribe is an Indian group which possesses certain qualities and characteristics that make it a unique cultural, social, and political entity. The nature of what constitutes

an Indian tribe and the very nature of tribes have changed considerably over the course of centuries, but certain characteristics have still remained. A tribe is viewed, historically or developmentally, as asocial group existing before the development of, or outside of, states. Total population of Scheduled Tribes is 84,326,240 as per the Census 2001 which accounts for 8.2% of the total population of country. Majority of the Scheduled tribe population live in rural areas and their population is 10.4 % of the total rural population of the country.

It is believed that persons of tribal origin are the earliest among the present inhabitants of our country. The historical study of human civilisation can be possible through the study of tribal Culture. The study of the tribal life will obviously show the way in which human civilisation originated, and may further reveal how the simple way of life of people living in Indian soil became so complex. There has been a continuous interaction between the tribals and non- tribals. As a result, the tribal way of life has been much influenced by their Hindu caste neighbours. In spite of this, they have retained some of the customs and traditions which form the original part of their culture. At this point, we see two things which seem to be in contrast to each other. On the one hand, the tribals are still guided by the principles of their own community and lead a distinct way of life in comparison to their Hindu caste neighbours. On the other hand, there is little difference between the tribals and the non-tribals in the economic way of life, clothing, food habits etc.

13.3 Linguistic Pattern of Indian Tribes

The linguistic map of India and the languages found among the tribes indicate that the Dravidian linguistic family is found in the Dravidian region in South India and in a few pockets of middle India in Chhotanagpur and north-western border near Baluchistan. Another linguistic family, Austro-Asiatic, is found in certain pockets in the north-eastern Himalayan region in Meghalaya, in Nicobar Islands and extensively in middle India and adjoining western India. Tibeto-Chinese is the third language which is traced on the map and is prevalent all along the Himalayan region. The Indo-European language is found in the remaining part of India. All these suggest a linguistic drift from north-western to southern India and again in the pockets of middle India in the case of Dravidian languages. There is much controversy regarding the origin of the Austro-Asiatic language. W.Schmidt named the Munda language as Austro-Asiatic. Hutton opined that the Austro-Asiatic language was brought by the Kolarians through the west end of the Himalayas and by the Mon Khmer speaking people from

the east of the Himalayas. The Tibeto-Burmese language entered India from the north and spread all along the Himalayas. Thus the tribes of India speak different languages in different regions and groups, and can broadly be classified into four main linguistic families. These are

o   Austro-Asiatic Family:

   Mon-Khmer Branch : Khasi and Nicobari

   Munda Branch : Santhali, Kharwari, Ho, Mundari, Gondi, Kharia, Savara, Khond, Gadaba, etc.

o   Tibeto-Chinese Family :

   Siamese-Chinese sub-family:

   Tai group---Khampti, Phakial, etc.

   Tibeto-Burman sub-family:

   Tibeto-Himalayan Branch: Bhotias of Darjeeling

   Western sub-group of Pro-nominalized Himalayan group: Chamba, Lahauli, Swangli, Kanauri,etc.

   Non-Pro-minalized Himalayan Group: Rong or Lepcha, Toto, etc.

   Arunachal Branch: Aka or Hrusso, Abot, Miri, Dafla, Mishmi, etc.

   Assam-Burmese Branch:

   Bara or Bodo Group: Plains Kachari, Dimasa or (Hill) Kachari, Garo, Tripura, etc.

   Naga Group:

   (i) Naga sub-group: Angami, Ao, Sema, Rengma, etc.

   Naga-Bodo sub-group: Kachcha Naga, Kabui Naga, etc.

   (a) Kachin Group: Singpho

   (b) Kuki-Chin Group: Kuki, Paite, Mar, Thadou, Ralte, Lushai, etc

o   Dravidian Family:

   Dravidian group: Korawa, Yerukala, Yarava, Badaga, Toda, Kota, Kurukh or Oraon, Malto or Maler, Kui Kandhi or Khond Gondi, etc.

o   Indo-European Family:

Hajong, Bhili, etc.

13.4 Dress and Ornament

The use of particular dress and ornaments among tribes are important marks of distinction in culture. A particular style of dress immediately indicates a particular culture group, and can be a much more direct mark of distinction than language. Dress and ornaments are important both within and outside tribes. Ornaments and styles of dress are often indicators of an individual's status within a given tribe. To the outside world, they immediately distinguish the tribal from mainstream society. Styles of dress and ornaments are also important between tribes themselves, and particular segments of tribes. Particular ornaments can have very culturally specific meanings among proximal tribes. The preference for particular styles of dress also indicates the degree of influence the outside world has had on a tribe. Many times, the men of a particular tribe will adopt Western-style dress, while the women will maintain traditional styles of dress and ornaments. There are a number of factors that influence this, one of the most important is that men tend to have greater interaction with non-tribal cultures, often going to urban centers for employment, or engaging in trade.

We will now look at some case studies. With the Mal Paharias, we find that those who live closer to the plains have adopted a style of dress influenced by the larger society. Many of the men wear dhotis and lungis, while the women often wear saris and blouses. Women also wear less clothing as the distance increases from the plains. The Mal Paharias do not use much ornamentation. The women often wear glass bangles bought from weekly markets. The lack of tribe-specific ornamentation could indicate simple tribal tradition, or could demonstrate the process of cultural assimilation and erosion. The Bondo people have very specific styles of dress and ornaments. Traditional dress is found among both men and women. The women of the tribe wear a style of dress which is very scanty. The women's ornaments are very ornate. These ornaments consist of a number of bead necklaces and aluminium necklaces and bracelets. The women also shave their heads and wear headbands of glass or beads. In Bondo culture, children are naked until the age of six or seven. The Bondos produce their own clothing on traditional looms from materials gathered from the forest. The men wear a traditional hand woven loincloth. The Bondos express their unique culture through their style of dress. The means of production of clothing and ornaments is

connected with their economic system. Their economy eschews money and is based on the barter system. As compared to the Mal Paharias, the Bondos strongly maintain their culture, which is expressed through both language and dress. A Bondo tribesman is immediately recognizable by the unique style of dress. From these two brief examples it is apparent that maintenance of culture-specific styles of dress and ornamentation is a strong indicator of the vitality of their culture. It also indicates the degree of influence from the outside world on their culture.

13.5 Customs, Environment and Religion

Another central mark of distinction is that of cultural customs, religious beliefs, and relation to the environment. These include everything from marriage customs, music, calendrical festivals, religious ceremonies, and economic systems. The maintenance of rituals and marriage customs often survive longer than other marks of distinction such as language and dress and ornaments. These forms of cultural expression are fundamental to the construction of unique tribal identities. Shared cultural practices create a feeling of solidarity among members of a particular tribe, and often differentiate them from other tribes and members of the plains. Rituals and festivals are of central importance to tribal identity, and can even survive in a modified form after religious conversion and prolonged contact with the outside world. Connected with these customs are often unique myths of the origin of the people, and their relation to the environment. The environment can also shape and dictate many of these customs and beliefs as well.

13.6 Communitization

In the absence of any formal education, socialisation and knowledge of traditional values, arts and crafts were made possible through institutions known as bachelor's dormitories, among many Mongoloid and Austroloid tribes. Among the Naga tribes like Konyak, Ao, Zemi, Angami, Lotha, Serna and Tangukhuls it was known as Morung, Ariju, Kienga, Kichuk

Champa, Dika Chung and Longshim respectively. Mizos call it Zawlbuk, Noctes Paa, Lalungs Samadi Muria Ghotu and GarosNokpantes. Tribes in Jharkhand area like Mundas call it Gitdora and Oraons Dhumkuria. Dr. S. K. Chatterjee and B.R.Choudhury have observed that this common club house system which was widespread among north Indian tribes might have come from Austric predecessors (B. R. Choudhury,

p. 159).Scholars point out that similar dormitory system existed in many tribes, in Nigeria, Congo, New Guinea, Borneo, Newzealand and other places till the twentieth century (Ruivah, p. 170).

The dormitories among various tribes have some common features like admission restricted to bachelors, common sleeping places, separate houses for boys and girls, strict exogamy, i.e.no permission to marry members of their own common house. Generally dormitories are intended to members of one clan with whom no marriage is allowed. In each village there can be one or more dormitories as required by the population or the clans. Boys' dormitories are strictly forbidden for women while girls' dormitories can be visited by boys; for the tribal's chastity begins only with marriage. The primary loyalty of a tribal boy is to his common house, which is the centre of all social and cultural activities of the village. Not only has it the duty to protect the village from enemies, but it also undertakes public works such as construction and repairs of village roads, water tanks, sowing, harvesting and hunting. It imparts traditional values to the tribe, training in arts and crafts, dancing and singing.

13.7 Tribal Economy

Economy simply means economics system of institution. Economy can be understood as an institutional arrangement that facilitates acquisition, production, and distribution of material means of survival for individual and community life. The economic system or its structure is repetitive and relatively permanent. According to Dalton (1969) "an economy is a set of institutionalized activities, which combine natural resources, human labour, and technology to acquire, produce and distribute material goods and specialist services in a structured and repetitive fashion". There are three interrelated features that characterize tribal economy. They are as follows:

1. It is a structural arrangement and has enforced rules for the acquisition and production of material goods and services.

2. In the process of acquisition and production of goods and services, division of human labour, use of natural resources and application of technology (tools and knowledge) are involved.

3. In the distribution process, superficial devices and practices such as market place, device for measuring some types of transaction are involved.

Thus economy can be understood as an institutional and normative structure that

governs the economic relations among a group of people. This group may range from a tribal village to a modern nation even the entire world. The major economic processes governed by this system are acquisition, production and distribution of goods and services necessary for human survival and sustenance.

13.8 Structural Features Of Indian Tribal Economy

The structural features of Indian tribal economy can be divided into a number of segments.

13.8.1 Forest Based Economy :

Tribal economy is embedded in and revolves around the forest ecology. Not only their economy, but also the culture and social organization are interwoven with forests. Forest constitutes the major natural resource base for livelihood in all the tribal regions. Tribal people depend on forests for fulfilling their basic needs. They harness the forest resources with the help of simple implements without much technological aid from the outer world. The livelihood of the tribes mainly depends on collection of minor forest produce, hunting of wild animals and fishing in the shallow waters of the forests. They collect edible roots, tubers, fruits, nuts flower, leaves, fiber, bamboo, honey, wax etc for their subsistence. Most of them hunt deer, birds and fish. They use simple indigenous tools such as wooden bamboo pots and vessels, bamboo baskets and sticks for food gathering. In hunting they employ different types of traps and weapons. Availability and adequacy of food from these sources differ according to season.

13.8.2. Domestic Mode of Production :

Family constitutes the basic unit of consumption as well as production in the tribal economics of India. In the simple economy of various tribal community all the members of the family together form the unit of production and are directly engaged in economic process of production and consumption. The decision-making process of allocation of labour and produce are governed by the familial stipulations. The household production is mainly geared for fulfilling their consumption needs rather than for the market. It is appropriate to call tribal economy as subsistence economy. The division of labour in the tribal household is based on age and gender. The gendered division of labour is based on the primitive belief that women are physically weak. The boys and girls are allotted different jobs suited to their age.

13.8.3 Simple Technology :

The development of an economy depends upon the level of its technological advancement. Technology, involves the use of tools and implements in utilization of natural as well as human resources for productive purposes. The tools and implements used in the productive and distributive process of tribal economy are generally crude, simple and indigenously developed without the aid from outside.

13.8.4 Absence of Profit in Exchange :

Maximization of profit is the main goal of economic transaction that drives the modern capitalistic economies. But the profit motive is quite absent in the economic dealing in the tribal economies of India. Two major institutional factors i.e. the communal nature of economy and absence of money as a medium of exchange are responsible for this. The mutual obligation and extension of free labour to the fellow beings result in no significant surplus at all. Money as a medium of exchange is almost absent in the tribal economies. Hence, there is no scope for measuring the value of goods and services and storing the profit generated in the exchange process as wealth for posterity.

13.8.5 Community as a Cooperative Unit :

Community works as a cooperative unit in tribal societies and economic activities are carried away collectively as a group. Primitive economy is embedded in other community relationships. Dalton held that the factors such as low-level technology, small size of the economy and its relative isolation from outer world contributes to mutual dependence- people sharing many social relationships. In economic interactions, each tribal village community is considered as cooperative unit. The villagers have close economic relations. Most of them are engaged in common economic activities such as grazing the cattle. Their youth jointly graze the cattle and defend their village together. The adult men and women jointly transplant and harvest paddy in each other's field on a reciprocal basis.

13.8.6. Gift and Ceremonial Exchange :

Universally, reciprocal gift, giving hospitality to social intimates plays a vital part in tribal economies. Process of distribution in tribal societies is part of non-economic relational matrix and takes the form of gift and ceremonial exchange. Each group, whether a family, a group of kinsmen communities, villagers, or the tribe as a whole, implies appropriate norm of reciprocity. Economic anthropologist Dalton (1971) holds

that the tribal mode of transaction is that of reciprocity i.e. material gift and counter gift giving induced by social obligations of kinship.

13.8.7 Periodical Market :

Market is a major economic institution that regulates as well as facilitates distribution of goods and services among the people all over. In the rural areas, periodical markets and the system of barter exchange play a vital role in the economic life of Indian Tribes. These periodical markets were weekly, fortnightly, of biweekly and are widespread in the rural areas. These periodical markets, locally known as Bazar and/or Hat, generally serve the tribal villagers within the radius of 5- 10 KMs. and function on a specific place, at regular intervals of time. In these markets, people of different tribes and caste groups come together and conduct their business transaction.

13.8.8 Interdependence :

The economic relationship among the various tribal communities are often considered, as one of interdependence while the spirit of competition is almost absent in the tribal economic life. The relationship between tribes, within tribes, or tribal people and non-tribal people are functionally interdependent. Vidyarthi and Rai (1976) observed that the economic functional interdependence is similar to the Jajmani system, found among the Hindu caste groups in most of the regions of the country. Under the jajmani system each caste group, within a village, is expected to give certain standardised services to the people of other caste. The family head served by an individual is known as the jajman, while the man who performs is kamin of the jajman. Economic interdependence among the tribes has been observed in different tribal zones of the country in variety of ways.

13.8.9. The Plain Agriculture Type :

The predominant occupation of the tribal population in India is that of settled agriculture or plain agriculture. In its simpler form plain agriculture requires tilling with a pair of animals. Two-third of the tribal population in the country is engaged in settle agriculture as their primary means of survival. However, the agriculture as practiced in tribal India is simple, less productive and at the subsistence level.

13.8.10 Cottage Industry :

Among the tribes of India, a good number depends on crafts and cottage industries such as basket making, making of iron and wooden tools, spinning and weaving,

metal work for survival. They use simple tools in their day today work. They live in mixed tribal villages and generally have no exclusive villages of their own. They sell their finished products in the periodical markets.

13.8.11 The Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Labour Type :

There is no single tribe that can be included under the agricultural labour or industrial labour type. Some of the members of agriculture and artisan tribes have taken the avenues of employment in agriculture and industries as casual labours.

Agricultural Development on the one hand and industrialization in the tribal region on the other, has contributed to the emergence of these types of labour among the tribal people in the country. The tribal agricultural workers mostly work in their own locality within a radius of a few kilometers. On the other hand non-agricultural or industrial workers work in different industries. Most of the industrial labours are generally seasonal migrants to distant towns, mines, mills and wage labours in railway and road construction, forestry, civil work, etc. Sometimes they move to their workplaces in distant locations in bands inclusive of both genders. Saharia agricultural labour was found wherever there was high incidence of indebtedness.

Education advancement, reservation policy of government of India etc. have prompted a significant proportion of the members to take up the skilled white collar jobs and trades of different kinds. Many individuals and households belonging to the tribes are presently working in government offices, hospitals factories and business enterprises.

13.9 Tribal Polity

A tribe's political organization is generally formed to satisfy the basic needs of the group. Though the groups are egalitarian, the leaders of the group, mostly male, enjoy formidable power based on both their ascribed and achieved status.

13.9.1 Chieftainship in Tribal Society :

In most of the tribal societies, the system of administration was based on the system of 'chieftainship'. Therefore, the kind of early state formation among the tribal was first seen in the form of Chieftainship system. The term 'Chief' cannot be equated with the term 'King' in many respects. But in some cases, the use of king and Chief seems to be interchangeable as it is confusingly used in many places. However, many a times, tribal Chiefs are also referred to as kings, depending on the size of population

they ruled; for example, the ruler of Buganda in Uganda who ruled over nearly two million people was known as the 'King', whereas the Chief implies smaller size of population, for example: Chief of Ubungu in Tanzania who ruled about twenty thousand people. But the use of the terms king or Chief does not have any conspicuous implication in the African context. Likewise, the Mizo word 'Lav' signifies a person who is above all others, the supreme head and military leader in times of war and the repository of an authority within his dominion regardless of the number of subjects he had. Peter Skalnik further observes from his field work in Nanun, South Africa, that kingdoms and monarchies were just states, which carried various epithets such as primitive, archaic, traditional, tribal or early, to distinguish them from the modem state.

Marshal Sahlin view that state represents the final stage off our stage evolutionary process through which the early society develops. These are: band, tribe, chiefdom and state. He says that the tribal state wer echaracterised by a segmentary lineage system and this lineage system is a social means of intrusion and competition and tends to be economically and politically autonomous because they are fissioning down the generations and occupying separated territories which too are further differentiated through internal and external intrusion. This segmentation could be genealogical as well as territorial. In this state there is a virtual lack of economic solidarity, the polity therefore is fragmented, materially the society remains in a 'simple Neolithicmode of production' typified by shifting agriculture and simple pastoralism'. It is only when these segments begin to become rank differentiated internally, and several of them also become rank relative to each other, thus creating a more extensive polity, does the tribal society progress into next stages of chiefdom and state. They may form a segmentary hierarchy. A tribe tends to remain egalitarian in that no one of the families is politically superior or more powerful in hereditary ranks than any other. In a tribal system differentiation of structure however, has not been carried to the point where separate bodies of political control, full economic specialization or true full time religious specialization have developed.

On the contrary, Elman R. Service observes that, in contrast to the ideal egalitarian tribal system we find cases which involve rise in the prestige of the person holding the office of Chief. 'Chiefdoms' are thus characterized by hereditary ranks. Chiefdoms are closely related to redistribution as a mode of exchange, whereas in the tribes it is typically reciprocal. The chiefdom provides a centralized direction to a hitherto tribal society and gives greater productivity without necessarily any change in

technological methods. But they do not have true government. The chiefdom is a development of the segmentary tribal system to higher level of integration. A chiefdom is, however, not a class society.

Regarding egalitarian society, it is observed that, 'political authority is uncentralized, and there is no permanent, institutionalized inequality among fundamental social units such as families and villages. Leadership tends to be ephemeral, and the individual leaders that emerge do so because they exibit unusual personal characteristics, like intelligence and bravery, that attracts followers. Leadership status is achieved, not ascribed at birth '. In Mizo society, the Chieftainship was based on the power one derived from his decent, kin connections, control on land, forests, hills and rivers beyond his own village.

It is further argued that chiefdoms will inevitably evolve into states, nor as static. Besides, chiefdoms are prone to repeated cycles of political growth, marked by an increase in the power and resources (both human and nonhuman) controlled by the chief, followed by a period of decline. This proved to be true in the case of Sailo (Lusai) Chieftainship as their superiority was attained because of political power over time and subsequently in their interest they developed the notion of superiority by making the Chieftainship hereditary and the most prominent ruling clan in Mizoram became the Sailo. There was a feeling of strong solidarity which gave rise to the feeling of high rank and supra-local solidarity. In rank societies chiefdoms, or authority is permanently centralized in the office of Chief, which exists apart from the person who occupies it and upon his death must be filled by someone of similarly elite descent, high status is largely inherited. However, in the case of Lushai Chieftainship, the leadership was confined to their respective village units. In other words it was one - village authority. Despite the existence of chief clans and the chieftainship, the Lushai society lacked centralised political structure. The villages did not form the smallest unit in the pyramid form of the social structure. Independent village chief did not combine themselves. In fact, the concept of the social structure of the society was alien to the tribe. The state organization and the pyramid-like authority and leadership structure was conspicuous by their absence. There was no gradation of the Chiefs. All the Chiefs were independent in the areas of operation. The political authority naturally was widely distributed and diffused among a large number of villages.

13.10 Power and Functions of the Chief

In Mesoamerica, Peru, Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Indus valley and China, it is observed that, the origin of bureaucracy can be found in those cases where chiefdoms evolved into the first pristine states through the process of primary state formation worldwide. In Mizo society, the Lushai Chiefs had more than one village and the other villages than his own was under a headman. The main village used to have during pre-colonial period up to 400 houses. In later time its number decreased. The Chief with his upa, zalen and ramhual used to look after the judicial as well as executive matters including the agricultural activities. The headman of a satellite village used to look after his village affairs in consultation with the chief. A big headman was allowed to trace his descent in the Patrilineal line; he used to emphasise his blood relations with the Chief. The sons of concubines only in rare circumstances could become a Chief. The right to rule over the people was enjoyed by the one who had the power and ability to command a large number of people and to repeal any attack by other Chiefs. Thus, chieftainship originated in the physical and intellectual power of a person. Or a person who had the power of giving security to the people became a chief. According to Parry, 'A chief is the repository of all power, and the fountain head of justice. He is also 'the father of his people'. His role is multifunctional despite the institution of the chief's non-chiefly assistant'.

As an administrator and supreme head of the village, the Chief enjoyed the right :

1. To order capital punishment to those who committed murder or rape,

2. To seize food stores and property of the villagers who wished to transfer their allegiance to other Chief,

3. To levy tax from traders who were doing business within his jurisdiction,

4. To attach the property of his villagers when he wished or deemed fit, with or without fault on the part of the villagers,

5. To help bawi who were by custom not open to redemption,

6. To freedom of action in relation to making his son Chief within his land,

7. To freedom of action in relation to all kinds of bawi who constituted the means whereby the Chief could cultivate and acquire the ability to sustain his village in peace and in war time, and

8. Proprietory rights over lands. It was a fact that the chief had the right over the life and death of his subjects.

13.11 Summary

It can be concluded that culture as a learned behaviour is a continuous process which passes from one generation to the other. Therefore, culture is basically a process of evolution. In the evolutionary process of development, different cultures have taken different shape according to the time and social requirement. Hence, there is cultural multiplicity and diversity of various cultural traits among different communities. Some see their own culture as superior and the culture of others as, inferior. This ethnocentric bias has developed cultural relativism leading to cultural typologies like 'barbarism', 'uncultured', 'pre-civilised', 'primitive', etc. But a value neutral analysis proves that every culture is shaped by the prevailing socio-economic milieu and various cultural traits are related to the life pattern and economic activities. Specially, tribal culture is shaped by their economic activities and vice versa. Their polity, religious practices and worldview act as binding forces to keep their society together as a coherent force. Their social practices, marriage system and social system as a whole still retain its uniqueness in spite of cultural contact with their non-tribal neighbours and the impact of modernity. These unique characteristics are said to be the core of tribal society and culture that can be distinctly studied from tribe to tribe and even among the same tribe from place to place.

13.12 Model Questions

1. Short Type Question **(5 marks)**

A. Write down the domestic mode of production among the Indian tribes.

B. What do you know about the chieftainship in tribal polity?

C. Write a short note on the dress and ornaments as a distinct features of tribal culture.

D. Write a short note on tribal economy.

2. Answer in Detail **(10 marks)**

A. Write down the linguistic pattern of tribal community.

B. Explain the basic feature of tribal economy.

C. Discuss the power and function of the chief in a tribal community.

E. Explain the tribal economy system.

F. Discuss the tribal polity.

G. Discuss the cultural traits of Indian tribes .

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Unit 14 ❑ Village : Structure and Change

Structure

14.0 Objectives

After you have read this unit you should be able to describe

- Studies in Indian villages.

- Village as a community.

- Chacteristics of Indian villages.

- Changes in village community.

14.1 Introduction

Among the earliest human groups, gathering was the main source of food. Gradually man acquired the skill and knowledge in agriculture. With the development of agriculture, people began to lead a settled life and human communities became more stationary. The emergence of village signified that man has passed from nomadic mode of collective life to the settled one. India is a land of villages. A great majority of villages are small with only around five hundred population each. Mahatma Gandhi's view that India lives in villages still holds good, at least from the demographic point of view. The village social life has its own peculiar characteristics. The village social

life norms strengthen the authoritarian and hierarchical norms in administration. The village social life, based on the hierarchical exchange relations greatly influence the behavior of civil servants in public organizations. Sociologists think that for defining an Indian village, its population, physical structure, and modes of production are definitely important. Usually, a village has less than five thousand individuals.

Agriculture is the main occupation of the Indians and a majority of people in India live in the villages. Our villages help in strengthening our social bonds and bringing stability to our society in many ways. Our villages also help our society in another way namely that of preserving our culture.

Village habitations have been an enduring feature of all human societies from the very dawn of human civilization and the idea of the village has occupied an important place in India. It has been one of the core categories through which India has been imagined and imaged in modern times. It has preserved Indian culture and has its own social, cultural, economic and political importance. It has retained some of its individual features despite the passage of time.

14.2 Studies on Indian Villlages

According to M.N. Srinivas, "The studies of village communities which are currently being carried out in the different parts of the country would provide the future historian with a vast body of facts about rural social life, facts collected not by travelers in a hurry, but by men who are trained to observe keenly and accurately. These studies therefore constitute valuable contributions to the social, political, economic and religious history of our country. The study of Indian Rural Society has helped in developing certain analytical categories. Srinivas has pointed toward a social process, which he termed as Sanskritization, through which the lower castes try to bring about changes in their life-ways to obtain greater ritual purity, and thereby attain a higher status in the ritual hierarchy of castes. Marriott discovered the processes of Universalisation and Parochialization which explain the complexity of Indian civilization and the communication channels that exist between the Great and Little traditions of the country.

S.C. Dube suggests that "the concepts of Great and Little Traditions, sanskritization, and universalization and parochialization offer us a good starting point, and from here we should build step by step a series of hypotheses and concepts that would ultimately lead to meaningful generalizations regarding the structure and processes of Indian

society." He says, The structural-functional approach provides us with more or less satisfactory conceptual tools for the study of village communities. Robert Redfield's "folk-urban continuum' provides one such conceptual framework." Redfield brings out the idea that folk societies gradually transform themselves into village communities and isolate themselves from the ideal types.

In India, both sociologists and anthropologists are jointly exploring the village community with a largely common methodology. In the year 1955, Dube's Indian Village, Majumdar's Rural Profiles (ed.), Marriot's Village India(ed.), and Srinivas' India's Villages (ed.) were the major publications. An Introduction to Rural Sociology in India, an anthology edited by A.R. Desai, appeared in a revised and enlarged version in the year 1959.

Yogesh Atal points out that "every village has a distinct 'personality' of its own. It has its distinctive structure, network of kinship-affiliations, caste-composition and dominance, and leadership patterns. The south Indian village is different in many respects from a north Indian village. "On "village studies" in India, Prof. Ramkrishna Mukherjee suggests that there is the need to take up these studies from the perspective formulated and interpreted by cultural and social anthropologists and sociologists and we may also note the distinct importance of portraying the peculiar and specific way of life of a village. Prof. Mukherjee emphasizes that the merit of "village studies" usually conducted by social anthropologists and sociologists cannot be denied but the point remains that the two streams of "village studies" carrying the imprint of economists or social anthropologists or sociologists must meet at relevant sites. He maintains that until and unless the "economic" and "social" perspectives towards "village studies" meet at critical points, it is not possible to obtain a composite understanding of village life and a balanced view of the dynamics of village society.

14.3 The Village as a Community

Distinguishing between "association" and "community", MacIver defines "community" as "circle of people who live together, so that they share not this or that particular interest, but a whole set of interests wide enough and comprehensive enough to include their lives" while an association "is a group specifically organized for the purpose of an interest or group of interests which its members have in common".

In the light of the above definition it must not be assumed that in all areas noted in the Census Report, there were in existence village communities in the sense of

close corporations of people living a more or less common life. It is true that village community must have existed in some form or other in nearly every part of India; and evidences of its survival are still found, though less easily distinguishable in some places than others. While the "Indian village" is ancient, the actual villages have had short histories in the constant process of founding, conquest, destruction and depopulation. There are certain regions, however, where the system of village communities does not appear to have existed at all, as is evident from the earlier discussion. And, therefore, when we speak of village community and its self-governing institution we do not mean what is almost entirely an artificial creation for revenue and administrative purposes but one where the feeling of community centering on the village is the strongest, where it is a social unit of settlement of the village type. This also includes the village consisting of a central unit with one or more satellite hamlets together constituting a social unit. In areas like Kerala and Himachal Pradesh the emergence of community feeling centering on the village is very weak or virtually absent. In such areas where the settlement pattern is of homestead or dispersed hamlet type, the introduction of settled administration has tended to the formation of artificial villages as local units. But whenever the term "village" is applied, it must be understood to mean little more than the administrative area occupied by a group of people and does not necessarily connote any settled corporate life.

The assumption that the "Indian village" is a community has, as already noted, a strong basis in historical fact even present fact more or less. The people living in a village had intimate social and economic relationships which were regulated by tradition and institutions which had evolved over centuries, unlike the comparatively superficial or transitory interests and ties which bind the neighborhood or a residential suburb in a modern city.

14.4 Characteristics of Indian Villages

Villages play an important part in Indian life. From the prehistoric times, the village has been enjoying an important place as the basic unit of Indian social structure. India can righty be called a land of villages. The bulk of her population lives in the villages. According to the census of 1991, about 75 per cent of the total population lives in villages. There are 5, 75, 721 villages in the country, 26.5 per cent of the total rural population lives in small villages (under 500 persons). 48.8 per cent in medium sized villages (between 500 and 2,000 persons), 19.4 per cent in large villages (between 2,000 and 5,000 persons). The basic charactaristics of Indian villages are as follows:

(i) Isolation and Self-Sufficiency: Almost till the middle of the 19th century, the villages in India were more or less self-contained, isolated and self-sufficient units. The inhabitants of the village had very little to do with the people outside. All of their essential needs were satisfied in the village itself. This feature of the Indian village is described graphically as follows:

Each village tends to be self-contained, in each will be found persons with permanent rights in the lands as owners or tenants with hereditary occupancy rights; of these some cultivate all they hold, others with large areas at their disposal rent out to tenants on a yearly agreement a part or whole of their lands; below these in the scale are agricultural labourers, some have a field or two on rent, some work in the fields only at times of pressure and are mainly engaged in crafts, such as leather work, or in tasks regarded as menial.

In all but the smallest village, there are one or two skilled artisans, carpenters or blacksmiths who provide and repair the simple agricultural implements, bullock gear and water-lifts. The household requirements are supplied by a shop or two whose owners usually provide the first market for the village produce and add to their earnings in money-lending. In short, it was more of a society within itself.

However, changing political and economic conditions are putting an end to the isolation and self-sufficiency of the Indian village. The rapid development of the means of transport and communication has broken the barriers between the village and city. The former is now socially and even economically connected with the neighbourhood city or town. Political parties have made village the centre of their activities as much as the city.

(ii) Peace and Simplicity: The second feature of an Indian village is the atmosphere of simplicity, calmness and peace prevailing therein. In the village there is no noise and little sophistication. The humdrum activities of modern civilization are rarely seen there. Though occasionally a car or a bus rolling along the kutcha road enveloped in thick clouds of dust may be seen there, but, on the whole, life in the village moves with traditional quietude and peace. The villagers lead a simple life, eat frugally, dress simply, and live in mud-walled houses completely lacking in the trappings of modern civilization.

But here also the old order is yielding place to a new one. The mud-walled houses are giving place to well designed buildings. Fashion is making its inroads in the life of young men and women of the village. Here and there notes of music issue from dry cell radio. However, this change is gradual and slow.

(iii) Conservatism: The inhabitants of the village are strongly attached to old customs and traditions. Their outlook is primarily conservative and they accept changes with extreme reluctance. They love old ways and are less eager to follow the advice of zealous social reformers regarding their marriage and other customs. Writing on Indian villages, Sir Charles Metcalfe wrote, "they seem to last where nothing else lasts. Dynasties tumble down; revolution succeeds revolution. Hindu, Pathan, Moghul, Maratha, Sikh, English all the masters change in turn, but the village communities remain the same."

(iv) Poverty and Illiteracy: Probably the most glaring and also depressing features of Indian villages are the poverty and illiteracy of the village people. They are generally poor with a very low income. They take coarse food and put on rough clothes. The pressure on land is high resulting in fragmentation of holdings and poor productivity.

Besides poverty the village people are steeped in ignorance and illiteracy. The opportunities for education are meagre in the villages. The village school is generally in a dilapidated condition. Facilities for higher education are practically nil. Due to poverty the villagers cannot send their sons to city for education. Due to illiteracy they cannot improve upon their agriculture or supplement their income by other means. Poverty is thus the cause and effect of illiteracy and the backwardness of the villagers.

However, recently the need has been realised for rural reconstruction. An all India organisation under the name of 'All India Kissan Sammelan' has been formed to focus the attention of the government on the problems of peasantry class. There is greater realisation now that the country can march ahead only if its villages are prosperous.

The governments, both at the centre and states, have launched numerous schemes like total literacy programme, fertilizer subsidy, crop insurance, free power, concessional water-rate, minimum procurement price and low-interest loans for liquidating illiteracy and removing poverty of the people living in the villages. Agricultural production is becoming more and more mechanized and agricultural products are fetching high prices.

(v) Local Self-government: The villages in ancient India enjoyed a considerable measure of autonomy or self-government. The villagers managed their own affairs through the traditional institution of Panchayat. The central government had neither the inclination nor the means for interfering with the self-government of villages.

With the advent of Britishers in India and their introduction of a highly centralised system of administration the importance of Panchayats began to decline. Their judicial powers were taken over by the British courts and the officers were appointed to look after the administrative affairs of the villages.

This change produced unpleasant results. Since the times of Lord Ripon attempts were made to revive the old system of village local self-government, but the progress was very slow in this direction. With the attainment of freedom now fresh efforts are being made to strengthen the panchayat system and make Panchayats play a better part in the work of national reconstruction. The 73rd Amendment Act, 1993 has laid the foundation of strong and vibrant Panchayati Raj institutions in the country.

(vi) Pattern of land ownership: The pattern of land-ownership, tenancy and labour frequently cuts across the village. The land which is included within the boundary of an official or administrative village is not always owned by those residents in it. Some of the land is usually owned by people in neighbouring villages or towns. During the last hundred years or more, there has come into existence a class of absentee landowners, people who reside in towns but own land in villages. Again, members of a village are commonly found to own some land in neighbouring villages. Even tenants and labourers are occasionally found cultivating land lying in another village. In some irrigated areas where the density of population is high, it is not unknown for a tenant to cultivate land lying six or seven miles from where he is staying.

(vii) External trade: It is often assumed that trade and commerce did not touch villages in India. This assumption was perhaps true only of villages in the tribal areas. In the non-tribal areas, however, village economy has for a long time been integrated in varying degree with regional, national and even international trade and commerce. In certain regions, such as Gujarat, and Kerala and Coromandel coasts, there was a high degree of integration of village economy with the economy of the wider world. These coastal areas had maritime commerce with overseas countries since at least the beginning of the Christian era. The exports of Gujarat included, for instance, agricultural and forest produce as well as finished goods. In the former category may be mentioned indigo, cotton, wheat, rice, tobacco, edible oil, ghee, honey, lac, hides, dried ginger and myrobalan. In the latter category there were goods of three kinds: firstly, goods such as cotton cloth, yarn, cushions. canopies, carpets and cotton tape, which were manufactured mostly by urban artisans but the raw materials; for which were supplied

by villagers; secondly; goods such as precious stones which were manufactured by urban artisans from indigenous minerals; and thirdly, goods such as silk cloth and objects of metal and ivory which were manufactured by urban artisans from imported raw materials."

(viii) Dependence on towns: The villagers also depended upon towns for certain specialized services. Whenever they wanted to build a brick-and-mortar structure, whether it was a dwelling house, a well a hospice (dharmasala), a village meeting house (chavadi), or a pigeon-tower (chabuturi), they had to call in brick-layers and limeworkers from nearby towns. They also get their gold and silver ornaments made by a town smith. Though mud pots and pans were popular in the house, the few metal vessels which were in use, and the immense metal utensils for cooking community dinners, were bought and repaired in the town. The florist, the tailor, the washerman, the vahivancha (genealogist) and the grain parcher were all to be found only in the towns and very large villages.

(ix) Weekly markets: There are also single-caste milages. Where these villages are of artisans, they sell their goods in nearby towns, or more frequently, in the weekly markets. The latter are an eloquent testimony to the Indian village's lack of self-sufficiency. They also imply a certain amount of monetization of the economy which in turn means that the village was part of a wider politico-economic system. Weekly markets again vary in their range. Some are patronised by people living in a few neighbouring villages while others are patronised by people spread over a wide area. Occasionally, there is also a certain amount of specialisation in weekly markets; one market is famous for trade in cattle, another in sheep and poultry, a third in woollen blankets, and so on. Pilgrimages also take the villager beyond the village, and occasionally into a different language area. The periodical festival of a deity attracts devotee and others from nearby villages, and a bazaar springs up around the temples. The prospect of buying and selling at the festival is as strong an attraction as the religious one. There are fairs which are famous for the sale of cattle, and nowadays, cattle are moved by lorry by a distance of two or three hundred miles to reach a fair. Such fairs occur all over the country and they reveal the fact that the peasant's social and economic universe is very much wider than his village.

(xi) Political structure: The assumption that the Indian village community was not influenced by, and did not in turn influence, the wider political structure, is also facile. This assumption is a result of looking only at the top and not at the base of

the political structure, a result of concentrating on the history of kings and generals and not of the people. At the village or slightly higher level, there was usually the dominant caste, the members of which owned a good deal of the available arable land, and also wielded political power in addition. Each such caste had a leader whose position was further strengthened by ties of kinship and affinity, and by his capacity to confer favours on his clients. Such chieftains stood at the base of the political pyramid everywhere in India. Above them was the Raja or king, the viceroy of an Emperor, and the Emperor himself, in ascending order of importance. The lower-level authority acknowledged the supremacy of the higher authority when he paid tribute, and declared his independence from the latter when he stopped payment. There was a continuum of power relations from the lowest to the highest levels, and changes at each level were followed by changes at the other levels. In 'orthodox' histories changes at the higher levels are said to be the cause of change at lower levels, but not the other way round.

14.5 The Change in Village Community in Different Spheres

(i) **Caste System:** The British rule in India gave a serious blow to the caste system in the villages. The economic policy and the laws of British rulers induced the different castes to adopt occupations other than the traditional ones. The hold of caste panchayat was loosened.

The status of a village man was determined on the basis of his economic position and personal attainments. The restrictions on food, dress, mode of living and other matters imposed under caste system were removed. Even untouchability was weakened. Thus caste system has now lost its traditional hold in the villages, however, casteism is getting strengthened on account of selfish political interests.

(ii) **Jajmani System:** 'Social Stratification in India, the "Jajmani" system, a feature of village community in India has now weakened due to the governmental efforts to raise the status of the lower castes and impact of urbanisation. The occupations adopted by the village people are not entirely hereditary or based on caste system, nor the payment for services rendered by the lower caste is in kind; it is now mostly cash payment.

(iii) **Family System:** The joint family system is no longer the peculiar characteristic of the village community. Nuclear families have taken its place. The family control over its members in matters of diet, dress and marriage has weakened. The family is

no longer an economic unit. Several activities which once were carried within the family are now performed by outside agencies. The education of village girls has raised the status of rural women.

(iv) Marriage System: Change can also be seen in the institution of marriage. Although inter-caste marriages are rare and parents continue to dominate the mate-choice, yet the boys and girls are consulted by the parents in the matter of mate-choice. Love marriages and divorces are almost non-existent. The individual qualities like education, economic pursuit, beauty and appearance of the marriage partners are given preference over the old family status. There is now less expenditure on marriages. The marriage rites also have been minimised. The custom of child marriage is being abolished.

(v) Living Standards: The standard of living in the village community is gradually going higher. The rural diet no more consists of coarse food only. It now includes vegetables, milk, bread, tea and vegetable ghee. The dress is getting urbanized. The youths put on pants and the girls put on frocks and Bell Bottoms.

Even the old ladies put on blouses instead of shirts. The mill cloth is used in place of handloom cloth. Gold ornaments have replaced the old heavy silver ornaments. The young boys live bare-headed with well combed long hair while the girls use cosmetics. There are now 'pucca' houses to live. These are now better ventilated, well furnished, and in some cases electrified too. The ceiling fans can also be seen in some houses. Lanterns have replaced the earthen lamps in most houses. Gobar gas plants have also been installed in some houses. The sanitary habits of the people have improved.

They now use soap for bath and washing the clothes. The safety razors are used for shaving. The drainage system is also better one. The primary health centres have made the village people health conscious. The threat of epidemics has lessened due to the vaccination and other preventive measures taken to the villages.

The family planning program has been understood by the village people who now adopt measures to limit the family size. Schools have been opened. In some villages degree and post degree colleges can also be found. Agriculture Institutes and other Rural Institutes have also been opened in some villages.

(vi) Economic System: Change has also taken place in the economic field. The educated rural youth seeks jobs in the cities rather than settling on the land. The demand for new scientific instruments of agriculture is increasing. The farmers have

been taught new methods to raise their production. The rural cooperative societies have lessened the woes and miseries of the village people in getting seeds, fertilizers and credit.

The 'Sahukara' system is on the wane. More and more banks are being opened in the villages. The Government gives financial assistance and other facilities for setting up industries in the villages. The per capita income has increased. Economic exploitation has decreased and the farmers get good price for their products.

(vii) Political System: The setting up of 'panchayats' has led to the growth of political consciousness among the village people. The newspapers, radio and television in some areas have added to the political knowledge of the villagers. However, the political parties have divided the people into groups and led to groupism among them. Caste conflicts and group rivalries have increased. The community feeling has decreased. Selfishness and individualism are growing.

14.6 Summary

It is thus evident that the Indian village is not a static community. It is dynamic. Sir Charles Metcalfe was wrong to hold that the village communities in India seem to last where nothing else lasts.The villages in India are at present passing through a transitional period. From the sociological point of view the old social relations, bonds and ties have disappeared. The community consciousness is steadily decreasing. Politics of the country has made deep inroads into the peaceful life of the village people and has divided them into political and sub-caste groups. The joint family system is fast disintegrating and morality has gone down. The only feature of the village community now left is agriculture. In India the task of rural reconstruction is a big and complicated affair, not to be accomplished easily. As we have seen above, 75 per cent of population lives in villages. To raise the standard of living of 64 crores of people is no easy task. However, the trends show that considerable progress is under waydespite great difficulties. A Ministry of Rural Development has been formed at the centre to look after the overall task of rural development and co-ordinate the different schemes in this direction. Agricultural development along with irrigation and generation of electric power had the highest priority in the First Plan. Both the short term and long term objectives of the First Plan were by and large achieved. In the Second Plan new targets of agricultural production were laid down which have been more than achieved. In the Third and Fourth Plans also adequate importance was

given to the task of rural reconstruction. The successive plans also have given due attention to the programme of rural development. Various schemes like Small Farmers Development Project (SFDP), Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Labourers Project (MFAL), Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP), Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP), Applied Nutrition Programme (ANP) and finally Jawahar Rozgar Yojna Programme have been in vogue for the upliftment of rural masses.

The rural school is undergoing transformations under the impact of Operation Blackboard. It is now better equipped and adequately staffed. The introduction of labour-saving machinery has shortened farm hours, decreased the difficulty of labour and increased the amount of leisure time. Link roads are being constructed in the villages, electricity provided, sanitary conditions improved, health facilities provided and well-equipped hospitals with qualified doctors opened.Many of the conveniences and comforts of the city are being introduced into rural homes. The 73rd Amendment Act, 1993 has sought to make the Panchayati Raj System more effective and role playing in the field of rural development. With the passing of theunattractive, barren and drudgery features of village home, it is hoped, there would come a new appreciation of the deeper rural values so that the young men would not flee to the cities, depriving the village of energetic and educated rural leadership.

14.7 Model Questions

1. Short type question **(5 Marks)**

    A. What is jajmani system?

    B. Explain the political system in Indian villages.

    C. Write down the major charaterstics of Indian villages.

    D. Write down the changes in village economy system.

2. Answer in detail **(10 Marks)**

    A. Explain the village as community.

    B. Write down six major characterstics of of Indian villages.

    C. Explain the changes in living standerd of village communities.

    D. Explain the changes in political system of village communities.

    E. Write down the importance of local self govt. In Indian villages.

F. Explain the changes in the village communities.

G. Illustrate the major characterstics of Indian villages.

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Unit 15 ❑ Village Solidarity

Structure

15.0 Objectives

After you have read this unit you should be able to describe-

●   Solidarity structure within various lavels of family.

●   Solidarity Structures at the Village Level.

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● Solidarity Structures in the Caste System

● Solidarity Structures Within the Jajmani System

15.1 Introduction

Among the institutions that compose the society, the family is the most important. It has been its very foundation. It plays a decisive role in the material and cultural life of the mass aggregate and in moulding the psychological characteristics of an individual as well as its collectivity. In fact, according to some thinkers, family and familism impress their stamp on the entire rural as well as urban structure. Familism permeates them from top to bottom. A systematic study of village family, its structure, functions, evolutions and interrelations with other institutions are necessary to study the village solidarity. In almost all fully developed agrarian societies, depending on plough agriculture, the patriarchal joint family is the basic of social solidarity in the rural areas.

There are three aspects to the structure of solidarity which must be considered in analyzing any relationship between the differentiated roles-"the various positions and activities distinguished" allocated through the nine different criteria of: age, generation, sex, economic allocation, political allocation, religion, cognition, nonhuman environment and solidarity. we shall use Levy's definitions for each of the three following aspects: content, strength and intensity. The content of any relationship is defined as "… the type of relationship that is to exist and the members between (or among) whom it is to exist." The strength of any relationship is defined as "…the relative precedence or lack of precedence taken by this relationship over other relationships of its general sort, and over other obligations and commitments in the larger social sphere." The intensity of the relationship is defined as "… the state of affect involved in the relationship." There are two possible types of variation in the state of affect: first, the type of affect involved (e.g. love, hate, anger, joy, respect, etc.); and second, the degree of affective involvement that is expected (e.g. whether the relationship is to be intimate or one of avoidance).

If we grant the above by way of explaining and defining the structure of solidarity then it follows that the structure of solidarity is crucial in at least two circumstances: first, where the frequency of interaction is high; and second, where relationships are strategic to the system (strategic relationships may have a high incidence of interaction, but this need not be the case).

It is neither possible nor is it desirable for the purposes to treat all of the relationships which can occur between roles within the village. Theoretically we should find it necessary to analyze only the relationships which exist between roles in the village social system, but, as per the role differentiation, the solidarity structure of the lower level social units (the household) must be considered as well because they so colour the upper level relationships that the upper level relationships cannot be fully understood without knowledge of lower level relationships. Thus, we must begin by discussing the structure of solidarity as it functions at the level of the household.

15.2 Solidarity Structure Within the Household

Of the many possible relationships which exist between members of the household there are two which must be understood in order to comprehend the structure of solidarity at the village level. These are the father-son relationship and the brother-brother relationship. At the village levels females do not figure as possibilities for the roles which are to be allocated. At the household level, females do affect the content, strength, and intensity of the above mentioned male relationships, but ideally at least they should not affect the content, strength or intensity of the village level relationships.

The rural family is far more homogeneous, stable, integrated and organically functioning than the urban family. The ties binding the members of the formal, for instance, the husband and wife, the parents and children are stronger and last longer than those in the case of urban family. The Indian village still remains a cluster of joint families though due to a number of historic-economic causes, the joint family has been exhibiting a tendency of slow and steady disintegration.

15.2.1 Peasant Household :

Another essential characteristic of the rural family is that it is generally based on peasant household. All its members are engaged in the agricultural occupation. Work is distributed among them mainly on lines of age and sex distinctions. "The community household, common land and common economic functions along with the common kinship bond create the peasant household." Since the members of rural family form a single economic unit and constantly co-operate with one another in agricultural operations, since they hold property in common usually managed by the eldest member of the family. Since also they spend most of their time together, the psychological traits they develop are similar.

15.2.2. Greater Discipline and Interdependence :

The rural family is characterised by greater discipline among its members than the urban family. Further, since there is considerably less state or public provision for meeting the educational, cultural, or social needs of the people in the rural area than in the urban. The rural family attempts also to satisfy these needs of its members. It thus serves as a school, a recreation centre, as well as a maternity or non-maternity hospital.

15.2.3 Dominance of Family Ego :

The interdependence of the members of the rural family and the dependence of its individual member on it are therefore, far greater than in the case of the urban family. This welds its members into a homogenous, compact, egoistic unit, strengthens emotion of solidarity and co-operation among them and fills them with family pride. They develop more collective family consciousness and less individualistic emotion.

In a rural society, a family is discredited if any of its individual members perpetrates an infamous act. Similarly, the glory of his or her achievement accrues to the family from which he or she springs.

The urban family in contrast to the rural family, is less authoritarian of the family even at the cost of their lives.

15.2.4 Authority of the Father :

Since the rural family is more integrated and disciplined unit than the urban family, the head of the rural family exercises almost absolute power over its members. It is he who distributes the work of the peasant household among the family members on lines of sex and age differences; arranges marriages of sons, daughters, nephews and nieces; administers a joint family properly according to his wisdom; and trains the youngsters for future agricultural work and social life. All initiative and final authority are vested in him. In fact, "the head of the family has had the rights and authority to be the ruler, the priest, the teacher, the educator and the manager of the family."

Thus, the family, through its head, subordinates its individual members to itself. The later are completely submerged in the family; hence, they hardly develop any individuality or personality.

15.2.5 Closer Participation in Various Activities :

One striking feature of the rural family lies in the fact that its members, being

engaged in work connected with the peasant household, spend practically the whole day together. In contrast to this, the members of the urban family engage in different occupations or being educated outside home, spend only a small portion of the day together. Even the recreational centres such as clubs and others lie outside the home. Hence, the home becomes only a temporary nightshed for the members of the urban family.

15.2.6 The Father-Son Relationship :

Before continuing, we must mention another major problem which we have been unable to solve. Social relationships are dynamic, not static. Ideally the role of both father and son does not change with time, nor does the solidarity structure which orders the relationship. Actually the content of the relationship changes drastically over time as does the strength and intensity. The father-son relationship is not the same when the father is twenty-five and the son five as it is when the father is sixty and the son forty. The best that we can do in these circumstances is to examine the father-son relationship at different stages in its development.

In a social system which is characterized as patriarchal, patrilocal and patrilineal, and it can be safely be assumed that the type of relationship will be that of superordinate-subordinate. The father has complete control over the actions of the son. However, the situation is never clear-cut because the young father is as dominated by his father, as he is dominant over his young son (ideally he is dominated whether the father is still alive or not). The following rather lengthy quote, from G. Morris Carstairs' book, The Twice Borndescribes the kind of relationship which exists between father and son among the upper castes in the village he was observing:

In striking contrast to all this attentive mothering, the child's father is an aloof seemingly unwelcome figure. The reason for this is that a man, so long as he remains under his own father's roof, must keep up the fiction of denying that he leads an active sexual life of his own. Not to do so is to be disrespectful. Consequently, a man and his wife can never talk to each other naturally, in his parents' presence; nor is it proper to either of them to show affection for their own children in front of their elders. This obligatory suppression of any overt show of tender feelings is relaxed only when the child cries. Then his needs take precedence even over the grandparents' authority, so that he will be handed over to his mother, often with the command "Give him the breast." A father, however, experiences no such exception to the demand that he remain impassive and detached. Even if his wife or child falls ill he must contain his

feelings and surrender the responsibility of tending them to his own parents. This taboo perpetuates in each generation the tension which exists between father and son; and it is very strong. Young Chauthmal, who lived in his father Bhurmal's house, had a boy of eighteen months, and often the grandfather could be seen carrying this child in his arms, or dandling him while they sat at their shop-but never Chauthmal: " I don't like to fondle him, even when we are alone in our room," he said: "if I did, he might get into the habit of running to my knee in the bazaar, and that would not look right." … On the other hand, there were three among my younger informants who disregarded the rule, and openly fondled their young children. They were able to do so because in each case their fathers were dead, and they were the heads of their several households: but still the consensus of opinion condemned their unashamed display of affection… the usual father-child relationship, then, was drained of spontaneous warmth of feeling. Instead it was governed by strict obligations on either side…the obligation of each to the other, of financial support and instruction on the one hand, and dutiful service throughout one's father's life (and after his death) on the other, were constantly emphasized, but personal intimacy was conspicuously absent.

The above observations, made on the content, strength and intensity of the father-son relationship among the three highest castes in the village of Deoli, are made on a situation, where, in fact, there is more opportunity to live up to the ideal father-son relationship. Among the lower castes one would not expect these observations to be made for at least two reasons. As Carstairs observed, it is the presence of the grandfather and/ or grandmother which constrains the behaviour of the father with respect to the son in the upper castes. Among the lower castes the presence of grandfathers and grandmothers within the family is even more unlikely than among the upper castes where the probability is only about fifty-fifty that both parents will be surviving at the time of the son's marriage. There is a fairly good correlation between caste ranking and wealth (the higher the caste, the more likely that caste will be wealthy) and there is a fairly high correlation between wealth and life expectancy.

The second reason is that among the lower castes there is very little opportunity for a father to accumulate wealth over which he has control in his old age. In a wealthy household, the aged father has no real need of physical strength; he merely needs the mental ability to make decisions concerning its disposition. The father can be traditionally oriented because he has the power to back his position. Among the poor lower castes, when a man loses his physical powers, as he inevitably must, he can hope that his son will follow tradition and provide for him in his old age. Thus,

when the son is the main contributor or only source of household income, he need not pay attention to the demands of his father. It is much easier in the poorer households for the son to take over from his father and begin to make decisions about the disposition of the household income. Concomitantly the poorer household heads may exhibit different behaviour patterns towards their sons than is found among the wealthy, high-caste households. Fathers and sons will probably spend more time, more pleasantly and less formally, with one another.

A third factor which is probably not as important as the first two is that while there is a lot of direct contact between father and son among poor households, this does not hold among wealthy households. The father in the wealthy household appears, and more likely is, as a more distant figure to the son. He does not have many direct dealings with him. Mother, grandparents, teacher and possibly servants will stand between him and his father.

Even among wealthy households, however, it is possible for the father to fly in the face of tradition with respect to his behaviour towards his son. While it is important to know that extreme variations can and do exist with regard to the content, strength and intensity of the father-son relationship, so we can say that normal type of solidarity structure that exists between some roles on the village level more nearly resembles that of the wealthy household than that of the poorer households. The intervention of caste into the structure of solidarity at the village level resembles the intervention of the mother, grandparents, teacher and servants at the household level.

We shall discuss shortly which roles in the village seem to have a solidarity structure modeled after the solidarity structure of the father-son relationship, but before we do so, let us discussed the solidarity structure of the brother-brother relationship on which other village roles are based.

15.2.7 The Brother-Brother Relationship :

One cannot say that the brother-brother relationship is a strong one except in certain circumstances. There are a number of other household relationships which can and do assume precedence over the brother-brother relationship. Some examples are the father-son, mother-son and husband-wife relationships. The differentiation of brothers occurs on the basis of relative age. The eldest son is expected to take over the household and ritual obligations of the father after the father's death. Neither the eldest brother nor the younger brother(s) have much power to make decisions while the father is alive (and capable of making decisions) so that the difference in roles is

not much emphasized. As the brothers grow up they receive the same sort of treatment from others in the household. The younger brother may in fact receive more attention simply because it is the older brother who will have the advantage when the father dies.

In addition, the above brothers inherit equally from the estate from the father-although the senior son may be granted something extra from the estate to compensate for the extra ritual expenses being head of the family.

Although in theory the elder brother should stand in the same kind of relationship to his younger brother as the father stands to his son, this kind of relationship cannot be maintained- particularly after the father is dead. The father can control his son because whatever wealth the household has is in his name, but each brother has his own source of wealth if any.

In principle, the same subservience was postulated in relation to one's elder brother. Younger siblings often show the same respect to the elder brother the father usually enjoys. May be , in their everyday activities they do not wait for the permission of the elders , in general, however ,in not so distant past elder brothers were accorded, at least in public, the deference due to their position in the family; and the same restraint was observed by a younger brother in suppressing all show of affection towards his wife and children before an elder brother, as before his father. Family conventions require that husband will not display any affection for the wife in front of the elders including the elder brother. Even if she is sick, the husband should not say this to his elder brother-but if younger brother is there, he can be asked to go for medicine. Traditionally village people believe that every man has got five fathers, and it is his duty to obey them without question, whatever they ask him to do. They are, his father, his elder brother, his king, his guru and his friends.

It would seem from the above that the distinction between brothers is perhaps most important after childhood; and its all the more important that brothers stick together in economic and political matters because they have more power as a group than as individuals. This combined with the power of traditional respect for the elder brother means that it will be the elder brother who makes decisions after taking into consideration the attitudes and desires of his younger brother. Often the brothers will maintain joint property even though they have set up separate households. The ideal is a joint household, but this is difficult to maintain because the wives so often quarrel with one another about who is to make what kinds of decisions within the household.

Sometimes brothers do quarrel and decide to go separate ways. This is usually at the instigation of their respective wives. What happens in effect is that the wives have forced their husbands to give precedence to the husband-wife relationship over the brother-brother relationship. When the brother-brother relationship is forced to give precedence to other relationships, it may break down completely. Brothers actually join political factions which are opposed quite bitterly to one another. They may even be the heads of these factions.

15.3 Solidarity Structures at the Village Level

During the rest of this chapter, we shall be discussing the solidarity structures which exist for relationships at the village level. Just as the individual is the basic unit of the household so on the village level the household is the basic unit. The eldest male is the head of the household and in any relationships outside of the household at the village level, the head of household represents the household. Households are interacting and the points of interaction are the respective household heads. There are essentially two types of relationships into which households enter at the village level: first, those in which caste is involved; and second, those which have to do with jajmani system.

15.4 Solidarity Structures Within the Caste System

Solidarity structures order the relationships which exist in both intra-caste and inter-caste situations. we shall discuss first the intra-caste situation and second the inter-caste situation.

15.4.1 Solidarity Structures within Intracaste Relationships :

The relationships of an intracaste nature are ordered in much the same fashion as the brother-brother relationship is ordered. The behaviour which is manifested by the interaction of brothers is very similar to that manifested when the household heads who make up the caste panchayat interact. Membership in the caste panchayat is ascribed to the same degree that the male sibling group is ascribed within the household. Relative age is important in determining who will be the head of the caste panchayat. However, instead of relative age as the prime selective factor for panchayat leadership, it is the size and wealth of the household which the individual represents. That individual who has the largest and wealthiest household behind him will be the ranking member of the caste panchayat unless of course he is much younger than any of the

other panchayat members. As the head of the household is responsible for the behaviour of all the members of the household, so the head of the caste panchayat will be held responsible for the behaviour of the members of the caste resident within the village. This responsibility is more theoretical than real, although it does have realistic elements, because, just as the eldest male of the sibling group does not have absolute authority over his siblings and must secure their consent in some sort of household council, so that ranking panchayat member must secure the consent of his fellow members. More simply stated the ranking member of the caste panchayat and the eldest male of the sibling group are each in their setting the first among equals. Like the sibling group there are times when other relationships take precedence over this particular one. Inter-caste relationships seem to take precedence over intra-caste relationships just as the father-son relationship takes precedence over the brother-brother relationship.

There is a greater frequency of interaction at the intra-caste level and less power differential between the heads of households in the same caste and hence there would seem to be a greater possibility for affection to be manifested for the relationships to be more intimate. The development of intimate and affectionate relationships depends, upon the size of the caste. If there are only four or five households living within the village it is much easier for household heads to behave as siblings toward one another. Just as one can imagine it to be a difficult thing for a large sibling group to act in concert in all matters so it is difficult for a caste panchayat of twenty or thirty members to maintain agreement on all matters affecting them. Normally, what happens is that, factions appear. There will be several groups of household heads within the Panchayat-each group acting as a unit with a head who interacts with the heads of the other groups.

15.4.2 Solidarity Structures in Inter-caste Relationships :

If the behaviour patterns manifested in intra-caste relationships bear close resemblance to those of the brother-brother relationship, then inter-caste relationships bear a similar resemblance to the father-son relationship. Just as the father gives orders and instructions to the son and expects them to be carried out, so a higher caste gives orders and instructions to a lower caste and expects them to be obeyed.As the son is responsible to the father and the father is responsible for the son so is with the upper caste and lower caste. As the son depends upon his father for support but not vice versa, so the lower castes depend upon the upper castes but not vice versa. As the father-son relationship takes precedence over any other relationship for the son but not vice versa, so the upper caste-lower caste relationship takes precedence over

any other relationship (at the village level, of course) for the lower caste but not vice versa. Just as the father-son relationship is cold, distant and formal so the inter-caste relationship is cold, distant and formal. As the father-son relationship appears to be asymmetrical so does the inter-caste relationship appear.

15.5 Solidarity Structures Within the Jajmani System

The second type of relationship at the village level which involves the head of the household acting as the representative of the unit is the jajmani-kamin relationship. This relationship is in content essentially an economic one-although it does have definite political overtones-in which the kamin is in an inferior and dependent position relative to the jajman.

The relationship is defined by the type of service which is exchanged between jajman and kamin households. As in the caste oriented relationships the point of contact is the heads of the two households, but in some ways the relationship can be regarded as an unwritten contract between two households so that the relationship can exist through more than one generation. It is up to each head of household to see that the terms of the agreement are lived up to. In the case of the joint household-brothers after the death of the father-it is the eldest brother who as head of household assumes the rights and duties of the previously existing agreement. If the jajmani household is small and the kamin household is large, it may be that the services of only part of the kamin household are needed. In that case the unneeded portion of the joint household will have to form a new relationship with another jajmani. The situation may, of course, be reversed.

The content of the jajman-kamin relationship is very similar to that of the father-son relationship. The kamin is in an inferior position with respect to the jajman because of his caste and occupation, and the behaviour patterns manifested in interaction patterns between the two are very similar to those between father and son. The kamin always shows a great deal of respect, deference and obedience to his jajman. The jajman in turn expects this and so long as that kind of behaviour is forthcoming treats the kamin as though he were a son.

The relationship for the jajman is not a strong one just as it is not for the father in the father-son relationship. For the kamin, the relationship with his jajman may take precedence over any of the others he might form at the village level. For example, the kamin will observe his obligations to his jajman before he observes the obligations he has, to his caste panchayat.

15.6 Summary

Solidarity structures at the village level operate to order the significant relationships-intra and intercaste and jajman-kamin relationships-in a manner very like the father-son and brother-brother relationships at the household level. The village can be viewed almost as the household writ large with each household as an individual writ large.

15.7 Model Questions

1. Short type question **(5 Marks)**

A. Write a short note on solidarity structure in inracaste relations.

B. Write a short note on solidarity structure in intercaste relations.

C. What do you mean by structure of solidarity?

2. Answer in detail **(10 Marks)**

A. Explain the brother-brother relationship in relation to the village solidarity system.

B. Explain the father-son relationship in relation to the village solidarity system.

C. What do you mean by structures of solidarity within jajmani system?

D. How does the structure of solidarity affect the various relationships within household?

E. What do you mean by solidarity structure in the caste system? Give a comparison between the intercaste and intracaste order of relationships.

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Unit 16 ❏ Kinship : Principles and Pattern

Structure

16.0 Objectives

After you have read this unit you should be able to describe:

● Definition of kinship system;

● The significance of kinship;

● Main approaches to the study of kinship in India;

● The principles of descent;

● The types of descent;

16.1 Introduction

Man does not live alone in society. From birth till death he is surrounded by a number of people. Some of these people are his relatives, some are friends, and some are neighbours while all others are strangers and unknown to him. He is bound to all these people who are related to him either on the basis of blood or marriage. The relations based on blood or marriage may be close or distant. The bond of blood or marriage which binds people together in groups is called kinship. According to the Dictionary of Anthropology, kinship system includes society recognized relationships based on supposed as well as actual genealogical ties. These relationships are the result of social interaction and are recognized by society.

A society is a network of interlocking groups which are related to each other through institutionalized patterns. One of the most important structural subsystems of allsocieties is the kinship system. Kinship groups occupy an important place in anindividual's life. The kinship system includes socially accepted relationshipsbased on fictional as well as actualancestral ties. These relationships are establisheddue to social interaction and accepted by the society. According to Murdock "it is astructural system of relationship in which kins are bound to one another by complexinter-locking ties. Kinship is one of the most fundamental principles for organizingindividuals into social groups, roles, categories, and genealogy."

16.2 Definition of Kinship

There are multiple definitions of kinship given by different sociologists and anthropologists in different periods of time. These definitions reflect different aspects of kinship in society. For the benefit of our discussion we are presenting here some

of these definitions.

1. Robin Fox: "Kinship is simply the relations between 'kin' that is persons related by real putative or fictive consanguinity".

2. Aberchrombie and others: "The social relationships deriving from blood ties (real and supposed) and marriage are collectively referred to as kinship".

3. A.R. Radcliffe Brown : Kinship is "a system of dynamic relations between person and person in a community, the behaviour of any two persons in any of these relations being regulated in some way, and to a greater or less extent by social usage".

To put it simply we can say the bond of blood or marriage which binds people together in group is called kinship. So the kinship system refers to a set of persons recognized as relatives either by virtue of a blood relationship or by virtue of a marriage relationship. In sociology, all blood relationships are known by a technical term, consanguinity. Similarly, all relationships through marriage are given the term affinity. For example, the relationships between mother and son/daughter, sister and brother/sister, father and son/daughter are consanguinal, while relationshipsbetween father/mother-in-law and daughter/son-in-law are affinal. Mostly, it is the social recognition of these relationships that is more important than the actual biological ties. Networks built around kin relationships play a significant role in both rural and urban social life in India.

16.3 Significance of Kinship

As described above, the kinship system refers to a set of persons recognised as relatives, either, by virtue of a blood relationship technically called consanguinity, or by virtue of a marriage relationship, that is through what is called affinity. Most of us tend to regard the kinship system into which we are born and in which weare reared as natural. It will seem natural and right to us that certain close relatives should be tabooed as marriage and sexual partners, and we feel quite certain that disastrous consequences would follow any infringement of the taboos. We may similarlythink it natural that certain classes of persons be preferred as marriage partners, or wemay on the contrary think it very unnatural that any persons be so designated. We all have very strong ideas, too, about what is the correct and proper behaviour ofdifferent kin towards each other-deference, respect, familiarity, avoidance, kindliness, protectiveness,

and so on, as the case may be. All such aspects of kinship relation stend to be taken for granted unless, or until, one is confronted with the kinship practices of other peoples. Initially, different practices may appear as disgusting or inhuman, exotic or fantastic, strange or primitive, etc. Earlier anthropologists spent a great deal of labour on trying to work out the various stages through which they believed kinship systems had progressed in the course of human history. However strange other peoples' kinship practices may at first appear to be, a closer look will usually show them to be functional. They are useful for the maintenance of the society as a whole, contributing to its continuity over time and containing the conflicts that might potentially disrupt it. This is not to say that all practices are for the best for all members of the society and for all time. One certainly need not justify customs like sati, female infanticide, childmarriage, amniocentesis or killing of the female foetus etc. One would here try to understand how these practices are (or were) consistent with the principles and valuesat work in the wider society.

16.4 Main Approaches to the Study of Kinship System in India

Sociological studies of kinship in India cover descriptions, comparisons and analytical problems based on the findings from various regions. Approaches to the study of kinship can be broadly classified under two headings (i) the Indological approach and (ii) the Anthropological approach. Here, we will discuss these approaches one by one.

1. Indological Approach : As the social institutions of Indian society are rooted in literary and learned traditions, many sociological studies have made use of textual sources for explaining the ideological and jural bases of our institutions. For example, K.M. Kapadia (1947) has used classical texts to describe Hindu kinship. Hindu Social Organisation by P.H. Prabhu (1954) is also based on Sanskrit texts. Similarly, Irawati Karve (1940, 43-44 and 1958) and G.S. Ghurye (1946, 1955) have extensively worked on Indian kinship system. Both have used textual sources to explain kinship pattern in different regions of India from a socio-historical perspective. We can, therefore, say that Indological approach to the study of kinship has provided a framework to understand the elements of continuity and change in the system (see Jain 1994).

2. Anthropological Approach: Descent and Alliance : Anthropologists have looked at kinship systems from the point of view of descent and alliance.

16.5 Descent Approach

'Descent' refers to the social recognition of the biological relationship that exists between the individuals. The 'rule of descent' refers to a set of principles by which an individual traces the descent.

16.5.1 Principles of Descent :

Descent is the principle whereby a child is socially affiliated with the group of his or her parents. In some societies the child is regarded as a descendant equally of both the father and the mother, except that titles and surnames are usually passed down along the male line. Such a system is termed Bilateral or Cognatic. The individual belongs simultaneously to several descent groups - those of the two parents, the four grandparents, the eight great-grandparents, and so on. This link is limited only by memory or by some conventionally determined cut-off point at, say, four or five degrees removal. In small intermarrying communities, membership will probably overlap, and in case of dispute or feud, the individual might find his or her loyalties divided. There are some cognatic systems where the individual has the right by descent to membership of several cognatically recruited groups, but this right is actualised only if the person is able to reside in a particular group's territory. Modern nationality laws often make this type of requirement.

16.5.2 Types of Descent :

Kinship in our society is used for establishing clear-cut corporate social units. Each one of us is a member of such a cooperating and closely bound group ofpeople. One can depend upon the help and support given by such people. Suchcooperating local groups are always larger than elementary families of spousesand their children. When these groups are recognised or defined on the basis ofshared descent, anthropologists call them descent groups. Formally speaking thereare six possible avenues for the transmission of descent group membership, fromparents to children. These are:

a. **Patrilineal Descent :** According to this rule, descent is traced through the father's or men line. Here the descent criterion is restricted to males, and only descendants of a common ancestor of the male line will be recognised as kin. These are known as agnatic or patrilineal kin.

b. **Matrilineal Descent :** Here the descent of the individual is traced through

the mother or female exclusively. The descendants are called here uterine or matrilineal kin. These two modes of tracing the descent are called "unilineal", that is, they select one "line", either the male or female. These principles or rules are not necessarily mutually exclusive within society.

c. **Bilateral Descent :** Where attributes are transmitted equally through both parents. Here no uni-lineal group can be formed but group structure can be cognatic, that is, the group of kin persons on the father's and mother's side. Membership can be acquired through either the father or the mother.

d. **Double (duo-lineal or bi-lineal) :** Where descent is traced in both the father's line as well as mother's line for different attributes such as movable property in one line and immovable in another.

e. **Parallel descent :** A very rare form of descent where descent lines are sex specific. Men transmit property to their sons while women to their daughters.

f. **Cross or alternative type descent :** This is also very rare. Here men transmit property to their daughters and women to their sons.

16.6 Functions of Descent Groups

Apart from the function of exogamy, unilineal descent groups tend to be 'corporate' in several other senses. Their members may often come together for ritual and ceremonial functions, for instance, for collective worship of lineage gods, totems or ancestors. The descent group will have a built-in authority structure, with power normally exercised by senior males, and it may well own corporate property. An individual's economic rights and responsibilities will be defined by his or her position in the descent group in many societies. Unilineal descent groups are also jural units, internally deciding their own disputes, and externally acting as a unified group in the conduct of feud, etc. For this reason, lineage structure is often coterminous with the political structure in societies lacking a centralised state structure. Lineages cannot expand indefinitely in a single locality and often segment into smaller, more manageable and economically viable lineage segments. You can see the lines of segmentation of the ground, as it were. Consider the pattern of land ownership in an Indian village; or at the pattern of village or urban settlement; a particular quarter of the village or town may be inhabited by the descendants of a single founding ancestor. Often, the large havelis are divided among brothers or step-brothers, and these quarters are

further divided among their descendants. In case a line dies out, the property would be reconsolidated.

Given the range of social functions that descent groups may potentially perform, it is little wonder that concern with the principles of unilineal descent has dominated the work of many students of comparative kinship. However, even these scholars realize that unilineal descent is not the whole story. In ancient Rome, women after marriage severed all contact with their natal group. In certain slave societies, the slave has no 'family' of his or her own. In patrilineal systems, the mother's father, mother's sister, and especially the mother's brother, are important relationships which need further discussion. To take note of the importance of relationships, the scholars have identified another principle. This has been termed the principle of complimentary filiation which explains the significant ritual and social roles of the mother's brother(s) in the lives of their sister's children. It reminds us that, in most societies, an individual is a child of both parents, in whichever way descent is formally reckoned.

16.7 Inheritance Rules

Rules of inheritance tend to co-ordinate with the reckoning of descent in most societies, but not necessarily in a one-to-one manner. In fact, it is quite often the case that certain types of property pass from father to son, and other types from mother to daughter. In most parts of India, in the past, immovable property such as land and housing, was inherited only by sons. In the absence of sons, except under rare circumstances, it goes to the nearest male relatives on the father's side. On the other hand, movable property in the form of cash and jewellery is given to the daughter at the time of her marriage, with a certain amount of jewellery also passing from the mother-in-law to the daughter-in-law.

In addition to property of various kinds, rights and obligations, esoteric knowledge, crafts and skills, etc., might be passed on in accordance with kinship roles. Succession to office to chieftainship, kingship, etc. and to other social roles and statuses, is also very often determined by kinship criteria. In such cases, the individual's status is said to be 'ascribed', not 'achieved'. It is commonly asserted that ascriptive status is accorded more importance in modern, industrial societies. There is a great deal of truth in this statement, but one should not underestimate the importance of kinship connections in modern societies too. Often one finds that in a family if father is a doctor or lawyer the son or daughter is also likely to choose the same occupation. Most of the Indian

women who have been successful in the political domain are either daughters, sisters or wives of people who have been active in politics. One such example is the Nehru family of India.

16.8 Rules of Residence

Rules of residence, meaning residence after marriage, are an important variable in a kinship system, and substantially affect the quality of personal relations within the kin network. If the husband and wife set up their own independent home after marriage, as is usually the case in modern western society, residence is said to be Neolocal. Where the wife goes to live with the husband in his parents' home, residence is described as Virilocal, Patrilocal, or Patrivifulocal, and where the husband moves to live with the wife, it is termed Matrilocal. Rules of residence may or may not 'harmonise' with the rules of descent.On the whole, patrilineal descent systems correlate with either neolocal or patrivifulocal residence patterns. However, matrilineal descent systems may be combined with all three types of residence. It is also combined with what is called Avanculocal residence, that is, residence with the mother's brothers.

16.9 Patriarchy and Matriarchy

A society is said to have a patriarchal structure when a number of factors coincide, i.e. when descent is reckoned patrilineally, when inheritance of major property is from father to son, when residence is patrilocal, and when authority is concentrated in the hands of senior males. There is, however, no society on earth, nor any society actually known to have existed, whose features are the exact reverse of these. For even in matrilineal, matrilocal systems, which are fairly rare, major property is usually controlled by males. And authority is normally exercised by males, though women may well have a higher status in the family and greater powers of decision-making than in the patriarchal set up. Some anthropologists assert that in societies with very simple technology and minimal property, relations between the sexes are relatively egalitarian, whether descent is formally matrilineal, patrilineal or bilateral, but others insist that women, and children, have played subordinate roles in all human societies. For this reason, the term 'matriarchy', though often found in the literature, is probably a misnomer, best avoided, and there is certainly no conclusive evidence to support the view that matriarchy was a universal early stage in the development of kinship systems.

In India, we generally find the patrilineal and matrilineal descent systems. Of the

two, patrilineal system is more common. The description and analysis of kin relationships in a descent group have given us a fairly comprehensive sociological understanding of certain types of kinship systems in India. For example, E.K. Gough (1956) has discussed the unity of the lineage with corporate rights on land. She has focused on roles and inter-personal relationships in the wider kinship. T.N. Madan (1965) has studied the role of kinship as an organising principle in the Kashmiri Brahmin society. He has brought out the strong patrilineal ideology that characterises kinship system of the Kashmiri Pandits. We already see in detail how the study of descent groups has helped our understanding of patrilineal kinship system in North India. Sociologists like, A.C. Mayer, T.N. Madan, Oscar Lewis while studying kinship organisation in North India, have taken the descent approach. They have described in detail various levels of kin groups and their activities. In sociological studies the terms 'line', 'lineal', 'lineage' etc. with or without the prefix 'patri' or 'matri' have in the past been used in at least four different ways.

1. They have been used to denote corporate descent groups, i.e., lineage proper,

2. Often employed to denote the chosen line of inheritance, succession etc. in a given society,

3. In the study of relationship terminologies the expression "two line prescription" has sometimes been used to refer to terminological structures which are consistent with "bilateral cross-cousin marriage",

4. Regardless of which lines (matriline or patriline or both) are chosen for the above three purposes, lineal relatives refer to one's ascendants or descendants. Lineal relatives are those who belong to the same ancestral stock in a direct line of descent. Opposed to lineal relatives are collaterals who belong to the same ancestral stock but not in a direct line of descent.

All of these usages, except the fourth, are context specific. i.e., they refer to particular situations. Here, social relations and groups are emphasised and sociologists study them in terms of interaction, norms and values of a particular society. For example, some scholars, following the theory of lineages or descent groups, have discussed the relation between mother's brother and sister's son in patrilineal societies. They use the idea of 'complementary filiation', i.e., the relationship ego one has with the relatives on the mother's side in a patrilineal society. In a matrilineal society it refers to the relationship ego one has with the relatives on his father's side. In a patrilineal society a person's maternal group is the affinal group of that person's father.

This is the group, from which the person's father has taken a wife. For this reason some sociologists like to consider the question of affinity in its own right, rather than as a complementary set of relationships. We may say that in descent approach, the emphasis is laid on social organisation of descent groups. As a result, there is little focus on the 'affinity' aspect of relationships. Now, in the next sub-section we look at the approach, which focuses on relationships arising out of marriage alliance.

16.10 Alliance Approach

Another concept that figured prominently in the study of kinship systems in India is that of alliance. Kinship includes the consideration of the patterns and rules of marriage. When a sociologist pays special attention to these aspects of kinship, we say that he/she is following the alliance approach to understand the patterns of kinship. Many studies of kinship in India have focused on marriage as an alliance between two groups and on kinship terminology, as a reflection of the nature of alliance. Because of their concentration on relationships arising out of marriage, we say that these studies follow the alliance approach. The main exponent of this approach is Louis Dumont (1950, 1953, 1957 a and b, 1959, 1962 and 1966). He has emphasised the role played by marriage in the field of kinship in South India. By showing the opposition between consanguines and affines as reflected in the Dravidian kinship terminology, Dumont has made an important contribution to our understanding of kinship system in India in general and of South India in particular. He has applied to South India a structural theory of kinship. It brings out the repetition of intermarriage through the course of generations. This pattern highlights the classification of kinsmen into two categories of parallel and cross relatives. The alliance approach to the study of kinship has helped sociologists to discuss and explain the distinction between bride-givers and bride-takers. In addition, it has also included the discussion on the notion of hypergamy (i.e., the bride takers are always superior to bride-givers), practice of dowry in relation to hypergamy and ideas of exchange in marriage.

16.11 Types of Kinship

Most of the sociologist and anthropologist agree that kinship is based on two broad catagories : birth and marriage. Some others thinker say third category of kinship involves social ties. These three types of kinship are:

1. **Affinal Kinship:** The bond of marriage is called 'affinal' kinship. When a

person marries, he establishes relationship not only with the girl whom he marries but also with a number of other people in the girl's family. Moreover, it is not only the person marrying who gets bound to the family members of the girl but his family members also get bound to the family members of the girl. Thus, a host of relations are created as soon as a marriage takes place. For examples, after marriage a person becomes not only a husband but he also becomes brother-in-law and son-in-law. Here it may be noted that in English language a number of relations created by marriage are referred to by the same term. Thus, the same term brother-in-law is used for bahnoi, sala, jija and saddhu. On marriage a person also becomes foofa, nandoi and mausa. Likewise a girl on marriage becomes not only a wife but also becomes a daughter-in-law, a chachi,/bhabhi,/ devrani/ jethani/ mami etc. Thus marriage creates a host of relationships which are called affinal kinship..

2. **Consanguineous Kinship:** The bond of blood is called consanguineous kinship. The consanguineous kin are related through blood whereas the affinal kin are related through marriage. The bond between parents and their children and that between siblings is consanguineous kinship. Siblings are the children of the same parents. Thus, son, brother, sister, uncle (chacha), elder uncle (tau) nephew and cousin are consanguineous kin, i.e. related through blood. In this connection, it may be pointed out that an adopted child is treated as if it were one's own biologically produced child. Thus, blood relationship may be established not only on biological basis but also on the basis of social recognition.

3. **Social kinship:** Schneider argued that not all kinship derives from blood (consanguineal) or marriage (affinal). There are also social kinships, where individuals not connected by birth or marriage may still have a bond of kinship, he said. By this definition, two people who live in different communities may share a bond of kinship through a religious affiliation or a social group, such as the Kiwanis or Rotary service club, or within a rural or tribal society marked by close ties among its members. A major difference between consanguineal or affinal and social kinship is that the latter involves "the ability to terminate absolutely the relationship" without any legal recourse, stated Schneider in his 1984 book, "A Critique of The Study of Kinship".

16.12 Degree of Kinship

On the basis of nearness or distance, relatives can be classified in several categories. Some relatives are very close, direct and near, for example, father-son, sister-brother, husband-wife. They are called primary kin. According to Dr. Dubey, there are eight such primary kins. They are husband-wife, father-son, mother-daughter, father-daughter, mother-son, younger-elder brothers, younger-elder sisters and sister-brother.

1. **Secondary Kins:** They are primary kin of primary kin. In other words, they are related through primary kin. They are not our primary kin but are the primary kin of our primary kin, hence our secondary kin. For example, father's brother (chacha) and sister's husband (bahnoi) are secondary kin. The father is one's primary kin and his brother is the primary kin of father. Therefore, father's brother is my secondary kin, the primary kin of primary kin. Similarly, sister is my primary kin but her husband is my secondary kin.

2. **Tertiary Kins:** There are tertiary kins. They are secondary kin of our primary kin and the primary kin of our secondary kin. Thus the wife of brother-in-law (sala) called sarhaj in Hindi, is tertiary kin because brother-in-law is one's secondary kin and his wife is the primary kin of brother in-law, similarly, the brother-in-law ofone's brother is one's tertiary kin because the brother is the primary kin and his the brother-in-law is the secondary kin of the brother.

16.13 Kinship Terms

Kinship terms are those terms which are used in designating kin of various types. Morgan made an important study of kinship terms. He classified these terms into (i) Classificatory system, and (ii) Descriptive system.

(i) **Classificatory System:** Under the classificatory system the various kin are included in one category and all are referred to by the same term. Thus, the term 'uncle' is a classificatory term. It is used for chacha, mama, mausa, foofa, tau, etc. Similarly the terms 'nephew' 'cousin' and 'in-law' are classificatory terms. The Sema Naga of Assam use aja for mother, father's brother's wife, and mother's sister. Among kuki clans, hepu, is used for father's father, mother's father; brother's son; wife's brother wife's brother's son. Thus, people of various age groups are designated by the same term. Among the Angami Nagas, the same terms are used for members of opposite sexes. The word she

stands for elder brother, wife's elder sister; husband's elder brother, elder sister's husband, brother's wife; father's brother's wife. In Hindi the word 'Sambadhin' is a classificatory term as it refers to father and mother of daughter-in-law and of son-in-law.

(ii) **Descriptive System:** Under descriptive system one term refers to only one relation. It describes the exact relation of a person towards another. For example, father is a descriptive term. Similarly, mother is a descriptive term. In Hindi we have mostly, descriptive terms. Thus the terms chacha, mama, mausa, tau, sala, bahnoi, nandoi, bhanja, bhatija, bhabhi, devar, etc. are descriptive terms and designate the speakers's exact relation. It may be remarked that there is no place in the world where either the pure descriptive or the pure classificatory system is used. Both the systems are found prevalent.

16.14 Kinship Usages

The study of kinship system does not end with the description of various kin and the basis of their classification but it also includes the study of behaviour patterns of different kin. Every relationship involves a particular type of hebaviour. The behaviour of a son towards his father is one of respect while the behaviour of husband towards wife is one of love. The behaviour of a brother towards his sister is one of affection. There are some usages which regulate the behaviour of different kin. These usages are called kinship usages. Some of these usages are the following:

(i) **Avoidance :** In all societies the usage of avoidance is observed in one form or another.

It means that the two kin should remain away from each other. In other words, they should avoid each other. They should not only avoid sexual relationship but in some cases avoid seeing the face of each other. Thus, a father-in-law (sasur) should avoid daughter-in-law. The son-in-law should avoid the mother-in-law. The purdah system in the Hindu family illustrates the usage of avoidance. Different explanations have been given for the usage of avoidance. Two of them are functionalist explanations given by Fred Eggan and G.P. Murdock. According to them, avoidance serves to foster further and more serious trouble between relatives. The third is the Freudian explanation according to which avoidance represent a sort of institutionalized neurotic symptom.

(ii) **Joking Relationship:** It is the reverse of avoidance relationship. Under it a relation is permitted to tease or make fun of the other. The relationship between devar-bhabhi, jija-sali, is joking relationship. The joking may amount to exchange of abuse and vulgar reference to sex.

(iii) **Teknonymy :** The word 'teknonymy' has been taken from the Greek word and was used in anthropology for the first time by Taylor. According to this usage a kin is not referred to directly but he is referred to through another kin. A kin becomes the medium of reference between two kin. Thus in traditional Hindu family a wife does not utter the name of her husband. She calls him through her son or daughter. He is referred to by her as the father of Guddu or Tannu.

(iv) **Avunculate :** This kinship usage is a peculiar feature of matriarchal system. It gives the maternal uncle (mama) a prominent place in the life of his nephews and nieces. He has special obligations towards them which exceed those of father. He has a prior right over their loyalties. He comes first among all male relatives.

(v) **Amitate :** When a special role is given to the father's sister, it is known as amitate. The father's sister gets more respect than the mother.

(vi) **Couvade :** This is a queer usage which is found among many primitive tribes like the Khasis and the Todas. Under this usage, the husband is made to lead the life of an invalid along with his wife whenever she gives birth to a child. He refrains from active work and takes sick diet. He observes the same taboos which are observed by his wife. This kinship usage thus involves both the husband and wife.

Kinship usages accomplish two major tasks. First, they create groups; special groups; special groupings of kin. This marriage assigns each mother a husband, and makes her children his children, thereby creating a special group of father, mother and children, which we call "family".

The second major function of kinship usages is to govern the role relationships betweenkin; that is how one kinsman should behave in a particular kinsman's presence, or what one kinsman owes to another. Kinship assigns guidelines for interactions between persons. It defines proper, acceptable role relationship between father and daughter between brother and sister, between son-in-law and mother-in-law and between fellow lineage members and clansmen. Kinship thus acts as a regularizer of social life.

It may, however, be noted that rules governing the relationship between a pair of kinsmen may be highly "patterned" in some societies to allow little leeway for spontaneity or individual differences, while in other societies, such rules may be less "patterned" so as to leave much room for individualised behaviour.

16.15 Summary

Marriage is a universal social institution. It is associated with mutual rights and obligations. It serves protective, regulatory, emotional and economic functions. Marriage ties result in formation of kinship network which organize individuals into social groups. In Hindu society marriage is deeply linked with religion and considered a sacrament. Hindu Marriage is a sacrament although certain changing trends can be observed due to various factors like urbanisation, industrialization, legislations and education. The classical thinkers like Durkheim views family as an important institution for maintaining social order and a moral society. Weber considers marriage as an essential institution which regulates the behaviour and desires of individuals. The modern thinkers relates marriage customs to habitus and cyclical changes in marriage to changes in economic system. Becker has analysed marriage on the basis of gains to trade model. Ulrich Beck elaborates on risks associated with marriage in the contemporary risk society. The post-modern thinkers like Foucault emphasize on deconstructing the institutions of family and marriage. Due the forces of globalization, modernization and legislations, changing trends can be observed in Hindu marriage. In spite of several changes, due to several customs and traditions, gender inequality can be observed in certain marriage practices and rituals. Divorce and widowhood are considered to be a stigma for women in Indian society. The issue of remarriage of women is associated with several religious and cultural practices.

16.16 Model Questions

1. Short question **(5 Marks)**

    A. Define kinship system.

    B. Write down the significance of kinship.

    C. What is the alliance approach to the kinship system?

    D. What is affinal kinship?

    E. What is social kinship?

    F. What do you mean by 'rules of residence'?

2. Answer in detail   (10 Marks)

    A. Discuss the types of kinship.

    B. Write down the functions of kinship.

    C. Discuss the descent approach of kinship.

    D. Discuss the alliance approach of kinship.

    E. What do you mean by inheritance rules?

    F. Discuss the major approach to the study of kinship.

    G. Define the kinship system ? Illustrate the types of kinship.

    H. Explain the kinship term as classified by Morgan ? write down the significance of kinship.

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Module V
Religion: Tradition and Modernity

Unit 17 ❏ Religion and Society

Structure

17.0 Objectives

The unit looks into the subject of religion to understand its associated aspects like—

- The Sociological Approach.

- The history of religion.

- Important sociological theories of religion.

- Anthropological Approach to understand primitive rituals and beliefs.

- Inter-relationship between religion and social change.

17.1 Introduction

Modern societies have generally been recognized as sites of human engagement that undermine the role of the spiritual/transcendental in the actual course of everyday human existence everywhere this has rarely been the case. The general trend of thinking within the social sciences and more specifically within sociology has been that the growing rationalization and secularization of human knowledge must result in a state of disenchantment of the transcendental, more specifically, the world of religion. While it is true that there are modern societies where religion has been successfully relegated to the domain of the private and the personal, it is equally true that in other modern societies, religion persists, one might even say that in many of these societies religious consciousness co-exists with its modern counterpart.

In acknowledging this relationship of religion and society, it is important to stress at the very outset that notwithstanding the modernist contention on religion both within sociology and other fields of the social sciences there has been an active intellectual engagement that seeks to understand and probe the various dimensions of this society-religion interconnection. Within sociology this relationship has been viewed in many different ways not only highlighting the specificities of theoretical traditions but also the methodological underpinnings of that which constitutes religion in the modern world. From its location in the discipline of sociology, this module attempts to explore the multi-faceted relationship that exists between religion and society not only as an ongoing theoretical concern but also as an empirical object that merits its own sets of observations, analysis and interpretation. It may be useful to point out here that as a subject of sociological engagement, religion has from the very beginning occupied an important place of theoretical engagement within the discipline of sociology. In their own ways all the major classical sociologists from Marx, Durkheim, Weber etc., invested a huge amount of intellectual engagement with the field of religion.

Given the vast diversity of religious practices that exist within society, the issue of identity emerges as significant not only in the domain of the religious context but also in terms of how these identities come to be represented in the everyday life of the believers. On the one hand, we consider how Hindu nationalism emerges as an ideology in the context of modern Indian society, on the other, we look at the growth of secularism and how secularism as an ideology and practice has sought to configure a distinctive relationship between religion and society in modern India.Continuity and change in the context of religion-society interrelationship. While continuity and change

affects the working of this relationship in all societies everywhere in the world, it is both relevant and significant to understand how a religion changes for its practitioners as a result of diverse forces that act upon it both internally and externally.

17.2 Sociological Approach of Religion

From the Latin religio (respect for what is sacred) and religare (to bind, in the sense of an obligation), the term religion describes various systems of belief and practice concerning what people determine to be sacred or spiritual. Throughout history, and in societies across the world, leaders have used religious narratives, symbols, and traditions in an attempt to give more meaning to life and understand the universe. Some form of religion is found in every known culture, and it is usually practiced in a public way by a group. The practice of religion can include feasts and festivals, God or gods, marriage and funeral services, music and art, meditation or initiation, sacrifice or service, and other aspects of culture.

While some people think of religion as something individual because religious beliefs can be highly personal, religion is also a social institution. Social scientists recognize that religion exists as an organized and integrated set of beliefs, behaviours, and norms centred on basic social needs and values. Moreover, religion is a cultural universal found in all social groups. For instance, in every culture, funeral rites are practiced in some way, although these customs vary between cultures and within religious affiliations. Despite differences, there are common elements in a ceremony marking a person's death, such as announcement of the death, care of the deceased, disposition, and ceremony or ritual. These universals, and the differences in how societies and individuals experience religion, provide rich material for sociological study.

In studying religion, sociologists distinguish between what they term the experience, beliefs, and rituals of a religion. Religious experience refers to the conviction or sensation that one is connected to "the divine." This type of communion might be experienced when people are praying or meditating. Religious beliefs are specific ideas that members of a particular faith hold to be true, such as that Jesus Christ was the son of God, or believing in reincarnation. Another illustration of religious beliefs is that different religions adhere to certain stories of world creation. Religious rituals are behaviours or practices that are either required or expected of the members of a particular group, such as bar mitzvah or confession (Barkan and Greenwood 2003).

17.2.1 The History of Religion as a Sociological Concept :

In the wake of 19th century European industrialization and secularization, three social theorists attempted to examine the relationship between religion and society: Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, and Karl Marx. They are among the founding thinkers of modern sociology.

As stated earlier, French sociologist Émile Durkheim (1858-1917) defined religion as a "unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things". To him, the sacred meant extraordinary-something that inspired wonder and which seemed connected to the concept of "the divine." Durkheim argued that "religion happens" in society when there is a separation between the profane (ordinary life) and the sacred. A rock, for example, isn't sacred or profane as it exists. But if someone makes it into a headstone, or another person uses it for landscaping, it takes on different meanings-one sacred, one profane.

Durkheim is generally considered the first sociologist who analyzed religion in terms of its societal impact. Above all, Durkheim believed that religion is about community: it binds people together (social cohesion), promotes behaviour consistency (social control), and offers strength for people during life's transitions and tragedies (meaning and purpose). By applying the methods of natural science to the study of society, he held that the source of religion and morality is the collective mind-set of society and that the cohesive bonds of social order result from common values in a society. He contended that these values need to be maintained to maintain social stability.

Religion then provided differing degrees of "social cement" that held societies and cultures together. Faith provided the justification for society to exist beyond the mundane and partial explanations of existence as provided in science, even to consider an intentional future: "for faith is before all else an impetus to action, while science, no matter how far it may be pushed, always remains at a distance from this".

But what would happen if religion were to decline? This question led Durkheim to posit that religion is not just a social creation but something that represents the power of society: when people celebrate sacred things, they celebrate the power of their society. By this reasoning, even if traditional religion disappeared, society wouldn't necessarily dissolve.

17.2.2 Classical Sociology: Émile Durkheim :

Durkheim's sociological analysis of religion in The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life (1912) was an example of this. In this work he was not interested in the theological questions of God's existence or purpose, but in developing a very secular, sociological question: Whether God exists or not, how does religion function socially in a society? He argued that beneath the irrationalism and the "barbarous and fantastic rites" of both the most primitive and the most modern religions is their ability to satisfy real social and human needs. "There are no religions which are false" he said. Religion performs the key function of providing social solidarity in a society. The rituals, the worship of icons, and the belief in supernatural beings "excite, maintain or recreate certain mental states" that bring people together, provide a ritual and symbolic focus, and unify them. This type of analysis became the basis of the functionalist perspective in sociology. He explained the existence and persistence of religion on the basis of the necessary function it performed in unifying society.

Whereas Durkheim saw religion as a source of social stability, German sociologist and political economist Max Weber (1864-1920) believed it was a precipitator of social change. He examined the effects of religious belief on economic activities and noticed that heavily Protestant societies-such as those in the Netherlands, England, Scotland, and Germany-were the most highly developed capitalist societies and that their most successful business and other leaders were Protestant. In his writing The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (1905), he contends that the Protestant work ethic influenced the development of capitalism by overturning the traditional anti-materialist Christian values of poverty.

17.2.3 The Protestant Work Ethic in the Information Age :

Max Weber (1904) posited that, in Europe in his time, Protestants were more likely than Catholics to reflect the values of hard work and savings conducive to capitalist ideology. Focusing on Calvinism, he showed that Protestant values influenced the rise of capitalism and helped create the modern world order. Weber thought the emphasis on community in Catholicism versus the emphasis on individual achievement in Protestantism made a difference. Weber's century-old claim that the Protestant work ethic led to the development of capitalism has been one of the most important and controversial topics in the sociology of religion. In fact, some scholars have found little merit to his contention when applied to contemporary society.

The work ethic in the information age has been affected by tremendous cultural and social change, just as workers in the mid to late 19th century were influenced by the wake of the Industrial Revolution. Factory jobs tend to be simple and uninvolved and require very little thinking or decision making on the part of the worker. Today, the work ethic of the modern workforce has been transformed, as more thinking and decision making is required. Employees also seek autonomy and fulfillment in their jobs, not just wages. Higher levels of education have become necessary, as well as people management skills and access to the most recent information on any given topic. The information age has increased the rapid pace of production expected in many jobs.

17.2.4 Karl Marx on Religion:

German philosopher, journalist, and revolutionary socialist Karl Marx (1818-1883) also studied the social impact of religion. He believed religion reflects the social stratification of society and that it maintains inequality and perpetuates the status quo. For him, religion was just an extension of working-class (proletariat) economic suffering: "Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people".

In reviewing the development of the Sociology of Religion, it is necessary to comment on some contributions that stood outside the positivistic, evolutionary tradition. In his early works with Engels, Karl Marx (1818-1883) concentrated on the political aspects of religion and its use or abuse as a means of moral and intellectual repression. According to Marx, the discussion of labour in a capitalist society, the development of the structure of the market and the consequent exploitation of labour by subjugating humans to the products of their own labour, led to a condition of alienation of humans. Humans, who were unable to unable to regulate their own world, turned to religion. This approach precisely shifted the focus to a more materialist, pragmatic critique of religion.

Marx observed that there is a parallel between religious and socio-economic activity. Marx and Engels saw religion as a social product, emerging out of social relations. Religion did not exist all by itself, independent of the social and economic forces. It became a means to control the masses and an instrument in legitimizing injustice.

It was during the Renaissance and the Reformation that the authority of religious

institutions was questioned. Science, up until then had been under the direct control of the Church. A protest against religion began with the understanding that it was necessary to get rid of religion if humanity had to progress, as it posed as an obstacle to scientific, rational thought. Up until then, science had been but a humble hand maiden of the Church. At the same time for the growth of material production, the bourgeois required a science that could explain the physical properties of natural objects. When science and reason rebelled against the Church, the bourgeoisie joined this struggle. Along with a struggle against feudalism, it was also a struggle against an older belief system that restricted rational thought. It was the bourgeoisie class that attempted to replace the Church's feudalism with a religious belief system more compatible with industrial growth and materialism. This led to the resultant Protestant Reformation. (Engels 1880) Protestantism was more compatible with materialism since it preached a doctrine of 'calling'. For the bourgeois, Protestantism justified accumulation of wealth, while for the lower classes it promoted a strong work ethic of hard work.

In his work The Introduction to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right (1844), Marx wrote, 'Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world. It is the opium of the people'. Fear had created the gods. The helplessness of the oppressed in their struggle against the exploiters led to a belief in a better life beyond the grave. The hope of a reward in the form of seeking heaven after death caused them to be more humble in accepting their sufferings on earth. Escape is the essential thing that religion offered the oppressed. While for those who are the owners of means of production, it offered an ideology, a system that legitimized poverty, injustice and suffering as the will of God. Marx states thus, 'The social principles of Christianity preach the necessity of a ruling and an oppressed class, and all they have for the latter is the pious wish that the former will be charitable…The abolition of religion, as the illusory happiness of the people, is required for their real happiness. The demand to give up the illusions about its condition is the demand to give up a condition which needs illusions. Religion was a false consciousness, an illusionary happiness. It preached the existence of a class structure and validated its unjust nature. A critique of religion was necessary according to Marx, so as to make humans see reason, to think and act and shape their reality according to reason.

For Marx, religion was only an illusion, God a human creation and not the other way round. Religion and the capitalist mode of production both were the causes of man's alienation albeit in different ways. Religion stripped humans of their most

valued ideals and projected them onto a supernatural being, a deity. Like any other dominant ideology, religion then legitimizes the ideas of the ruling class, in this case, the bourgeois. Capitalism on the other hand, projected human-like values to the products of human labour, alienating man's labour.

Religion's ideological function is, for Marx, related to the idea of reification. Reification occurs when the social character of labor becomes objectified and obscured by ideologies in which "divine law" (rather than human beings with particular interests) is viewed as the true author of social relations. Reification thus conceals that which is actually arbitrary and socially changeable by representing it as immutably given. As such, reification is an excellent form of social control, since the workers control themselves rather than forcing the owners to control them in visibly unjust or brutal ways. As religion robs humans of their merits projecting them to a god, so does the capitalist economy rob us of our labour, transforming it to another commodity, into the hands of those who can buy it. Religion strips humans of qualities and assigns them to a supernatural being, thus being just another kind of fetishism.

Thus Engels wrote in Anti-Duhring (1878) how we have already seen, more than once, that in existing bourgeois society, men were dominated by the economic conditions created by themselves, by the means of production which they themselves have produced, as if by an external force. So religion would not vanish unless the social conditions that accompanied a belief in religion were removed. As long as humans were made to believe that an external force held some power over them, whether economic or social, religion would exist and accompany the ongoing class struggles.

For Durkheim, Weber, and Marx, who were reacting to the great social and economic upheaval of the late 19th century and early 20th century in Europe, religion was an integral part of society. For Durkheim, religion was a force for cohesion that helped bind the members of society to the group, while Weber believed religion could be understood as something separate from society. Marx considered religion inseparable from the economy and the worker. Religion could not be understood apart from its ideological role in perpetuating or mystifying the inequalities of capitalist society. Despite their different views, these social theorists all believed in the centrality of religion to society.

17.3 Anthropological Approaches to the Study of Ritual and Belief in Non-Western Societies

a) Edward Burnett Taylor on Beliefs as Mistaken Inferences in 'Primitive' Culture: A leading figure of nineteenth-century evolutionary anthropology, Edward Taylor, in Primitive Culture (1871), argues that the study of culture and civilization allows for the understanding of the general laws of human thought and action. Just as one finds uniform laws in the realm of nature, one can apply the same principle to civilizations. According to Taylor, the job of the student of culture is to find general principles of human action. One can embark on this study by analyzing "survivals", those elements in the present that are carried over from the past, reflecting beliefs, customs and conditions of an older time. Survivals include traditional games, popular sayings, customs, and 'superstitious belief'. According to Taylor, many parallels have been observed between ancient human tribes and the existing savage tribes and hence, by studying the present-day 'savage-tribes', one could learn about this story of civilization.

In his book Theories of Primitive Religion (1965) E.E. Evans-Pritchard critiques the theories of evolutionary anthropologists. The way both Taylor and Frazer argue is a form of a priori speculation. It proceeds by imagining oneself in place of a person living in primitive conditions and recreating the logic that would lead one to uphold primitive beliefs. "A logical construction of the scholar's mind is posited on the primitive man, and put forward as an explanation of his beliefs." It is possible that this is how 'primitive' beliefs came about, but there is no way to verify it.

b) Functional (and Structural) Explanations of Belief and Ritual by Bronisaw Malinowski (1884-1942) goes back to the distinction between magic and religion, as well as magic and science. His work emerges as a critique of those who do not demarcate a scientific approach from a magical one within primitive society. According to to Malinowski, it is not possible to carry on everyday life without sound generalizations and logical reasoning, which are needed for normal activities and are the basis of production. However, no matter how extensive one's knowledge, there will always be limitations, and it is never possible to completely eradicate an unexpected turn of events. He traces the need for, and existence of, a special type of ritual activity (known as magic) in both modern and primitive society, where one realizes the impotence and limits of knowledge. Ordinary work and skill is never replaced by magic, which shows that science doesn't develop out of magic (as Frazer had claimed).

The force of magic can only be produced within a traditionally-defined dramatic and emotional milieu, which creates the atmosphere of the supernatural. He emphasizes the functional nature of magic in terms of individual psychology and its cultural and social value.

One finds a different kind of functionalism in Alfred Radcliffe-Brown (1881-1955), who also draws on the structuralism of Durkheim. In his influential work, The Andaman Islanders, he examines different types of social action and devotes significant attention to "ceremonial customs." In interpreting these customs, he shows how "every custom and belief of a primitive society plays some determinate part in the social life of the community, just as every organ of a living body plays some part in the general life of the organism." (Radcliffe-Brown in Morris 1987: 124) According to Morris, Radcliffe-Brown's interest is not in historical origins of social institutions, but in the interpretation of their "meaning," or their function.

c) Ritual in terms of Rebellion, Communities and Mystification : When theorizing ritual, Max Gluckman's work and subsequently Edward Norbeck's critique pose an interesting question. Durkheim's idea of ritual as confirming group solidarity didn't quite fit for Gluckman, who in his work on South East Africa looked at examples of certain rites where people in a subordinate position performed a reversed role in the ritual. For instance, women would assert dominance over men in a certain rite. Gluckman called these "rituals of rebellion" embedded in a "repetitive social system", where the act of rebellion had rebels but no revolutionaries, and ritual eventually supported the same structure. Edward Norbeck in his critique suggests that instead of rituals of rebellion, these could be seen as simply part of a larger category of rituals that allow for a momentary relaxation of social rules. Thus, ritual could be seen as exaggerating "real conflicts" but affirming unity despite conflict. (Morris 1987: 248-251)

The terms 'rites of passage', usually associated with initiation rituals, came into usage more broadly as a concept when developed by Arnold van Gennep. The term depicts transition and change of status through ritual. The ritual can be for different occasions such as marking a new stage in a person's life or change of seasons or rituals associated with territorial movements, initiation into groups etc. All rites of passage have an underlying pattern with three phases: the first stage is a separation from the previous state, place, time or status.

d) The characteristics of the liminal personae ("threshold people") are necessarily ambiguous, since they cannot be identified with the web of classifications

that normally persist. This ambiguity is expressed in diverse ways. It may include subjecting the liminal entities to nudity or disguising them as monsters, inflicting some arbitrary punishment, expecting humble behavior, erasing distinctions of rank or status or rendering them uniform. "It is as though they are being reduced or ground down to a uniform condition to be fashioned anew and endowed with additional powers to enable them to cope with their new situation in life."

What Turner finds interesting about liminality is the space it produces, characterized by lowliness and sacredness, allowing for homogeneity and comradeship. In such rites, one is presented with a momentary image of a generalized social bond that has ceased to exist and yet it is about to be classified into a variety of hierarchical, structural bonds. According to Turner, the liminal phase is not simply a distinction between "sacred" and "secular"; rather, "this 'sacred' component is acquired by the incumbents of positions during the rites de passage, through which they changed positions. Something of the sacredness of that transient humility and modelessness goes over, and tempers the pride of the incumbent of a higher position or office." (Turner 2002 [1969]: 360). Turner states that this isn't simply about giving legitimacy to existing social structures but is rather a recognition of an "essential and generic human bond, without which there could be no society".

Liminal situations are also almost everywhere attributed to magico-religious properties and often accompanied by ideas of danger, inauspicion, pollution, taboo etc. Turner suggests that this should seen from the perspective of maintaining the status quo, and thus the form of the communitas must appear as dangerous or anarchical and have to be surrounded by conditions and prescriptions.

e) Ritual as Mystification : Peter Van Der Veer compares Maurice Bloch's approach towards studying rituals to Clifford Geertz's, for whom symbols, as vehicle, allow for meaning to be communicated. These symbols constitute the worldview of a society, and ritual does the significant job of retaining this worldview by making it seem real. While society actually changes over the course of time, ritual action retains the traditional worldview.

Bloch, also interested in studying symbols, critiques the functionalist, intellectualist and the symbolist approach for assuming that rituals are as they are in order to fulfill one particular function that is explanation. According to Bloch, even a less simplified approach like Turner's which brings together the symbolic, emotional and sociological aspects of ritual doesn't quite situate the symbolic in the social. This, he states, is not

possible to do on a short-term scale. He thus attempts to study the circumcision of the Merina in Madagascar as a symbolic system being created in history. (Bloch 1986: 8)

17.4 Types of Religious Organizations

Religions organize themselves-their institutions, practitioners, and structures-in a variety of fashions. For instance, when the Roman Catholic Church emerged, it borrowed many of its organizational principles from the ancient Roman military, turning senators into cardinals, for example. Sociologists use different terms, like ecclesia, denomination, and sect, to define these types of organizations. Scholars are also aware that these definitions are not static. Most religions transition through different organizational phases. For example, Christianity began as a cult, transformed into a sect, and today exists as an ecclesia.

Cults, like sects, are new religious groups. In popular usage, this term often carries pejorative connotations. Today, the term "cult" is used interchangeably with the term new religious movement (NRM). However, almost all religions began as NRMs and gradually progressed to levels of greater size and organization. In its pejorative use, these groups are often disparaged as being secretive, highly controlling of members' lives, and dominated by a single, charismatic leader.

Controversy exists over whether some groups are cults, perhaps due in part to media sensationalism over groups like polygamous Mormons or the Peoples Temple followers who died at Jonestown, Guyana. Some groups that are controversially labelled as cults today include the Church of Scientology and the Hare Krishna movement.

A sect is a small and relatively new group. Most of the well-known Christian denominations in North America today began as sects. For example, the Presbyterians and Baptists protested against their parent Anglican Church in England, just as Henry VIII protested against the Catholic Church by forming the Anglican Church. From "protest" comes the term Protestant.

Occasionally, a sect is breakaway group that may be in tension with larger society. They sometimes claim to be returning to "the fundamentals" or to contest the veracity of a particular doctrine. When membership in a sect increases over time, it may grow into a denomination. Often a sect begins as an offshoot of a denomination, when a group of members believes they should separate from the larger group.

Some sects evolve without growing into denominations. Sociologists call these established sects.Established sects, such as the Hutterites or Jehovah's Witnesses in Canada fall halfway between sect and denomination on the ecclesia-cult continuum because they have a mixture of sect-like and denomination-like characteristics.

A denomination is a large, mainstream religious organization, but it does not claim to be official or state sponsored. It is one religion among many. For example, The Church of England in Canada, the Presbyterian Church, the United Church, and Seventh-day Adventist are all Christian denominations.

The term ecclesia, originally referring to a political assembly of citizens in ancient Athens, Greece, now refers to a congregation. In sociology, the term is used to refer to a religious group that most members of a society belong to. It is considered a nationally recognized, or official, religion that holds a religious monopoly and is closely allied with state and secular powers. Canada does not have an ecclesia by this standard.

One way to remember these religious organizational terms is to think of cults (NRMs), sects, denominations, and ecclesia representing a continuum, with increasing influence on society, where cults are least influential and ecclesia are most influential.

17.5 Religion and Social Change

Religion has historically been a major impetus to social change. In early Europe, the translation of sacred texts into everyday, non-scholarly language empowered people to shape their religions. Disagreements between religious groups and instances of religious persecution have led to mass resettlement, war, and even genocide. To some degree, the modern sovereign state system and international law might be seen as products of the conflict between religious beliefs as these were founded in Europe by the Treaty of Westphalia (1648), which ended the Thirty Years War. As outlined below, Canada is no stranger to religion as an agent of social change.

Secularization

At the same time that religion is still a major force in Western society, it is within a backdrop of societies becoming more and more secularized. Secularization as a social and historical process has been outlined by the sociologist Jose Casanova as three interrelated trends, all open to debate: 1) the decline of religious beliefs and practices in modern societies, 2) the privatization of religion, and 3) the differentiation

of the secular spheres (state, economy, science), usually understood as "emancipation" from religious institutions and norms.

Historical sociologists Émile Durkheim, Max Weber, and Karl Marx and psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud anticipated secularization, claiming that the modernization of society would bring about a decrease in the influence of religion. Weber believed membership in distinguished clubs would outpace membership in Protestant sects as a way for people to gain authority or respect.

Religious independent schools teaching from kindergarten to grade 12 receive varying degrees of public funding across Canada. In British Columbia, these schools are countering the student population declines found in the public schools and have generally increased enrolments annually.

The power of the sociological study of religion goes well beyond how we think and behave over religion. These views and behaviours spill over in fundamental ways into other important arenas within our lives. Whether we consider our views on politics, homosexuality, or our children's education, the sociological study of religion provides valuable insights into our collective behaviour.

17.6 Summary

Three different perspectives in the study of religion were discussed. While Marx held a strong critical view of religion, Durkheim appraised it as the glue that held social groups together. Weber on the other hand made a comparative analysis of world religions and the way in which religious worldviews and socio-economic activities influence each other. The common thread that links these scholarly works is their attempt to grapple with large scale changes that gripped the European society.

Sociological terms for different kinds of religious organizations are, in order of decreasing influence in society, ecclesia, denomination, sect, and cult. Religions can be categorized according to what or whom its followers worship. Many of the classical sociological theories predicted that levels of religiosity in Western societies would decline due to the process of secularization. The clash of secular and religious values in modern society produces issues that are difficult to resolve.

17.7 Model Questions

1. Answer briefly the following questions: **(5 marks)**

   a) Define religion as a sociological concept.

   b) What are the anthropological approaches to the study of rituals and beliefs in non western countries?

   c) Point out the three major theoretical perspectives on religion.

   d) Write a short note on cult.

2. Answer in detail the following questions: **(10 marks)**

   a) Write a detailed note on Durkheim about religion.

   b) Contrast the views of Weber and Marx on religion.

   c) Discuss in detail the different religious organizations.

   d) Explain he relationship between Religion and Social Change.

   e) Elaborate views of three sociological thinkers on religion.

   f) Analyse Anthropological approach of rituals and beliefs in non western countries.

   g) Describe the theoretical perspective on religion and religious organization

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Unit 18 ❑ Religion as an Institution

Structure

18.0 Objectives

18.1 Introduction

18.2 Religion: A Sociological Definition

18.3 Functions of Religion

18.5 Role of Religious institutions in Society

18.6 Summary

18.7 Model Questions

18.8 References and Suggested Readings

18.0 Objectives

From this unit students will come to know of :

● How religion is defined in sociology.

● What functions it performs in society.

● What role religion plays in social life.

● The nature and scope of religion as a social institution.

18.1 Introduction

In viewing religion as an institution, sociologists evaluate its impact on human societies. As an institution, religion has operated to standardize the religious emotions, beliefs and practices, and to spread and perpetuate them. It is a powerful instrument of social control and social integration. It is a strong bond of social unity through promoting a community of thought. It deals with divine sanctions as well as with present and future rewards and punishments. Through this, it exercises a profound influence on one's behaviour. In viewing religion as a social institution, sociologists have also evaluated its impact on individuals and society as a whole. As an institution, religion is characterized by its universality, its rituals, its sacredness and its persistence.

Religion can be viewed from individual and societal points of view both. The functions of social cohesion and social control are oriented towards the larger society while providing emotional and social support and other psychological explanations are more oriented towards the individual. Although religion, like all other institutions, has changed, it continues to be a potent force, rather with more vigour in our lives throughout the modern neo-liberal risky world. The assertion that 'God is dead' is not true for a large part of world's population. Despite the incredible growth in the importance of science and empiricism since 19th century, which has caused many people to regard religion as a superstition, an irrational belief and religiously and spirituality among people is increasing in some or the other way. At many times, religion persists in the face of scientific evidence.

Even, the men who call themselves as scientists are not fully devoid of religious beliefs and they take part in many religious rituals in the home as well as at workplace. We often hear a doctor saying that he or she will do his/her best to save the life of the patient but it is ultimately He (God) who saves. This proves that religion has always been present and has also been a prominent institution.

In traditional societies the religious and non-religious spheres of life are not sharply differentiated. But, in modern industrial societies, religion and society are not the same. The emergence of different modes of life experience leads to different meanings about life, producing a religious differentiation. Religion may still provide cohesion, but now only for sub-groups of society.

18.2 Religion - A Sociological Definition

Societies make distinctions between the sacred (anything that is considered to be part of the supernatural world and that inspires awe, respect and reverence) and the profane (anything considered to be part of the ordinary world and, thus, commonplace and familiar). This distinction is the basis for of all religions (systems of roles and norms that are organized around the sacred realm and that bind people together in social groups). Religion is a basic institution, yet it exists in many different forms because different societies give sacred meaning to a wide variety of objects, events and experiences.

Religion is not just defined in terms of superhuman agents but also in terms of textual traditions. Religion in Fitzgerald's (2000) opinion is vaguely used to refer to rituals directed towards God and that it becomes a habitual reflex than a deliberate

and sustained policy. Religion may also be used deliberately as a non-theological analytical category to make distinctions between religious and the non-religious. Fitzgerald (2000) outlines certain assumptions that lie behind the phenomenology of religion, such as, it is a universal phenomenon to be found in principle in all cultures and all human experiences. Another pervasive assumption is that religions are defined by a common faith in the transcendent or the divine-belief in superhuman agencies, or preferably in one Supreme Being, who gives meaning and purpose to human history.

In his opinion, religion should be studied as an ideological category, as an aspect of modern western ideology and as a basis of modern form of theology, with a specific location in history. Thus, according to him, the ethnocentric Judeo-Christian theological semantic association of the word religion has not been sufficiently neutralized. Attempt is made to smuggle in some ecumenical assumptions about what can and cannot be sacred or transcendental. With the onset of the twentieth century, other faiths aspired for world religions and described their eligibility based on dominant characteristics of a recognized religion.

The world religions according to Weber (1946); are the five religions (Confucian, Hinduist, Buddhist, Christianity, and Islam, Judaism) or religiously determined systems of life-regulation which have known how to gather multitudes of confessors around them. According to him, the religiously determined way of life is itself profoundly influenced by economic and political factors operating within given geographical, political, social, and national boundaries. Marx too accepts the view that religion represents human self-alienation. He declared in a famous phrase that religion has been the opium of the people. Religion defers happiness and rewards to the after-life, teaching the resigned acceptance of existing conditions in this life. Attention is thus diverted from inequalities and injustices in this world by the promise of what is to come in the next. Religion has a strong ideological element, religious beliefs and values often provide justifications for inequalities of wealth and power. In Marx's view religion in its traditional form will and should disappear.

Ambedkar (1987) also illuminates that religion is an institution or an influence and like all social influences and institutions, it may help or it may harm a society which is in its grip. It is a force which can be accepted as good without examining the form it takes and the ideal it serves.

18.3 Functions of Religion

Religion is a cultural universal because it fulfills several basic functions within human societies. It is a basic requirement of group life. In sociological terms, these include both manifest and latent functions. Among the manifest (open and stated) functions of religion are included defining the spiritual world and giving meaning to the divine.

Religion provides an explanation for events that seem difficult to understand. By contrast, latent functions or religion are unintended, covert, or hidden. Functionalists suggest that religion is a requirement for society and individual both because it serves both manifest and latent functions.

1. Religion as an Integrative Force: Durkheim believed that the primary function of religion was to preserve and solidify society. It functions to reinforce the collective unity or social solidarity of a group. Sharing the same religion or religious interpretation of the meaning of life unites people in a cohesive and building moral order.

The social cohesion is developed through rituals such as reciting prayer in the honour of God, institutions of worship (church, temple, mosque, etc.), performing Namaz, and multitudes of observances and ceremonies practised by different groups.

The unifying rituals of different faiths are also observed by individuals on the most significant occasions such as birth, marriage and death. This integrative function of religion was particularly apparent in traditional, pre-industrial societies. Durkheim was particularly concerned with a perplexing question, 'How can human societies be held together when they are generally composed of individuals and social groups with diverse interests and aspirations'. In his view, religious bonds often transcend these personal and divisive forces. It gives people certain ultimate values and ends to hold in common.

2. Creating a Moral Community: Religion provides a system of beliefs around which people may gather to belong to something greater than themselves in order to have their personal beliefs reinforced by the group and its rituals. Those who share a common ideology develop a collective identity and a sense of fellowship.

Members of moral community also share a common life. This moral community gives rise to social community through the symbolism of the sacred that supports the more ordinary aspects of social life. Religion then legitimizes society. It provides

sacred sanction for the social order and for its basic values and meanings.

3. Religion as Social Control: Frank E. Manuel (1959) had said that 'religion was a mechanism which inspired terror, but terror for the preservation of society'. While conservatives have valued religion for its protective function, radicals have also often recognized that religion can be a support of the established order, and have, consequently, been critical of religion.

Friedrich Engels, a life-long close associate of Karl Marx, once noted that religion could make the masses 'submissive to the behests of the masters it had pleased God to place over them'. Durkheim also emphasized that besides acting as an integrating force, religion also reinforces social control in oppressive society.

Religious beliefs can influence the conduct of those who believe in them. It keeps people 'in line' through folkways and mores. It provides a foundation for mores of society. Religious sanctions are sought for certain desirable patterns of behaviour to persist in society in the forms of mores. Thus, many taboos in various cultures have religious sanctions, e.g., the taboo against eating of pork in Jewish and Muslims and cows meat in Hindus.

4. Provides Rites of Passage: Religion helps us in performing ceremonies and rituals related to rites of passage (birth, marriage, death and other momentous events) which give meaning and a social significance to our life.

5. Religion as Emotional Support: Religion is a sense of comfort and solace to the individuals during times of personal and social crises such as death of loved ones, serious injury, etc. This is especially true when something 'senseless' happens. It gives them emotional support and provides consolation, reconciliation and moral strength during trials and defeats, personal losses and unjust treatments.

It provides a means whereby man can face the crises and vicissitudes of life with strength and fortitude. The concepts of karma and transmigration among Hindus and Jesus Christ as son of God and prayer among Christians seek to provide such fortitude and strength.

Thomas O'Dea (1970) writes, 'Men need emotional support in the face of uncertainty, consolation when confronted with disappointments and anxiety.' It is often said that visiting places of worship and holy premises serves as outlets for releasing tension and stress.

Religion offers consolation to oppressed peoples also by giving them hope that they can achieve salvation and eternal happiness in the afterlife. Religion increases the 'God will provide' the attitude.

6. Religion Serves a Means to Provide Answers to Ultimate Questions: Why are we here on earth? Is there a supreme being? What happens after death? All religions have certain notions and beliefs that provide answers to the above questions. These beliefs are based on the faith that life has a purpose, and there is someone or something that controls the universe. It defines the spiritual world and gives meaning to the divine. Because of its beliefs concerning people's relationships to a beyond, religion provides an explanation for events that seem difficult to understand.

7. Religion as a Source of Identity: Religion gives individuals a sense of identity-a profound and positive self-identity. It enables them to cope effectively with the many doubts and indignation of everyday life. Religion may suggest people that they are not worthless or meaningless creatures and thus helps them alleviating the frustrating experiences of life which sometimes force a person to commit suicide. According to Thomas Luckman (1983), 'The prime function of religion is to give personal meaning to life'.

In industrial societies, religion helps to integrate newcomers by providing a source of identity. For example, Bangladeshi immigrants in India, after settling in their new social environment, came to be identified as Indian Muslims. In a rapidly changing world, religious faith often provides an important sense of belonging.

8. Legitimating Function of Religion: According to Max Weber (1930), religion may be used to explain, justify or rationalize the exercise of power. It reinforces the interests of those in power. Even in societies not as visibly ruled by religious dogma, religion legitimates the political sector.

For example, India's traditional caste system defined the social structure of society. According to one theory, caste system is a creation of the priesthood (Brahmins)-the uppermost stratum of this system, but it also served the interests of political rulers by granting legitimacy to social inequality.

Marx has acknowledged that religion plays an important role in legitimating the existing social structure. The values of religion reinforce other social institutions and the social order as a whole and as a consequence it perpetuates social inequality in society.

9. Psychologizing Religion: The notion of 'positive thinking' serves as an example of psychologizing religion. It provides peace of mind, promises prosperity and success in life, as well as effective and happy human relations. It is thus a source of security and confidence, and also of happiness and success in this world.

But at times religion can be debilitating and personally destructive. Persons convinced of their own essential wickedness can suffer extreme personal difficulties. As Kingsley Davis (1949) noted, 'Like other medicines, it (religion) can sometimes make worse the very thing it seeks to remedy.

Innumerable are the psychoses and neuroses that have religious content'. But, in this role, religion is not always harmful. Many times, it serves as a liberating and integrating force for individuals. For instance, it helps in bringing change (sobriety) to seemingly hopeless alcoholics.

10. Religion Acts as Psychotherapy: In modern world, religion has also become a supporting psychology-a form of psychotherapy. Now, God is conceived of as a humane and considerate God. Such a hopeful perception helps the sufferer in alleviating his/her personal and social crisis.

A new vocation of religious practitioner has recently come up in the mental health field as a helping professional. It already existed in village India and other places in the form of shamans, priests and magicians (shamans are treated as super-humans endowed with supernatural powers in some tribal societies).

11. Religion as an Agent of Social Change: While religion supports the status quo in its priestly function, it inspires great change in its prophetic function. It can enable individuals to transcend social forces; to act in ways other than those prescribed by the social order.

Mahatma Gandhi, Jesus, Thomas More all died upholding spiritual beliefs that were not those of the social order in which they lived. Religion, in its prophetic function, provides individuals with an unshakable foundation of social criticism which later on becomes the basis for social change. Many religious groups of the world protested against Vietnam and Iraq wars and an age-old Buddha statue in Afghanistan.

12. Religion as an Agent of De-politicization: According to Bryan Wilson (1976), religion functions as an agent of de-politicization. Marxists suggest that by inducing a 'false consciousness' among the disadvantaged, religion lessens the possibility of collective political action. In simpler terms, religion keeps people away from seeing their lives and societal conditions in political terms.

13. Religion Controls Sexuality: According to B. Turner (1992), 'religion has the function of controlling the sexuality of the body, in order to secure the regular transmission of property via the family'. In feudalism, and now in capitalism, religious control of sexuality is an important vehicle for the production of legitimate offspring.

In the end, it may be said that in spite of being regarded as superstition, religion is persisting for such a long time as a social institution because of its varied functions cited above that it performs for the welfare of the individual and the society both.

At many times, even the so-called educated people regard religious laws as superior to the man-made laws. In primitive and traditional societies and even some sections of modern societies, despite all-round attack over it, religion is a pervasive matter, and religious beliefs and rites play an important part in the activities of various kinds of groups-from family to occupational groups. Though inhabitants and citizens of a 'modern' society, many remain traditional in their religious and moral outlook. For some, this means that religious authority and principles override that of secular law.

18.4 Nature and Scope of Religion

The theological concept of religion which is reflected in the popular ones centers round as supernatural power, other than independence, of human experience. The assurance of God's being comes in this approach, not from any internal experience but, from the faith in an external revelation, primary emphasis thus, seems to be on belief and faith and not on inner experience, though even this approach has to recognize that man's religion is conditioned to a large extent by man's interest in his own destiny. On the other hand, man's inner experience is of primary importance for the psychoanalytical writers and humanist thinkers with existentialist sympathies. If man experiences God, argues Ludwig Furbish, this experience gives us greater information about the man himself than about God, God being regarded by him as the projected image of man himself. No man of religion would agree with this reduction of God to a creation of the human mind. Religion, as it is generally understood, is not only based on a central revelation, but its entire development is also determined in a way by that revelation thus, the most basic tenet of Christianity is God's revelation to mankind in and through Christ, the son of god. This forms not only the basis of the Trinitarians concept of god and the entire church creed regarding the atonement, resurrection etc, the faith in Christ as the saviors and the son of god has been the greatest determining factor in the religions experience of the Christians- For example, the awareness or

experience of the Divine presence is more often interpreted by Christian mystics and saints as that of Christ the son and not that of god, the father.

18.5 Role of Religious Institutions in Society

As religion so its institutions also play an important role in social life. None can deny the fact that the different kinds of social institutions such as, domestic, economic and political influence on religious institutions. But it is also true that these institutions are sometimes influenced by religious institutions. An important aspect of religion is prayer and different classes of people belonging to different castes of society assemble I religious institutions for performing prayer and worship. By these activities there forms common feelings which thereby further generate a common sentiments and fellowship amongst the worshipers of a particular religion. Sometimes it is found that the members of a particular religion unite together, and for the greater interest of the society they perform different humanitarian activities. It is evident from the above that religious institutions perform not only their religious activities, they also discharge different types of activities related to social welfare such as, charitable hospitals, schools, homes for the homeless. These institutions also run orphanages and collect money for the poor people. It cannot be denied that religion has an external form of social control. The different activities of the people and their different spheres of social life are still influenced by religious rites and ceremonies. People generally express their religious feelings through rituals and ceremonies. It is also true that almost all the aspects of lives of primitive people were covered by religious practices, although these were crude in nature and did not have any precise organization. We find that there are different important occasions in our social life such as, birth, marriage, harvesting, hunting, death etc. and in all these activities religious rites were performed in primitive societies. By doing these activities there developed a common feeling s and actions which are very much other than religious functions. Not only in primitive societies but also in modern societies religious activities occupy an important place. The different occasions of social life, such as birth, death, marriage etc. religious rites are performed. Similar activities are found in the events related with economic life also. Moreover, it is found that, in almost all communities religious rites are common practices during various occasions in social life such as, inauguration of a new building, oath taking etc. From the above description of the role of religion in social life, it is evident that a regular order of procedure is developed by religion in society and thus it helps to control the society. Religion helps to shape the character

of an individual and thereby it moulds social life. It brings forth the sense of social value in the mind of people. In obeying the social laws or to respect the elders and to show sympathy towards the feelings of others, or to discharge the social obligations faithfully, the role of religion is immense. In those cases it acts as a teacher. Not only this, a sense of fellow feeling amongst the people belonging to different communities is also taught by religion. Moreover, religion teaches that the man?s love and services to God will be real only if he loves and serves humanity. In developing moral consciousness amongst people, religion acts as an inspiring factor. Religion enforces uniformity of behaviour and it strengthens social solidarity and thereby acts as an instrument in stabilizing social order. In primitive age the influence of religion was very great in controlling society and this feature is not totally lost even today. Social life of primitive people were controlled by inspiring God-fear in their minds but in modern age people are inspired not by fear but by the hope for the attainment of virtuous and noble life. Thus by fostering patriotic sentiments in men, religion helps to maintain social integration. In describing the role of religion Dr. S. Radhakrishanan says that religion has innumerable effects. Religion not only guarantees values but it also gives meaning to life. Moreover, the confidence to go on adventures is also inculcated in our mind by religion. Thus narrating the role of religion he says, "Religion is the discipline which touches the conscience and helps us to struggle with evil and sordidness, saves us from greed, lust and hatred, releases moral power and imparts courage in the enterprise of saving the world". 4 People live in the third world countries such as, India, Africa, Brazil etc. derive their sense of life from religion and as such religion is very important to them. They get the answers of many questions that appear in their minds. The questions such as, who we are? What is the purpose of life? What is life and what is death? Is there anything after this life? - are very common for human being and they are curious to have answers of these questions. But in the third world countries science is not so developed to answer these questions. Thus, it is religion from which they seek to get answers of these questions.

18.6 Summary

The study of 'religion' further makes clear the relation between institutionalised values of the specific societies and the legitimation of power. The term 'religion' requires introducing the category of 'religion' into the context of non-western and indigenous societies. Such studies are needed to clarify why a shift in the meaning of 'religious' or 'secular' is of crucial importance, which would identify a lacuna in

contemporary research in the social sciences and religious studies. The convergence of religious studies with cultural studies and anthropology into the field of humanities/ social science/ethnographical studies will encompass the field of 'religion' to useful analytic categories such as soteriology, ritual, politics, culture/tradition, social organisation, customary practice (caste system in India) etc., while simultaneously paving the way towards a genuine decolonisation of the study of religions in India.

Religion restricts free thinking of human beings. It produces a sense of numbness in man and thereby makes him insensible to the actual happenings of the world. It teaches people to live in the world of determinism. People forget the capacity of their free thinking and which ultimately makes them blunt in analyzing the natural phenomena scientifically. It is true that in primitive society science was not so developed and people were ignorant about the happenings of natural phenomena. At that time religion was necessary to control the barbarous and ignorant people. People were satisfied with the answers given by religious institutions. Even in mediaeval period people were convinced that the sun moves round the earth and challenging which the great scientist Galileo, on a charge of heresy, had to spend the rest of his life under house arrest. But now it is scientifically proved that the earth moves round the sun. Thus if institutional religion is eradicated from the society, people will live peacefully and there will be less possibility of quarrels and bloodshed amongst the people. They will also be able to understand the happenings of natural phenomena scientifically.

18.7 Model Questions

1. Answer briefly the following questions: **(5 marks)**

　　a) What are the main functions of religion?

　　b) Give two sociological definition of religion.

　　c) Give two scopes of religion.

　　d) Note down broadly different types of religion.

　　e) Briefly point out how religion establishes connection with emotion.

2) Answer in detail the following questions: **(10 marks)**

　　a) Discuss in details the major functions of religion. Do you think religion plays an important role in ones social life? Give reasons.

　　b) Evaluate the sociological definition of religion and identify the nature of religion.

c) "Religion a social institution after family and marriage"….give suitable points to elaborate the above statement.

d) "Religion is the belief in Spiritual Beings" critically evaluate the saying.

e) Differentiate between sociological and personal functions of religion.

f) Explain in details different types of religion.

g) Write in detail the role of religion in society.

18.8 References and Suggested Readings

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Unit 19 ❑ Relation Between Magic, Science and Religion

Structure

19.0 Objectives

This unit examins intimately the relations between magic-science and religion. From this unit students will learn about -

- Religion, Science and Magic.

- The difference between these three.

- The inter-connection between religion, magic and science.

19.1 Introduction

In every primitive community, studied by trustworthy and competent observers, there have been found two clearly distinguishable domains, the Sacred and the Profane; in other words, the domain of Magic and Religion and that of Science.The credit of

having laid the foundations of an anthropological study of religion belongs to Edward B. Tylor. In his well-known theory he maintains that the essence of primitive religion is animism, the belief in spiritual beings, and he shows how this belief has originated in a mistaken but consistent interpretation of dreams, visions, hallucinations, cataleptic states, and similar phenomena.

The extended and deepened outlook of modern anthropology finds its most adequate expression in the learned and inspiring writings of Sir James Frazer. In these he has set forth the three main problems of primitive religion with which present-day anthropology is busy: magic and its relation to religion and science; totemism and the sociological aspect of early faith; the cults of fertility and vegetation. It will be best to discuss these subjects in turn.

Magic, based on man's confidence that he can dominate nature directly, if only he knows the laws which govern it magically, is in this akin to science. Religion, the confession of human impotence in certain matters, lifts man above the magical level, and later on maintains its independence side by side with science, to which magic has to succumb.

While science is based on the conception of natural forces, magic springs from the idea of a certain mystic, impersonal power, which is believed in by most primitive peoples. This power, called [MB 20] mana by some Melanesians, arungquiltha by certain Australian tribes, wakan, orenda, manitu by various American Indians, and nameless elsewhere, is stated to be a well-nigh universal idea found wherever magic flourishes. According to the writers just mentioned we can find among the most primitive peoples and throughout the lower savagery a belief in a supernatural, impersonal force, moving all those agencies which are relevant to the savage and causing all the really important events in the domain of the sacred.

Totemism, to quote Frazer's classical definition, is an intimate relation which is supposed to exist between a group of kindred people on the one side and a species of natural or artificial objects on the other side, which objects are called the totems of the human group. Totemism thus has two sides: it is a mode of social grouping and a religious system of beliefs and practices. As religion, it expresses primitive man's interest in his surroundings, the desire to claim an affinity and to control the most important objects: above all, animal or vegetable species, more rarely useful inanimate objects, very seldom man-made things.

Primitive religion, as fashioned by modern anthropology, has been made to harbor all sorts of heterogeneous things. At first reserved in animism for the solemn figures of ancestral spirits, ghosts and souls, besides a few fetishes, it had gradually to admit the thin, fluid, ubiquitous mana; then, like Noah's Ark, it was with the introduction of totemism loaded with beasts, not in pairs but in shoals and species, joined by plants, objects, and even manufactured articles; then came human activities and concerns and the gigantic ghost of the Collective Soul, Society Divinized.

19.2 Religion

Malinowski saw religion as basically a way of utilizing belief in inferred, imaginary supernatural beings and forces to satisfy the emotional needs of the "savage." He said nothing about the civilized folk, but one assumes he was, as usual, sideswiping them via the Trobriands. He never forgot his self-imposed mission to confront his elite European readers with an ironic reflection of themselves. One can also assume that, like many early-20th-century social scientists, he expected religion to wither away in the near future.

Malinowski's "religion" was strongly individualistic and psychological. He rejected Durkheim's idea of religion (Durkheim 1995/1912) as the projection of society, and, by implication, Marx' somewhat similar (though materialist) view. He dismissed Durkheim's theory as mere mysticism, which, along with much else, proves that he did not understand Durkheim very well.

Religion is now almost invariably defined as belief in supernatural beings. However, Malinowski (and others of his time) differentiated religion from magic, which also depends on supernaturals. And belief in supernatural beings is generally not considered adequate to make a religion. For Scott Atran, author of one recent major book on the anthropology of religion, Mickey Mouse doesn't count, and neither do devoutly held but allegedly "factual" or "scientific" belief systems like Marxism; religion must involve not only supernaturals but also counter-evidential beliefs and emotional sacrifices. Others disagree, finding Marxism and "capitalism" more like religion than like science or spirituality.

In general, most anthropologists have defined religion as belief in supernaturals. Many other social scientists, on the other hand, seem to stay with Durkheim, and define religion as a social institution characterized by rituals and moral codes. However, Malinowski, as well as many historians and theorists of religion, saw religion as

basically defined by spiritual emotion-specifically, a sense of awe and reverence. Often this is opposed to the coldly practical sense that is alleged to animate science. Yet, many scientists feel awe, reverence, and veneration when contemplating the universe. Conversely, many, perhaps most, religious people seem to view religion simply as routine social practice. It is something they do without much feeling. Recent events have reminded us that still other people, worldwide, have violent hatred as their sole religious emotion. The emotional phenomenology of religion is too complex and diverse to be defining.

Recent anthropological accounts of religion tend to exaggerate the distinction from science by highlighting the aspects of religion that seem most exotic and irrational to the writers. The problem here is that religion, everywhere in the world, is far more often a matter of going politely and sociably to church, temple, ch'a'chaak, or witchetty grub ceremony, there to sit patiently and be bored to death. The ordinary humdrum side of religion is far more common, typical, and important to believers than the exotica. By contrast, spirituality is, by definition, emotional; it is the individual's experience of awe, reverence, entrancement, enchantment, or similar emotions or transcendent feelings, inspired by natural or supernatural entities or forces. Religion usually stimulates spirituality, and may be influenced by it.

The current claim that "secularism" or "secular humanism" is a "religion" does not make the grade by any standards. First, secularism has no supernaturals-by definition. Second, it has no communitas; nobody purports to be part of the secularist church or congregation or communion, nor does secularism have festivals, rituals, temples, or anything else to show. Third, it has no body of beliefs. The few secular humanists out there do agree on some facts, but they have no litmus test, no professions that they must accept. Indeed, skeptics differ enormously in world views-they are united only by skepticism.

19.3 Science

The division between magic, science, and religion was also important to Lévi-Strauss (1962) and others of the time. All the thinkers of the structural and cognitive traditions of the 1960s emphasized the rational, systematic, empirical side of traditional knowledge, Lévi-Strauss' "science of the concrete." In the 1950s and 1960s, interest in such systems climaxed in the development of the field of "ethnoscience." This field arose from the researches of several of George Murdock's students, sent to work in

Micronesia and the Philippines (Conklin 1957; Frake 1980). The word was coined from the earlier term "ethnobiology," introduced by John Harshberger in 1895. Soon, terms like "ethnobiology," "ethnozoology" and "ethnoornithology" followed. The word "ethnoscience" seems to have disappeared somewhere in the intervening years, but the other terms persist, in spite of an attempt by Scott Atran to substitute "folkbiology" and other "folk-" words (Medin and Atran 1999).

Many of these systems are as purely empirical, self-correcting, developing, and truth-driven as any western science (Anderson 2000, 2003, 2005). They also share with scientists a concern with insight, sensed experience, testing and probing, and the like (David Kronenfeld, personal communication, comment on draft of this paper, 2004). As science, they are limited more by lack of scope and equipment than by lack of some (mythical?) scientific mentality or method. However, many, as we shall see, have supernatural entities built into them. These problematize still more the basic distinction. Insight and sensed experience are basic to both science and religion, narrowing somewhat the gap between them.

As ethnoscience was developing, the term "science" was being subjected to a great deal of critique. For thousands of years-ever since the Greeks began to talk of scientia-it had had something like the straightforward, common-sense meaning that Malinowski knew. It referred to systematized knowledge, as opposed to faith (belief without evidence) on the one hand and techne, mere craft, on the other.

Considering all folk explanations, and classifying the traditional ones as "religion," Edward Tylor classically explained magic and religion as, basically, failed science (Tylor 1871). He came up with a number of just-so stories explaining how religious beliefs could have been reasonably inferred by fully rational people who had no modern laboratory devices to make sense of their perceptions. Malinowski's portrayal of religion as emotiondriven was part of a general reaction against Tylor in the early 20th century. Indeed, Tylor discounted emotion too much. On the whole, however, there is still merit in Tylor's work.

Postmodernists dismiss science-and sometimes all truth-claims-as just another social or cultural construction, as solipsistic as religion and magic. Some anthropologists still believe, or at least maintain, that cultural constructions are all we have or can know. This is a self-deconstructing position; if it's true, it isn't true, because it is only a cultural construction, and the statement that it's only a cultural construction is only a cultural construction, and we are back with infinite regress and the Liars Paradox.

The extreme cultural-constructionist position is all too close to, and all too usable by, the religious fundamentalists who dismiss science as a "secular humanist religion." Both the postmodernists and the fundamentalists are, alas, all too often answered only by the self-styled apologists for science who maintain that science is True and is All Facts.

Thus, it is sometimes difficult to distinguish science from religion. However, we can say that science is made up of facts that are empirically proved and ideas that can be theoretically proved, or at least tested, while religion is made up of things that must be taken on faith because they simply cannot be proved or disproved by any evidence. Stephen Jay Gould (1999) has recently given us a strong argument for this position, and for the fundamental complementarity-and therefore the fundamental difference-of religion and science. Yet Gould has to admit that his own science, paleontology, cannot be directly tested-and that not only traditional religions, but also modern fundamentalist religions, make a number of statements that can be tested. At least, like paleontological ideas, they could be proved or disproved if we had a time machine. The reality of six-day creation in 4004 BC, Noah's flood, and Joshua's musical destruction of Jericho have all been established as fact to fundamentalists' satisfaction; geology, archaeology, and other sciences are bent to their ideas. The same objective data serve to disprove the same events, of course, in the eyes of other observers.

Gould simply argues that this is a mistake-the religious are trying to do science, and shouldn't mix the two. The fundamentalists, of course, disagree. As Gould points out, the "conflict between science and religion" is an 18th and 19th-century invention. (Admittedly, it had an ancestry going back to the 17th century.) Before then, people did not think the two were mutually exclusive or occupied different spheres. Gould tries to eliminate the conflict, but only by making the difference even more profound.

Religion is heavily involved with morals, while science is traditionally considered to be values-neutral. The separation owes a great deal to David Hume's argument that one cannot deduce an "ought" from an "is" (of course, Hume was more nuanced and subtle than this canned, though useful, summary of his philosophy; see Hume 1975). Religion can prescribe morality, justifying it from divine law. Science cannot. Supposedly, it is about "is," not about "ought." Ethical bias in science is often seen as a contamination, inevitable or not. (The fundamentalist claim that science is really a religion of "secularism," faked up to sell evil and cutthroat morals under the name of "evolution," is based on complete lack of knowledge of science.)

In short, separating religion from science and both from magic is analytically important, valuable, and interesting, but it must always be a somewhat arbitrary separation. It is constantly being problematized by the messiness of the real world and the messiness of real human thought. No matter how defined, "religion" and "science" (to say nothing of "magic") are ideal types-idealtypen-that do not describe the real world very neatly.

Ethnoscience and folk science studies have been criticized for using the term "science" broadly enough to include a good deal of mystical and supernatural belief. Modern science is not-it is internationally constructed and stated, and is proved by tests rather than by social usefulness.

Religion can be seen as partly based on plausible but wrong inferences about ultimate cause. Thus, in explaining the world, people naturally infer spirits and gods. There appears to be a genuinely natural tendency for people to assume that trees, rocks, and animals are "people," in some sense-having volition, consciousness, and humanlike will. The Durkheimian observation that religion is a projection of the social order naturally follows from this (a point Atran rather misses). There is obviously a great deal more than this to what we normally call "religion," but inferences about the "people" out there clearly comprise one of the building blocks from which religion is made.

In short, inferred black-box causal arguments, once they are superseded, can get called either "science" or "religion," depending largely on the whims and prejudices of the person doing the calling. Magic, science, and religion as very useful terms, but terms that are limited in their application.

19.4 Magic

Magic never originated, it never has been made or invented. All magic simply "was from the beginning an essential adjunct of all such things and processes as vitally interest man and yet elude his normal rational efforts. The spell, the rite, and the thing which they govern are coeval.

Thus, in Central Australia, all magic existed and has been inherited from the alcheringa times, when it came about like everything else. In Melanesia all magic comes from a time when humanity lived underground and when magic was a natural knowledge of ancestral man. In higher societies magic is often derived from spirits and demons, but even these, as a rule, originally received and did not invent it. Thus

the belief in the primeval natural existence of magic is universal. As its counterpart we find the conviction that only by an absolutely unmodified immaculate transmission does magic retain its efficiency. The slightest alteration from the original pattern would be fatal. There is, then, the idea that between the object and its magic there exists an essential nexus. Magic is the quality of the thing, or rather, of the relation between man and the thing, for though never man-made it is always made for man. In all tradition, in all mythology, magic is always found in the possession of man and through the knowledge of man or man-like being. It implies the performing magician quite as much as the thing to be charmed and the means of charming. It is part of the original endowment of primeval humanity, of the mura-mura or alcheringa of Australia, of the subterrestrial humanity of Melanesia, of the people of the magical Golden Age all the world over.

Magic is not only human in its embodiment, but also in its subject matter: it refers principally to human activities and states, hunting, gardening, fishing, trading, love-making, disease, and death. It is not directed so much to nature as to man's relation to nature and to the human activities which affect it. Moreover, the effects of magic are usually conceived not as a product of nature influenced by the charm, but as something specially magical, something which nature cannot produce, but only the power of magic. The graver forms of disease, love in its passionate phases, the desire for a ceremonial exchange and other similar manifestations in the human organism and mind, are the direct product of the spell and rite. Magic is thus not derived from an observation of nature or knowledge of its laws, it is a primeval possession of man to be known only through tradition and affirming man's autonomous power of creating desired ends.

Thus, the force of magic is not a universal force residing everywhere, flowing where it will or it is willed to. Magic is the one and only specific power, a force unique of its kind, residing exclusively in man, let loose only by his magical art, gushing out with his voice, conveyed by the casting forth of the rite.

It may be here mentioned that the human body, being the receptacle of magic and the channel of its flow, must be submitted to various conditions. Thus the magician has to keep all sorts of taboos, or else the spell might be injured, especially as in certain parts of the world, in Melanesia for instance, the spell resides in the magician's belly, which is the seat of memory as well as of food. When necessary it is summoned up to the larynx, which is the seat of intelligence, and thence sent forth by the voice,

the main organ of the human mind. Thus, not only is magic an essentially human possession, but it is literally and actually enshrined in man and can be handed on only from man to man, according to very strict rules of magical filiation, initiation, and instruction. It is thus never conceived as a force of nature, residing in things, acting independently of man, to be found out and learned by him, by any of those proceedings by which he gains his ordinary knowledge of nature.

To most types of magical ritual, therefore, there corresponds a spontaneous ritual of emotional expression or of a forecast of the desired end. To most features of magical spell, to the commands, invocations, metaphors, there corresponds a natural flow of words, in malediction, in entreaty, in exorcism, and in the descriptions of unfulfilled wishes. To every belief in magical efficiency there can be laid in parallel one of those illusions of subjective experience, transient in the mind of the civilized rationalist, though even there never quite absent, but powerful and convincing to the simple man in every culture, and, above all, to the primitive savage mind.

Thus the foundations of magical belief and practice are not taken from the air, but are due to a number of experiences actually lived through, in which man receives the revelation of his power to attain the desired end. We must now ask: What is the relation between the promises contained in such experience and their fulfilment in real life? Plausible though the fallacious claims of magic might be to primitive man, how is it that they have remained so long unexposed?

The answer to this is that, first, it is a well-known fact that in human memory the testimony of a positive case always overshadows the negative one. One gain easily outweighs several losses. Thus the instances which affirm magic always loom far more conspicuously than those which deny it. But there are other facts which endorse by a real or apparent testimony the claims of magic. We have seen that magical ritual must have originated from a revelation in a real experience. But the man who from such an experience conceived, formulated, and gave to his tribesmen the nucleus of a new magical performance — acting, be it remembered, in perfect good faith — must have been a man of genius. The men who inherited and wielded his magic after him, no doubt always building it out and developing it, while believing that they were simply following up the tradition, must have been always men of great intelligence, energy, and power of enterprise. They would be the men successful in all emergencies. It is an empirical fact that in all savage societies magic and outstanding personality go hand in hand. Thus magic also coincides with personal success, skill, courage, and mental power. No wonder that it is considered a source of success.

This personal renown of the magician and its importance in enhancing the belief about the efficiency of magic are the cause of an interesting phenomenon: what may be called the current mythology of magic. Round every big magician there arises a halo made up of stories about his wonderful cures or kills, his catches, his victories, his conquests in love. In every savage society such stories form the backbone of belief in magic, for, supported as they are by the emotional experiences which everyone has had himself, the running chronicle of magical miracles establishes its claims beyond any doubt or cavil. Every eminent practitioner, besides his traditional claim, besides the filiation with his predecessors, makes his personal warrant of wonder-working.

It can be said without exaggeration that the most typical, most highly developed, mythology in primitive societies is that of magic, and the function of myth is not to explain but to vouch for, not to satisfy curiosity but to give confidence in power, not to spin out yarns but to establish the flowing freely from present-day occurrences, frequently similar validity of belief. The deep connection between myth and cult, the pragmatic function of myth in enforcing belief, has been so persistently overlooked in favor of the etiological or explanatory theory of myth that it was necessary to dwell on this point.

19.4.1 Magic and Science: First of all, magic is surrounded by strict conditions: exact remembrance of a spell, unimpeachable performance of the rite, unswerving adhesion to the taboos and observances which shackle the magician. If any one of these is neglected, failure of magic follows. And then, even if magic be done in the most perfect manner, its effects can be equally well undone: for against every magic there can be also counter-magic. If magic, as we have shown, is begotten by the union of man's steadfast desire with the wayward whim of chance, then every desire, positive or negative, may — nay, must — have its magic. Now in all his social and worldly ambitions, in all his strivings to catch good fortune and trap propitious luck, man moves in an atmosphere of rivalry, of envy, and of spite. For luck, possessions, even health, are matters of degree and of comparison, and if your neighbor owns more cattle, more wives, more health, and more power than yourself, you feel dwarfed in all you own and all you are. And such is human nature that a man's desire is as much satisfied by the thwarting of others as by the advancement of himself. To this sociological play of desire and counter-desire, of ambition and spite, of success and envy, there corresponds the play of magic and counter-magic, or of magic white and black.

Magic is akin to science in that it always has a definite aim intimately associated

with human instincts, needs, and pursuits. The magic art is directed towards the attainment of practical aims. Like the other arts and crafts, it is also governed by a theory, by a system of principles which dictate the manner in which the act has to be performed in order to be effective. In analyzing magical spells, rites, and substances we have found that there are a number of general principles which govern them. Both science and magic develop a special technique. In magic, as in the other arts, man can undo what he has done or mend the damage which he has wrought. In fact, in magic, the quantitive equivalents of black and white seem to be much more exact and the effects of witchcraft much more completely eradicated by counter-witchcraft than is possible in any practical art or craft. Thus both magic and science show certain similarities, and, with Sir James Frazer, we can appropriately call magic a pseudo-science.

19.4.2. Magic and Religion: Both magic and religion arise and function in situations of emotional stress: crises of life, lacunae in important pursuits, death and initiation into tribal mysteries, unhappy love and unsatisfied hate. Both magic and religion open up escapes from such situations and such impasses as offer no empirical way out except by ritual and belief into the domain of the supernatural. Both magic and religion are based strictly on mythological tradition, and they also both exist in the atmosphere of the miraculous, in a constant revelation of their wonder-working power.

Magic, the specific art for specific ends, has in every one of its forms come once into the possession of man, and it had to be handed over in direct filiation from generation to generation. Hence it remains from the earliest times in the hands of specialists, and the first profession of mankind is that of a wizard or witch. Religion, on the other hand, in primitive conditions is an affair of all, in which everyone takes an active and equivalent part. Every member of the tribe has to go through initiation, and then himself initiates others. Everyone wails, mourns, digs the grave and commemorates, and in due time everyone has his turn in being mourned and commemorated. Spirits are for all, and everyone becomes a spirit. The only specialization in religion — that is, early spiritualistic mediumism — is not a profession but a personal gift. One more difference between magic and religion is the play of black and white in witchcraft, while religion in its primitive stages has but little of the contrast between good and evil, between the beneficent and malevolent powers. This is due also to the practical character of magic, which aims at direct quantitative results, while early religion, though essentially moral, has to deal with fateful,

irremediable happenings and supernatural forces and beings, so that the undoing of things done by man does not enter into it. The maxim that fear first made gods in the universe is certainly not true in the light of anthropology.

In order to grasp the difference between religion and magic and to gain a clear vision of the three-cornered constellation of magic, religion, and science, let us briefly realize the cultural function of each. The function of primitive knowledge and its value have been assessed already and indeed are not difficult to grasp. By acquainting man with his surroundings, by allowing him to use the forces of nature, science, primitive knowledge, bestows on man an immense biological advantage, setting him far above all the rest of creation. The function of religion and its value we have learned to understand in the survey of savage creeds and cults given above. We have shown there that religious faith establishes, fixes, and enhances all valuable mental attitudes, such as reverence for tradition, harmony with environment, courage and confidence in the struggle with difficulties and at the prospect of death. This belief, embodied and maintained by cult and ceremonial, has an immense biological value, and so reveals to primitive man truth in the wider, pragmatic sense of the word.

Magic fixes upon these beliefs and rudimentary rites and standardizes them into permanent traditional forms. It enables man to carry out with confidence his important tasks, to maintain his poise and his mental integrity in fits of anger, in the throes of hate, of unrequited love, of despair and anxiety. The function of magic is to ritualize man's optimism, to enhance his faith in the victory of hope over fear. Magic expresses the greater value for man of confidence over doubt, of steadfastness over vacillation, of optimism over pessimism.

19.4.3 Science and Religion : Science is not a mess of facts; it's a system that is meant to represent the world accurately and empirically. It necessarily includes a lot of black-box variables that is hypothesized but is generally under examination, and that often turn out to be wrong. Religion is not just a bunch of supernatural beliefs; it too is a system, in which emotionally compelling beliefs collectively represent social contracts and sell social ethics. Magic partakes uncomfortably of both, and is thus a dicey term, very hard to use beyond a low level of abstraction. Thus, when we focus on religion as supernaturals, we are focusing on the wrong thing. We should be focusing on religion as part of society, the part that stirs deep emotions to persuade its membership to follow the social codes.

There is some truth to the old cliché that "the Indians" live in a religious or

spiritual world, but that cliché misses the point, which is that the Indians live in a world about which they know an incredible amount of factual information and toward which they have an intensely ethical stance. The detailed factual knowledge and the free-standing moral philosophy are not separable from each other, or from the supernatural beliefs. The problem of deducing an "is" from an "ought" is resolved by seeing the "oughts" as natural laws, part of the "ises." The need to represent factual knowledge and ethical treatment of resources in one system means that Native American systems of thought cannot be separated into "religion" and "science." There is thus a very basic, very fundamental way in which we cannot see these systems in terms of "religion" and "science." This has often been pointed out in anthropology, but it needs continual reassertion.

19.5 Summary

"Science," then, can be seen as the ideal word to use if one is looking at the empirical, evidence-driven side of a knowledge system. Science is empirical, and rests on open-minded inquiry. It is done by individuals who are concerned with verifiable, empirical results, and often with probing further into new realms.

"Religion" is used if one is looking at the belief-driven or tradition-driven side of human knowledge. It is based on widely-shared social beliefs, usually of very long standing and of very high levels of perceived antiquity and legitimacy.

Science and religion, however, overlap broadly when one looks at inferred explanatory variables, and also when one looks at complex and emotional attitudes toward the world.

Magic-basically a sciency agenda done in a religious way-disappears analytically, though the concept still may have uses for someone somewhere.

These terms, when applied to societies other than modern western or western-influenced ones, do not refer to identifiable and institutionalized sectors of activity (as they do in the modern US). Instead (as Malinowski knew) they provide a rather arbitrary classification system for knowledge, imposed in a thoroughly etic way. Other societies have their own, quite different, systems for classifying knowledge. Usually, their cultural models do not include a natural/supernatural split.

Thus, "magic, science, and religion" are not very adequate terms to represent traditional knowledge systems.

Classifications are about being useful, not about being cast in stone. We of the modern international scholarly community have found a particular way of classifying knowledge to be rather useful. Perhaps it is not so useful now. Meanwhile, other cultures have classified knowledge in radically different ways. These often overlap our classification system. This does not mean they are wrong; it means they serve different purposes. Traditional people usually do not want to separate environmental knowledge from ethics, or either one from ritual."

19.6 Model Questions

1. Answer briefly the following questions: **(5 marks)**

    a) Write a short note on magic.

    b) Write a brief note on science.

    c) Briefly state meaning of religion.

    d) Distinguish between science and religion.

    e) Distinguish between magic and science.

2. Answer in detail the following questions: **(10 marks)**

    a) Define magic and show its relation with science and religion.

    b) How religion is related with magic? Elaborate with suitable examples.

    c) Explain in detail how science is related with magic.

    d) Evaluate the relation between religion science and magic.

    e) Critically illustrate the relation between religion, society and magic.

19.7 References and Suggested Readings

1) Atran, Scott. 2002. In Gods We Trust. New York: Oxford University Press.

2) Hume, David. 1975. Enquiries Concerning Human Undestanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals. Ed. L. A. Selby-Bigge (orig. 1777). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

3) Malinowski, Bronislaw. 1948. Magic, Science and Religion. Glencoe, IL: Free Press.

4) Popper, Karl. 1959. The Logic of Scientific Discovery. London: Hutchinson.

Unit 20 ❑ Religion and Globalisation / Social Conflict

Structure

20.0 Objectives

The unit gives important insights into:

● Relations between and other institutions in contemporary world.

● The impact of globalization on religion.

● Religion as cultural and political resource and many other related issues.

20.1 Introduction

Religion and globalization can, in various manifestations, be seen as partners. History pays testimony to the fact that the growth and influence of Christianity was a result of a link between its own global ambitions and the expansion of various

political and economic regimes. Elements of similar historical pattern can be found in Buddhism, Islam, and other faiths as well.

Globalization has led to massive social changes in the world. Undoubtedly, religion is not immune from these changes and their burgeoning effects brought about by globalization. This also includes rapid changes in the moral beliefs and value system of people. New religious networks are emerging which are transnational in character. As globalization disembeds religions from their historic homelands and scatters them around the world we can clearly observe how social processes try to globalize a particular religion. For instance, the way Hindu temples and ashrams are becoming increasingly transnational and how African and Korean churches are booming in Europe and North America (Nanda, 2009) is relatively a new phenomenon. John Zavos (2012) refers to three organizations: the National Council for Hindu Temples (NCHT), the Hindu Council UK (HCUK) and the Hindu Forum of Britain (HFB). Together these three organizations purporting to represent Hindus have developed a public profile in the UK over a period of 30 years. They have a significant role to play in the public representation of Hindu - ness. It is also surprising to see how in most of Europe, including in France where the age of enlightenment originated, beliefs in occult powers and reincarnation (Johnson, 2007) have gained firm grounds. Therefore, we can say that globalization has played a tremendous role in the revivalism and resurgence of some religions as they are today not relegated to the few countries where their roots began (Azzouzi, 2013).

It is here, that Arjun Appadurai's idea of mediascape and technoscape (1996) needs to be mentioned. When we see growing number of T.V. channels, radio stations and print media founded solely for advocating religious values, the role of media in the globalization process becomes observable. For instance, we see how India's devotional channels like Aastha, Sanskar, MH1 Shraddha, Bhakti TV and God Asia are gaining popularity. Taking Islam as an example, we find T.V channels like Iqrae, Ennass, Majd, El Houda, Erahma, etc. which are purely religious channels created for the purpose of strengthening and the fortification of Islam (Azzouzi, 2013). Besides, as the technology grew under globalization, improvements in the transportation means contributed considerably to the emergence, revivalism and fortification of religion.

Rise of Spiritual Market:

The neo : Hindu cults driven by a new concept of guru who is leader of a spiritual movement or organization now focus on this - worldly concerns derived from

modern western technologies of self healing, highlighting transcendental meditation and yoga rather reincarnation and karma in South Asian religious cultures. New rituals and new gods are being invented in the market where spiritualism is mixed with capitalism and consumerism. Examples are plenty to illustrate the process of commodification of religion. The Gayatri Parivar's novel and scientific interpretation of the Gayatri Mantra and the horse yajna invented a whole new way of explaining the significance of a ritual. Nanda (2009) notes that apart from popularizing the Gayatri Mantra and yajnas, the Parivar also offers courses in moral upliftment and stress management to the government and private sector professionals. Besides, the local gods and goddesses which were until recently associated with the more plebeian masses, are finding new homes in swanky new suburbs with malls and multiplexes. Globalization if on the one hand has led to the commodification of religion.

20.2 Globalization and Religion in the Contemporary World

Although it is doubtful whether we can confidently propose an idea of 'global religion' in the present times because a global religion would have to presuppose a global community where people must share common beliefs, experiences and sentiments. Turner (2006) argues that unfortunately global networks are too thin and fragile to serve as the social carriers of a shared set of symbols and practices.

Globalization may bring about the unpacking of local cultural complexes. It may also create multifarious local identities so much so that diversity is seen in local spaces. To illustrate with examples, Caribbean Pentecostal Churches, Nigerian 'Aladura' Churches or branches of the Zimbabwe Assemblies of God Africa in Britain and Ghanaian Pentecostal churches are so different from any British religious institution (Lehmann, 2004). Turner (2006) further argues that in the globalized world, local (or mass religion) and the elite religion interact to result in religious glocalisation which means "the simultaneity — the co-presence — of both universalizing and particularizing tendencies" (Robertson, 1992). For instance, Vale Do Amanhecer is a rapidly expanding Brazilian religion where elements of Christianity, Brazilian indigenous beliefs and European spiritism appear merged together with Afro - Brazilian traditions. Oomen (2003) argues that there is no possibility of a global culture as there are four interrelated processes involved in its creation: homogenization, pluralization, traditionalization and hybridization. Homogenization refers to popularization and diffusion of cultural symbols to reduce cultural diversity (Jennings, 2010). The homogenization thesis proclaims that global culture is becoming standardized around a Western or American

pattern. Rapid communication and constant flow of products across the borders often give us the impression of homogenization. For instance, popularity of blue jeans or pop music or democratic ideas can be seen as part of homogenizational process. It is important to remember here, that homogenization can often lead to hegemonization i.e. assimilation of the minority and weaker groups into the mainstream. From the religious perspective, it can be seen that the attempts of extreme Hindu right, the Sangh Parivar in India is believed to impose its homogenizing fascism on the lines of Brahmanic ethos. There have been repeated attempts by such Hindutva groups to bring homogeneity by forced conversions and communal tensions. Increasing incidences of violence against Muslims, Christians and Dalits especially in the decade of 1980s were conducted by different organizations like BJP, VHP, Bajrang Dal, Hindu Jagran Manch and Hindu Munnani for the specific agenda of homogenization of Hindutva politics (Puniyani, 2000).

T.N Madan (1993) on the contrary says that Hinduism which is demographically dominant and even hegemonic is nothing but a federation of faiths. It has both horizontal and vertical distribution rather than a single homogenous religion. In this line, we can say that pluralism and not homogeneity is inherent in Hinduism because it comprises many regional cultural groups. Pluralization implies existence and practice of more than one forms of culture simultaneously.

In the process of adaptation we retain some of the traditional aspects and intertwine them with some modern aspects this is a process usually referred to as hybridization. For instance, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar who has built a global spirituality programme conduct 'rock satsangs' in his Bangalore ashram almost every evening where people sing along and dance to his devotional songs. It is one of the clearest manifestations of hybridization where rock music is blended with traditional and devotional touch to cater to the needs of Indian masses. Following Arjun Appadurai (1996), we can call such global markets for religion as the 'religioscape of modernity.'

Bryan turner (2006) argues that glocalisation has also somewhat blurred the distinction between what Weber (1996) calls virtuoso and mass religion. He differentiates between the two as this: the religion of the elite satisfies the moral and intellectual needs of religious virtuosi and the religion of the masses caters to the thaumaturgical interests of the disprivileged by people from all rungs of Indian society can be seen as an apt example of glocalisation. The way Sanskritic texts like Upanishads and Vedas are now open to the mass interpretation were kept reserved for the elite Brahmnins in India.

Lehmann (2004) says that the interaction of religion and globalization seems to change boundaries in two ways: one, which he calls cosmopolitan, brings old practices to new groups in new settings - a variant of disembedding. For instance, reshaping of Eastern religion outside Asia in the form of transcendental mediation, yogic breathing practices, etc. The other variant, which he calls global, extends and intensifies transnational links among groups similar in their practices and creates tightly knit communities of people.

20.3 Religion as Transnational Institution

The relative absence of religion from many globalization perspectives and theories is in some respects quite surprising, especially when one looks at the issue historically. Of the forces that have in the past been instrumental in binding different regions of the world together, in creating a larger if not exactly a geographically global system, economic trade and political empire have certainly been the most obvious; but in conjunction with these, it is equally clear that what we today call religions have also at times played a significant role.

The more or less permanent displacement of large numbers of people from diverse regions and cultural backgrounds to many other parts of the world, but notably from non-Western to Western countries, has like few other phenomena brought home to an increasing range of observers just how much humanity is now living in a single world where identity and difference have to be renegotiated and reconstructed. Dialogical theories of globalization and those that stress globalization from below have been particularly apt to analyze the consequences of global migration, but the issue is not missing from many that understand globalization primarily in economic or political terms. Like global capitalism or international relations, this question is not susceptible to easy understanding on the basis of theories that take a more limited territory, above all a nation-state or a region like Europe, as their primary unit of analysis. In the context of the various other structures that make the world a smaller place, global migrants in recent times maintain far stronger and more lasting and consequential links with their countries of origin. Globalization approaches allow a better understanding of why they have migrated, what they do once they migrate, and the dynamics of their integration or lack thereof into their new regions.

Given that religious institutions, religiously informed worldviews, and religious practice are so often instrumental in these processes, the growing number of efforts

to understand religion's role among global migrants is not surprising. Such contributions have focused on the concrete religious institutions of the migrants in their new homes, the immigration and integration policies and attitudes of the host countries, the transnational links and flows that the migrants maintain, and the influence of these diasporic communities on the global religions that are usually involved. Not infrequently in such analyses, the sorts of transnational religious organizations and movements just mentioned are salient topics, since the migrant communities are often instrumental in bringing about, developing, and maintaining their global character. Moreover, the consideration of the role of transnational religious institutions in the context of global migration already implicates the second way that religion has been understood as a significant contributor to globalization processes, and that is as a cultural, but especially political resource.

20.4 Religion as Cultural and Political Resource

The role of religion in providing, broadly speaking, cultural resources in a global context is not limited to the situation of migrants, however. Globalization, irrespective of which meaning one favors, implies a kind of compression of space in which the upheaval and uprooting characteristic of the migratory experience are the lot of a great many of the world's people, whether they leave their homes or not. Parallel circumstances in Africa and Latin America can serve to make this similarity clear. Both these continents have large regions and large populations that are effectively excluded from the main globalized power structures, yet their lives are nonetheless profoundly affected by them. Religion and religious institutions are important resources for responding to the situation. In Latin America, for instance, one reason for the rapid rise of Pentecostal Christian churches along with significant growth among Afro-Brazilian religions like Candomblé and certain Roman Catholic movements is that these institutional religious forms provide people with ways of understanding themselves and coping in a world where their situation is changing and often precarious. They afford people narratives with attendant life practices by which they can give themselves a meaningful and dignified place in this world. Religion lends them a measure of power. Even more clearly, in sub-Saharan Africa above all Christian and Islamic organizations, centers, networks, and movements offer large numbers of people at least some access to an institution that actually functions reasonably to their benefit. Although they are localized institutions and largely in the control of local people, a far from insignificant part of the appeal of these religious establishments is that they

have links to and represent access to the wider globalized world. This has always been one of the attractions of both Christianity and Islam; they have in effect been global religions for many centuries. In today's world they continue to fill that role. The degree to which religions contribute to the globalized circumstance as well as their character as globalized institutions becomes evident in these cases.

As noted earlier, the one phenomenon that has attracted the most attention to the global significance of religions is the proliferation of effective religio-political movements in almost all regions of the world. From the rise of Hindu nationalism in India and the heavy political involvement of certain Buddhist organizations in Japan to the many highly politicized Islamicist movements in countries as diverse as Iran, Indonesia, and Nigeria, politicized religion has been a constant feature of the global world since at least the 1960s and in many respects well back into the nineteenth century. Although the literature often analyzes them under the somewhat tendentious label of fundamentalisms, two of their most basic features illustrate quite clearly how relevant they are for theories of globalization and how they manifest the global nature of so much contemporary religion.

20.5 Religion and Religions as Globalizing System

A further theoretical approach to the role of religion and religions in globalization goes beyond the idea that religious worldviews and institutions have participated in the process. It focuses on the degree to which both modern institutional forms and modern understandings of religion are themselves manifestations of globalization. With the centuries-long development of what is today a globally extended society, religion came to inform what is today a globally extended religious system consisting primarily of a series of mutually identified and broadly recognized religions. These religions, in virtually every region of the globe, include Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, but a variable list of other religions receives almost as broad legitimacy. Among these are Judaism, Sikhism, Daoism, and Jainism, followed again by another set of less consistently or more regionally accepted ones such as Bah???, Shint?, Candomblé, African Traditional Religions (ATR), Scientology, and so forth. The idea that religion manifests itself through a series of distinct religions may seem self-evident to many people, including a great many of their adherents. Yet that notion is historically of quite recent provenance. In Europe, where this understanding first gained purchase, it dates back at the earliest to the seventeenth century. Elsewhere, such as in most regions of Asia, one must wait until at least the nineteenth century.

Its development and spread is entirely coterminous with the period most theories identify as the prime centuries of globalization.

A strict corollary of this theory, a consequence of the selective nature of this religious system, is that new religions will constantly try to form and that much religiosity will escape the system. The existence of this global religious system, simultaneously at the global and local levels, therefore spawns its constant development and the constant challenging of the way it operates. That idea leads logically to consideration of the religiousness of the global system itself.

20.6 Religion, Globalization and the Human Condition

More than a few theories of globalization explicitly address what one might call its ideal dimension, the way it shapes how people understand the nature and purpose of the world and their place in it. Given that such questions of ultimate concern or purpose often appear as defining features of religion, this ideal dimension can also be conceived as its religious dimension, although thereby not necessarily referring to the role of religious traditions and institutions in it. One can divide the analyses of this dimension of globalization according to whether it is seen as a positive or negative feature, and whether unity or diversity of vision dominates.

Unitary but negative visions share most of these characteristics but reject the idea that any of these developments can have a positive outcome. Sometimes these take world-rejecting communitarian directions, advocating retreat from the globalized world. Ironically perhaps, it is not uncommon for these visions to espouse precisely the sort of egalitarian values typical of the positive versions but insist that this is only possible in a separated-and usually quite small-scale-society. Some subdivisions of environmental and back-to-nature movements exemplify this possibility. In many respects they are mirror images of globalized society, and in that respect reflections of it. By contrast, there are those rejections of a unitary globalization that insist on the unique validity of a particular culture or society. Some so-called fundamentalist visions fall in this category, but it must be stressed how comparatively rare they are. The Afghan Pashtun Taliban, in contrast to most Islamicist perspectives, may have been one of the few.

Pluralist visions of the world are variations on the unitary ones, putting greater stress on, respectively, the difference or the irreconcilability of diverse worldviews. The clash of civilizations model made famous by Samuel Huntington is representative of a negative version, dependent as it is on the idea-not to say ideal-that quasi-

essential civilizations with particular characteristics actually exist logically prior to the globalized context in which mutually identifying them might make sense. Pluralist positive perspectives, by contrast, are even more mere variations on the unitary variety: the value of pluralist and egalitarian inclusion here is simply more strongly emphasized.

What is therefore especially noteworthy of all these representations of globalization's ideal dimension is just how close they are to one another. Without in the least underplaying the degree to which globalization entails vast differences in power and influence among different regions and different people; without denying the significant contestation, even conflict, between different visions of what the global world is or should be; this seeming narrowing of alternative world visions may in the end be one of the most powerful symptoms of the social reality which the idea of globalization seeks to name.

20.7 How Globalization has Encouraged Hinduism: The Case of India

The phenomenon of globalization buttresses the neo - liberal ideology too. The core of neo - liberalism is the belief that unconstrained market forces will bring prosperity, democracy and peace to all people in all societies. The underlying principle is that the borderless markets should lead without the government intervention (Nanda, 2009). While privatization, disinvestment and deregulation are the pillars of neo - liberalism the state is not made entirely irrelevant. The state's topmost priority under the regime of neo - liberal globalization is to facilitate the smooth running of the markets. Much of the contemporary critique of neoliberalism can be traced to the works of Karl Polanyi (1944). He argues that the laissez - faire system came into existence with the help of the state. Expansion of the free market and the self protective reaction against it by the state and the society is called 'double movement' (D. Hall, 2007). Polanyi's hope lay with society and the nation-state but today they have been rendered less powerful with the rise of globalization (Ritzer, 2011). On the contrary, what is emerging is that neo liberalism is changing the texture of democracy: the accumulation of private profit has become the highest social good that the government promotes. Meera Nanda (2009) writes that when government becomes more like a for-profit corporation, the citizens are rendered to the position of consumers. Their relationship with the state changes from that of citizens to that of clients of government services. This model of market place is encouraged by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund where the better off and more educated 'customers -

citizens' manage to get more choices while the poor are bypassed. With the fall in public investment and growth of the commercialized agriculture in Andhra Pradesh, as noted above, many poor farmers and indebted laborers committed suicide.

A triangular relationship that has emerged between the state, the corporate and the Hindu leaders in India which Meera Nanda (2009) calls a 'state - temple - corporate complex' has created new institutional spaces where maximization of profits through Hinduism is renewing itself. She further writes that Indian state and its functionaries operate on the unstated assumption that Hinduism is not merely one religion among other religions of the Indian people, but rather the national ethos, or the way of life, that all Indians must learn to appreciate, if not actually live by.

There are two broad areas where an outright influence of globalization can be seen upon Hinduism in India: education and tourism (Nanda, 2009). With the commercialization of higher education in India new priest training schools and deemed universities are mushrooming. Meera Nanda records how such universities produce English - speaking, computer - using pujaris, astrologers, vaastu shastris and other providers of religious services. Gurus and swamis are entering into the business of conferring degrees in priestcraft and astrology and even setting up modern institutions with a traditionalist bent. The best example could be Sri Sri University set up by the spiritual leader Shri Shri Ravi Shankar in 2009 which boasts its tag line as 'Holistic modern education combined with ancient Indian values'. Besides, Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthana (SVYAS) in Bangalore and Bihar Yoga Bharati in Fort Munger in Bihar offer advanced degrees all the way to Ph.Ds in yogic sciences. Further, the Sandipani Pratishthan established in 1987, an autonomous organization of the Ministry of Human Resource Development funds gurukuls all across the country and serves as their accrediting body. Another sector where the corporate and even the state are making a common cause with Hinduism is the religious tourism. It is quite common to see how temple management departments are actively trying to turn some remote temple into a pilgrimage spot by inventing a history behind it. For instance, the newly invented rituals like gold car in temples of Tamil Nadu or the reenactment of the Shiva and Parvati wedding. Another example to show government's involvement in propagating religious tourism can be seen in the fact that how Devaswom board of the Sabarimala temple in Kerala in full complicity with the government's electricity board was involved in the fraud of lighting the 'divine light' also called Makaravilakku for which millions of pilgrims turn out every year ('Makaravilakku is lit by hand: Tantri' in The Hindu, May 28, 2008).

20.8 Impact of Globalization Upon Diasporic Religious Communities

The internet and other means of mass communication holds the diasporic community together as it provides an obvious method for dialogue within and between diasporic groups but at the same time, Turner (2006) notes, that the unintended consequence of globalization is often that the diasporic politics and their intellectual elites come to depart radically from tradition, building up their own internal notions of authority, authenticity and continuity.

The globalization of religion in the twentieth century has strong connections with the evolution of a global business ethic and global corporations. One aspect of the Appadurai's global religioscape is the adoption and adaptation of religions to the social needs of new middle classes. For instance, in the Welsh countryside of Great Britain, Turkish migrants have brought their 'whirling dervishes' to village life, where the local inhabitants are made to believe that whirling is psychologically good for them. Yoga practices from Hinduism have been widely adopted in the West where practice is stripped of its spiritual significance and developed merely as a meditation technique. Such flows of religious beliefs in the globalized world also threaten to denude them of their authentic meaning and significance.

20.9 Summary

Globalization refers to the historical process by which all the world's people increasingly come to live in a single social unit. It implicates religion and religions in several ways. From religious or theological perspectives, globalization calls forth religious response and interpretation. Yet religion and religions have also played important roles in bringing about and characterizing globalization. Among the consequences of this implication for religion have been that globalization encourages religious pluralism. Religions identify themselves in relation to one another, and they become less rooted in particular places because of diaspora and transnational ties. Globalization further provides fertile ground for a variety of noninstitutionalized religious manifestations and for the development of religion as a political and cultural resource.

Peter Berger (2003) says that virtually all religious communities are today, if not globalizing, reaching across the borders of their traditional territories. But they differ in their intention or capacity to create new forms of modernity. For instance, we

discussed Oomen's take on homogenization, traditionalization, pluralization and hybridization. Globalization has not only disembedded religions from their historic homelands but also led to the resurgence of spiritual market. Next, we also saw how with the advent of globalization and neoliberalism Hindu religiosity is facilitated by the Indian state and corporate interests. Meera Nanda (2009) argues that new religiosity of middle class Indians which has been aggravated by globalization is openly ritualistic, ostentatious and nationalistic. Globalization also opened the avenues for private education which is today surreptitiously bringing religion into the school and college instruction. The Indian state entered into partnership with the corporate in order to accumulate capital has opened new institutional spaces where Hinduism can renew itself. The effect of globalized economy can also be seen on diasporic communities who negotiate with their religion in different forms.

20.10 Model Questions

1. Answer briefly the following questions: (5 Marks)

   a) What is globalization? Identify its features.

   b) Why religion is known as a transnational institution?

   c) How religion becomes a political resource?

   d) Briefly state the interconnection between Religion and globalization.

2. Answer in detail the following questions: (10 Marks)

   a) Write a broad outline of the rise of spiritual market in the era of globalization.

   b) Write a detailed note on relationship between religion, globalization and human condition.

   c) Analyse the relation between globalization and religion…give suitable examples to enrich your answer.

20.11 References and Suggested Readings

   1) Ahmed, Akbar S. Islam, Globalization and Postmodernity. London, 1994.

   2) Appadurai, Arjun. Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization. Minneapolis, 1996.

   3) Bauman, Zygmunt. Globalization: The Human Consequences. London, 1998.

4) Berger, Peter L., and Samuel P. Huntington, eds. Many Globalizations: Cultural Diversity in the Contemporary World. Oxford, 2002.

5) Braman, Sandra, and Annabelle Sreberny-Mohammedi, eds. Globalization, Communication and Transnational Civil Society. Cresskill, N.J., 1996

6) Stackhouse, Max L., and Peter J. Paris, eds. God and Globalization: Religion and the Powers of the Common Life. Harrisburg, Pa., 2000.

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Special Notes:

i)   The role of the caste panchayats are to solve cases and to bring out solutions so that the internal regulation of the village stays strong. It promotes solidarity among the members of the village. It is mainly operated by the elderly members of the village.

ii) Sanskritization was coined by M.N Srinivas in his book "Religion and Society among The Coorgs of South India". It is one form of caste based social mobility. According to him, "Sanskritization is a process by which a lower caste or tribe or any other group changes its customs, rituals, ideology and way of life in the direction of a higher or more often twice-born caste."

iii) Parashuram was regarded as the Brahma Warrior. He was believed to be the incarnation of Lord Vishnu as per the Hindu mythology.

iv) One of the most popular Hindu mythology is the Mahabharata. Bhishma was one of the most important figures over there. He was popular for his vow to remain celibate all his life. He was blessed with a boon to have wish-long life. He was one of the unparalleled warriors of his time.