



INSTITUTE
OF DISTANCE
EDUCATION **IDE**
Rajiv Gandhi University

BATS101 TRIBAL STUDIES : MEANING AND CONCEPTS



**BA (TRIBAL
STUDIES)**
1ST SEMESTER

Rajiv Gandhi University
www.ide.rgu.ac.in

BOARD OF STUDIES	
1. Prof. J L Dabar Department of History Mizoram University Tanhril, Aizawl, Mizoram	Chairman
2. Prof. S.K. Chaudhuri Department of Anthropology Rajiv Gandhi University	Member
3. Dr. (Mrs.) Jumyir Basar Assoc. Prof., Arunachal Institute of Tribal Studies Rajiv Gandhi University	Member
4. Ms. Zilpha Modi Asstt. Prof., Arunachal Institute of Tribal Studies Rajiv Gandhi University	Member
5. Dr. S. Simon John Director (i/c), Arunachal Institute of Tribal Studies Rajiv Gandhi University	Member Secretary

Copyright Vikas© Revised Edition 2021

All rights reserved. No part of this publication which is material protected by this copyright notice may be reproduced or transmitted or utilized or stored in any form or by any means now known or hereinafter invented, electronic, digital or mechanical, including photocopying, scanning, recording or by any information storage or retrieval system, without prior written permission from the Publisher.

"Information contained in this book has been published by Vikas Publishing House Pvt. Ltd. and has been obtained by its Authors from sources believed to be reliable and are correct to the best of their knowledge. However, IDE—Rajiv Gandhi University, the publishers and its Authors shall be in no event be liable for any errors, omissions or damages arising out of use of this information and specifically disclaim any implied warranties or merchantability or fitness for any particular use"



Vikas® is the registered trademark of Vikas® Publishing House Pvt. Ltd.

VIKAS® PUBLISHING HOUSE PVT LTD

E-28, Sector-8, Noida - 201301 (UP)

Phone: 0120-4078900 • Fax: 0120-4078999

Regd. Office: 7361, Ravindra Mansion, Ram Nagar, New Delhi – 110 055

• Website: www.vikaspublishing.com • Email: helpline@vikaspublishing.com

About the University

Rajiv Gandhi University (formerly Arunachal University) is a premier institution for higher education in the state of Arunachal Pradesh and has completed twenty-five years of its existence. Late Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister of India, laid the foundation stone of the university on 4th February, 1984 at Rono Hills, where the present campus is located.

Ever since its inception, the university has been trying to achieve excellence and fulfill the objectives as envisaged in the University Act. The university received academic recognition under Section 2(f) from the University Grants Commission on 28th March, 1985 and started functioning from 1st April, 1985. It got financial recognition under section 12-B of the UGC on 25th March, 1994. Since then Rajiv Gandhi University, (then Arunachal University) has carved a niche for itself in the educational scenario of the country following its selection as a University with potential for excellence by a high-level expert committee of the University Grants Commission from among universities in India.

The University was converted into a Central University with effect from 9th April, 2007 as per notification of the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India.

The University is located atop Rono Hills on a picturesque tableland of 302 acres overlooking the river Dikrong. It is 6.5 km from the National Highway 52-A and 25 km from Itanagar, the State capital. The campus is linked with the National Highway by the Dikrong bridge.

The teaching and research programmes of the University are designed with a view to play a positive role in the socio-economic and cultural development of the State. The University offers Undergraduate, Post-graduate, M.Phil and Ph.D. programmes. The Department of Education also offers the B.Ed. programme.

There are fifteen colleges affiliated to the University. The University has been extending educational facilities to students from the neighbouring states, particularly Assam. The strength of students in different departments of the University and in affiliated colleges has been steadily increasing.

The faculty members have been actively engaged in research activities with financial support from UGC and other funding agencies. Since inception, a number of proposals on research projects have been sanctioned by various funding agencies to the University. Various departments have organized numerous seminars, workshops and conferences. Many faculty members have participated in national and international conferences and seminars held within the country and abroad. Eminent scholars and distinguished personalities have visited the University and delivered lectures on various disciplines.

The academic year 2000-2001 was a year of consolidation for the University. The switch over from the annual to the semester system took off smoothly and the performance of the students registered a marked improvement. Various syllabi designed by Boards of Post-graduate Studies (BPGS) have been implemented. VSAT facility installed by the ERNET India, New Delhi under the UGC-Infonet program, provides Internet access.

In spite of infrastructural constraints, the University has been maintaining its academic excellence. The University has strictly adhered to the academic calendar, conducted the examinations and declared the results on time. The students from the University have found placements not only in State and Central Government Services, but also in various institutions, industries and organizations. Many students have emerged successful in the National Eligibility Test (NET).

Since inception, the University has made significant progress in teaching, research, innovations in curriculum development and developing infrastructure.

SYLLABUS

Tribal Studies: Meaning and Concepts

Unit-I Definitions and Scope

- (a) Introduction to Tribal Studies: Nature, Scope, relevance
- (b) Relationship with other disciplines.

Unit – II Understanding ‘Tribe’

- (a) Conceptual debate: tribes and indigenous people; Use of terms in India;
- (b) Scheduled Tribes, primitive tribes, denotified tribes/ex-criminal tribes in India. .

Unit-III Social Structure

- (a) Structure, function and Organisation
- (b) Social Mobility: types, tribe and caste, tribe-caste-present continuum and Sanskritization

Unit – IV Process of Social Stratification

- (a) Social Stratification and Social Processes
- (b) Tribalisation, detribalisation and re-tribalisation

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
UNIT I DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE	3-19
UNIT-II UNDERSTANDING 'TRIBE'	20-42
UNIT-III SOCIAL STRUCTURE	43-100
UNIT - IV PROCESS OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION	101-110

INTRODUCTION

NOTES

The tribal people are rich in cultural heritage and skill of art and craft but they are still marginalized in respect to higher education as well as in other walks of life. In the present age of globalization the world has shrunk into a village as the society has advanced in technology. But the tribes, who are the custodians of Indian culture in the real sense, are far behind in this race of advancement.

The greatest challenge that the Government of India has been facing since independence is the proper provision of social justice to the scheduled tribe people, by ameliorating their socio-economic conditions. Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes and de-notified tribes constitute the weakest section of India's population, from the ecological, economic and educational angles. They constitute the matrix of India's poverty. Though the tribal community are the sons of the same soil and the citizens of the same country, they are born and grow as the children of nature. From the historical point of view, they have been subjected to the worst type of social exploitation. They are practically deprived of many civic facilities and isolated from modern and civilized way of living since so many centuries.

The British rulers really did something in providing certain facilities in villages and towns such as, education, transport, communication, medical etc. though inadequate and mainly with self-interest. But it did nothing for ameliorating the socio-economic conditions of tribal people, except to the people in North-East region of the country, because of certain reasons. First, the British administrators thought it expedient generally to leave the tribal community alone, as the task of administration in the hill areas was difficult and costly. Second, it was considered desirable to keep away the tribal community from possible political influence from the world outside. Third, some of the British officers genuinely felt that left to themselves, the tribal people would remain a happier lot. The Scheduled District Act of 1956 had, therefore, kept most of these areas administratively separate, the same situation was allowed to continue under the Government of India Acts of 1919 and 1935. However, post-independence this policy was abandoned and new policies of tribal development and integration were initiated. The Constitution of India has made definite provisions for the welfare and upliftment of the tribal people throughout the country.

There is an increasing interest in tribal studies in contemporary times. Besides academic interest, government organizations and NGOs also have shown their increasing interest in tribal development and as such in tribal studies. In recent years, national and international funding agencies (ICSSR, UGC, UNESCO, Ford Foundation) have been funding researches to study tribal culture and life. Tribal studies has assumed an interdisciplinary commitment over the last several decades.

This book, *Concepts and Methods*, is written in a self-instructional format and is divided into five units. Each unit begins with an *Introduction* to the topic followed by an outline of the *Unit objectives*. The content is then presented in a simple and easy-to-understand manner, and is interspersed with *Check Your Progress* questions to test the reader's understanding of the topic. A list of *Questions and Exercises* is also provided at the end of each unit, and includes short-answer as well as long-answer questions. The *Summary* and *Key Terms* section are useful tools for students and are meant for effective recapitulation of the text.

UNIT I DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE

Structure

- 1.0 Introduction
- 1.1 Unit Objectives
- 1.2 Introduction to Tribal Studies
 - 1.2.1 Relevance
 - 1.2.2 Nature
 - 1.2.3 Scope
 - 1.2.4 Relationship with Other Disciplines
- 1.3 Summary
- 1.4 Key Terms
- 1.5 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 1.6 Questions and Exercises
- 1.7 Further Reading

NOTES

1.0 INTRODUCTION

India has the largest tribal population in comparison to any other country in the world. According to the 2011 Census of India, the total population of tribes in India is nearly 104.3 million with a sex ratio of 990 per thousand. They constitute an important segment of the Indian population and account for nearly 8.6 per cent of the total population of India. Their literacy percentage is recorded at 58.96 per cent. Except for Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and Union Territories of Chandigarh and Puducherry, they are present in all the states and Union Territories of India. This does not mean that there are no tribes in these places. Every year hundreds of tribal students move to Delhi to join the Delhi University for higher education. What it means is that there are no tribal communities native to these places. Tribes occupy around 15 per cent of the total geographical area and are mostly located in the hills, forests and other relatively inaccessible places. Many tribal areas are very rich in natural resources like flora, minerals deposits and natural water bodies.

The term tribe is used for a very diverse set of communities, each of which is different from the other. They show wide diversity in terms of their cultural practices, social organizations, occupations, levels of literacy, languages, physical characteristics, degree of acquired traits, demographic characteristics and levels of economic development. Some, like the Khasis and the Garos of Meghalaya, are matrilineal while the Nagas and most of the tribes from Central India, like the Mundas and the Oraons, are strongly

NOTES

patrilineal. All the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh are also patrilineal. Polygyny i.e. socially approved union of one man with two or more women is accepted among the Varlis of Dadar and Nagar Havelli, and Nishis and Adis of Arunachal Pradesh, while polyandry

i.e. socially approved union of one female with more than one man was known to be prevalent among the Todas of Tamil Nadu and the Monpas of Arunachal Pradesh.

A literacy rate of more than 90 per cent is reported among the Mizos and the tribes of Lakshadweep while tribes like the Chenchus and Cholanaiken have around 1 per cent literacy. The lowest literacy rate is recorded among the tribes of Uttar Pradesh (0.06 per cent). Tribes like the Gonds and Bhumijas happened to establish a dynastic role for some time in the history of India. The Khamptis of Arunachal Pradesh, a Buddhist tribe, also ruled the Sadiya outpost of the Ahom kingdom during the first part of 19th century. Meenas from Rajasthan have a large representation in government jobs, others like the Kochuvelans and the Koragas of Tamil Nadu or the Puroiks of Arunachal Pradesh have negligible presence. Why do we still call all of them as tribes? How are they different from other communities? What are the important cultural characteristics of these communities and how are these communities different from others? This unit attempts to answer some of these questions. We shall begin with the relevance of tribal studies and then proceed to understand the concept of tribe and how it evolved in anthropology. Thereafter, we will see how tribes are defined in the Indian context.

1.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Discuss the nature and scope of tribal studies
- Describe the importance of studying tribes in the present context
- Assess the relationship between tribal studies and other disciplines
- Explain the debate on the use of the terms tribe and indigenous people
- Analyse the terms used in India to refer to the tribal communities like Scheduled Tribes, Primitive Tribal Groups and De-notified Tribes

1.2 INTRODUCTION TO TRIBAL STUDIES

Tribal studies have been a matter of interest since the late sixteenth century. It was around this time that the Western world came to know of communities and cultures which were very different from them. The study of tribal communities commenced with anthropologists' interest in the study of '**other cultures**'. Anthropology as a discipline emerged with the study of tribes. In the initial years, anthropologists were mainly interested in understanding and explaining tribal communities.

With time, the discipline of anthropology got diversified. Besides studying the tribes, anthropologists now also study the various aspects related to non-tribes and humankind in general. Therefore, we have civilizational studies, village studies, ecological anthropology, psychological anthropology, urban studies, medical anthropology and many more areas of study under the discipline of anthropology. At the same time, scholars from other disciplines like sociology, economics, history, political science, education, ecology, law, botany, zoology and literature also take an interest in the study of tribes. Scholars from these diverse disciplines have enriched the understanding of tribes through

their theoretical perspectives. In contemporary times, there is an inter-disciplinary convergence in the study of the tribes. However, the contribution of anthropologists in tribal studies remains the foremost. This is because it was due to the account of anthropologists that tribal culture and practices which were once thought to be weird, bizarre, primitive and irrational were shown to be meaningful, scientific, rational and contextually relevant. It was their accounts which brought about the much deserved respect for tribal cultures and institutions in the Western world.

Studies on tribes have contributed immensely to the growth of knowledge in academics. The origin and growth of anthropology—more precisely social (cultural) anthropology—has its roots in tribal studies. The holistic approach to study a phenomenon, comparative methods to study cultures, understanding religion as syncretism, micro studies to understand the essence of ‘human-nature-super-nature’ relationship, all have come from the study of tribes. Tribal studies have given a perspective to appreciate diversity and pluralism. Besides, emic-etic debate in academics, substantivist and formalist approaches to study economics, understanding social categories as acephalous (society without a head; democratic societies for example) and cephalous (society with a head), are offshoots of tribal studies. K. S. Singh (1991) informs us that ‘the studies of the tribes have considerably enriched our understanding of Indian pluralism. At a time when everything appeared well and harmonious in the 1950s and 1960s, it was the study of the tribal societies that made us aware of our diversities.’

There is an increasing interest in tribal studies in contemporary times. Besides academic interest, government organizations and NGOs also have shown their increasing interest in tribal development and as such in tribal studies. In recent years, national and international funding agencies (ICSSR, UGC, UNESCO, Ford Foundation) have been funding researches to study tribal culture and life.

1.2.1 Relevance

Tribal studies have been relevant in many ways. In the seventeenth century, studies on tribes commenced with the aim to understand them as a representative of the earlier stage of human civilization. They were seen as social fossils and by studying them it was recognized that it was possible to reconstruct the past of human society and culture. Seventeenth and eighteenth centuries were also the era of expansion of Western colonization. Many of the tribal areas of Africa, America and South East Asia came under the control of colonial powers. With this, there was an urgent need for understanding the tribal communities for governing them. Therefore, the colonial power promoted the tribal studies with the ostensible objective to serve the administrative interests. However, anthropologists like Evans-Pritchard, Radcliffe-Brown, Max Gluckman and Lucy Mair, who undertook these studies, did not restrict themselves to serving the interest of the colonial government. They carried out detailed and exhaustive fieldwork to satisfy their academic and intellectual curiosity. Their efforts have contributed immensely to academic debates and broadened our understanding of many social phenomena.

With the end of colonialism, tribal studies acquired a different set of objectives. With nationalist governments in power in different countries, the focus shifted on more humanistic concerns. In India, for example, the approach shifted to the welfare and development of tribal communities, rather than the colonial approach to keep them isolated. Tribal studies have been conducted to understand these communities better. A better understanding of the tribal society has become essential to prepare programmes of planned change and development in accordance with their own values and practices.

NOTES

NOTES

With the passage of time, there has been a change in the paradigm of tribal studies. In the initial phases of post-colonial era, the objective was the welfare of tribal societies. Now, we talk about the welfare of non-tribal societies through the knowledge obtained from studying tribal societies. The tribal societies are seen as knowledge societies. They are viewed as sources of new ideas and innovation. The tribal art and craft objects are of great demand in cities and urban places. The tribes' knowledge of local herbs and medicines are considered to be of immense value by the practitioners of modern biomedicine. Their relationships to their ecology, and their lifestyles are often cited as models of sustainable living. Many people feel that it is essential to incorporate tribal ethos and values to overcome many of the problems besetting contemporary non-tribal societies. The knowledge derived from the study of tribal societies can go a long way in improving 'others' (i.e. non-tribals) way of life.

The tribal studies have provided a holistic understanding of social phenomena in contrast to an atomistic, fragmented understanding fostered by the Western system of knowledge. The reductionist approach of the West has promoted more and more specialized studies. It has promoted a specialized and partial understanding of societal reality. A tribal society does not manifest a segregated and isolated characteristic of a social phenomenon. In matters of selection of a plot for shifting cultivation, the people perform rituals according to their faiths and beliefs. The Adis, propitiate Kine Nane, the goddess of wealth in *Unying-Aaran* festival for good harvest. Like the Adis, all tribes believe in a deity of crops. For example, in many tribal societies, economic activities are closely tied to religion. Similarly, the same person can play the role of a medical specialist and religious specialist in another situation. The study of tribal societies has underlined how all the aspects of social life are integrated. Hence, no aspect of life can be studied in isolation. It has reiterated the significance of a holistic understanding of society and social phenomenon.

The methodology of holistic understanding derived from tribal studies has also made its impact on other disciplines. The contemporary trend in social sciences is of inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary understanding of social phenomenon. This is best exemplified in the case of the concept of development. Earlier, the concept of development was considered in terms of economic development only. This understanding was again based on specialized disciplinary boundary. Therefore, economic development could not bring about development in other aspects of life. Moreover, it could not be equitable. Today, the concept of development is not restricted to economic development; it includes human, social and cultural development also. As we are developing a holistic outlook to understand humankind and related issues, it is but natural to know the sources which have given such an outlook. Moreover, no community today exists in isolation; all have been exposed to forces of development to different degrees. This means, the tribal communities are also in transition. The traditional tribal society exposed to modern forces, which are more specialized, faces challenges of accommodation between holistic and specialized ideas. It is in this context that tribal studies bear greater significance.

1.2.2 Nature

The knowledge system pertaining to tribal studies so far has not been recognized as a separate discipline. However, it has been emerging as a discipline of inter-disciplinary nature. Interest in tribal studies, no doubt, has evolved into the discipline of anthropology. But anthropology is no more the study of the tribes alone. At the same time, there are other disciplines in social sciences and life sciences which take interest in the study of the tribes giving it an inter-disciplinary status.

Presently, no societies including the tribal societies are static. They have been exposed to external forces of change in different degrees. Hence, the tribal societies in particular are in transitional phases. The tribal studies have been emerging as a discipline focusing on the study of social dynamics of tribal societies.

As mentioned earlier, scholars from various disciplines take interest in tribal studies. This interest is mainly academic in nature. But the governmental and non-governmental organizations also have taken to tribal studies from the perspective of development. Their interest lies in action research to evolve development schemes and to get a feedback for policy formulation and planning the development of tribes in a better way. No doubt tribal studies promote researches which are both fundamental and action oriented. Besides, the laboratory experiment has been linked to the tribal studies especially in the study of ethno-medicine by the scholars from life sciences.

We are aware that tribal studies began with the outsiders' interest. They study the tribes from their own perspective. But over the years there are scholars from the tribes also. Clearly, the interest in tribal studies no more remains in the domain of outside scholars. It is being pursued by both outsiders and indigenous scholars and from this trend of studies we get new insights into the tribal studies. Briefly, we allocate the nature of tribal studies as a discipline in the following way:

- It studies the changes as societies are transitional.
- It is inter-disciplinary in the use of methodology and disciplinary perspectives.
- Tribal studies' research has gone beyond academic interest as is reflected in the interest of governmental and non-governmental organizations (GOs and NGOs), and therefore, has both academic and non-academic dimensions.
- It includes both theoretical and action researches.
- It is no more the study performed by outsiders; it is taken up by both outside and indigenous scholars.
 - Major portion of the knowledge is field-study based.
 - It uses both quantitative and qualitative methods of research.
 - Approach to tribal studies is of a holistic understanding as opposed to specialized knowledge.

1.2.3 Scope

Interest shown in the study of the tribes has gone a long way since its beginning with the colonial interest in these communities. Studies are now taken up for academic interest and also with objectives with policy implications. If we look closely at the subject, we will discover that field study tradition is the predominant approach to study tribes. B. Malinowski, Margaret Mead, A. R. Radcliff-Brown, Raymond Firth, to mention a few, were the pioneers in the field study tradition. But there were also library works on tribes. Mention may be made of Edward Burnett Tylor and his publication on culture and James Frazer and his publication entitled *The Golden Bough*. However, the field study tradition is the essence of tribal studies even today.

As we know, a tribe is a social category like a non-tribal community. There are various aspects of life of non-tribal people. Almost all these aspects are present in tribal communities either in form or in spirit or in both. Hence, the scope of tribal studies is wide like the study of non-tribal communities. A tribal community has a culture, a language, a social organization, an economic pursuit, a system of power and authority, a sense of

NOTES

artistic perception and ascetic expression, and many such things. Studies on all these aspects have a vast scope. But studies on non-tribal communities are normally specialized investigation of phenomena. In case of tribal studies, the approach is holistic.

NOTES

The studies on tribes have generally two aspects. One is the study of individual tribe and the other is the study of tribes from a cross-cultural perspective. In the former sense, individual tribes are studied in totality or a particular phenomenon relating to the tribe's culture is the focus. The same trend is noticed in case of cross-cultural studies. Two or more tribes are studied either in totality and then compared or one aspect of culture in more than one of the tribes is studied. In recent years, because of the interest of GOs and NGOs, tribal studies are becoming more action oriented. However, the focus is always on the dynamics of tribal societies and more often on various aspects of the social process. As has been said, various disciplines have shown interest in the study of the tribes. Medical practitioners also have started showing interest in the ethno-medicine system. Obviously, the scope of tribal studies is expanding and the discipline is in the making. Its scope can also be understood with its relation to other disciplines. We have discussed it in the following section.

1.2.4 Relationship with Other Disciplines

(a) Tribal Studies and Life Sciences

The life sciences deal with the evolution of life, taxonomy, physiology of animals and plants, and therefore explain the process of evolution in the case of living objects. Tribal studies carried out by physical anthropologists have close connections with life sciences. They have tried to study the process of physical adaptation and bodily changes it has caused in the process of evolution. They have also studied the disease patterns, anatomy and physiology but not in relation to an individual but as a group. In case of life sciences, the focus is on the individual, while in tribal studies the focus is on the community. There is a great degree of overlapping in tribal studies. In tribal studies, there are many topics especially related to health and medicine having many close associations with life sciences. However, in tribal studies the emphasis is on indigenous knowledge of medicine; a subfield known as ethno-medicine is a popular topic of research in tribal studies. Health is seen not merely as a biological phenomenon but also as a cultural and psychological process. Ethnobotany and ethnomedicine, which concern the tribes, have been emerging as areas of investigation in Botany.

The evolutionary theory applied to the study of tribes and their culture was influenced by Darwin's theory of evolution of life.

(b) Tribal Studies and Political Science

Political scientists generally study the nature of the state and the organs of power. They study how in a particular setting distribution of power is ordained. They also study the rules by which the groups struggle for power. Political scientists study the nature of government with special reference to its political executive, judiciary and legislative powers. In tribal studies, the concept of power has been viewed from the social perspective. They have tried to understand the relationship between power and social institutions like kinship and religion. Many tribal societies are without a governing head and are known as acephalous societies. They have tried to determine how order is maintained in such societies without any separate political institutions. The roles of lineage, economic and religious institutions have been explained in resolving conflicts. As far as

the study of power and authority is concerned, political science focuses mostly on literate societies while tribal studies on pre-literate societies. Nevertheless, there are attempts to study the body politics of pre-literate societies using the concepts and theories of political science. For example, political scientists apply the concept of deliberative democracy to understand the decision-making process in tribal village councils. There are also studies in understanding state formation in many tribal communities.

(c) Tribal Studies and History

The tribes may remember their history restricted to only three to four generations. Beyond that it tends to get merged in mythology. Moreover, there are no written records. They have only oral histories. History and historical methods tend to emphasize political and economic history. But many historians are writing about the past of tribal communities. The growth of studies based on oral records is emerging as an important method to study the history of tribal societies. In fact, recognition of the method of oral history has been helping the reconstruction of history of tribal communities. Folklores like legends and myths form the basis for preparing the historiography of non-literate society in general and tribal communities in particular. The concept of ethno-history is emerging as an important branch of knowledge in the discipline of history.

(d) Tribal Studies and Economics

Tribal studies have been focussing on studying tribal economies where one encounters a different kind of economic system. In a tribal economic system, the emphasis is not so much on economic rationality or profit maximization. Tribal markets are not based on the pure market principle of demand and supply. The economic relationships are embedded in social relationships. As a result, they play an important role in economic transactions. Economic theories are based on the theories of maximization of profit. In tribal societies, people give equal importance to social values.

Studies conducted on tribal societies have contributed immensely to the understanding of many economic phenomena. The notion of development is no more confined to the basis of statistical indices like GDP, GNP, per capita income; it is conceived in terms of quality of life, level of aspirations of people and so on. We also talk about development through culture.

When an African chieftain destroys his cattle stock, it seems he is irrational. But he does so with an objective to maximize his satisfaction in terms of his social status corresponding to such an act. There is a principle of maximization guiding human behaviour; in conventional economics it is maximization of material benefit while in tribal communities it is non-material consideration in a cultural context. Tribes, unlike earlier beliefs, produce surplus, but the purpose of the surplus is not in terms of investment, but for earning social prestige, and sometimes using it as a medium of exchange. In both the cases, an economic transaction takes place; in tribal economics it is a barter exchange while in market economics money plays an important role as a medium of exchange. Many economic principles operate in both the economies, but with a difference owing to the difference in the level of technology and perception about maximization. However, tribal (barter) and non-tribal (market) economies have expanded the scope of economics as a discipline and the understanding of economics in a holistic sense. They both are complementary. We know that in recent years tribal economy is being integrated with market economy and national development planning. In recent years, tribal development has emerged as an important area of research in the discipline of economics.

NOTES

NOTES

(e) Tribal Studies and Sociology

Tribal studies are closely related to sociology. Earlier, sociologists were only interested in studying urban societies. Their approach was macro and the comparative perspective was absent. But this distinction is fast eroding. This is especially true for sociologists in India. This is because, as we would see later, the distinction between tribe and non-tribe is not so clear in the context of India. Many sociologists are also studying tribes using a micro perspective and through fieldwork. M. N. Srinivas's work among the Coorgs is an apt example. The contributions of sociologists like G. S. Ghurye, A. R. Desai, Andre Beteille, and Virginius Xaxa to our understanding of tribal communities are very significant. The differences are more historical. The only difference is that sociologists study societies other than tribal societies also; and the tribes do not form the main thrust of their study as it happens in tribal studies. Tribal societies are changing rapidly. In fact, all tribal communities are in a transitional phase. Sociologists have developed concepts and theories for studying social change which tribal studies can make use of. Moreover, due to the process of change, tribal communities experience social problems which provide an interesting area of study for field sociologists.

(f) Tribal Studies and Literature

Tribal/indigenous literature is emerging as a genre in the field of literature in American Literature, Canadian Literature and Indian Literature. The creative imagination in the tradition of orality often gets expression in the written tradition. The writers of the tribes write down songs, prayers and myths in their dialects or in Roman scripts. The area of ethno poetics is a significant emerging field in literature. The ballads of Nandamma, Liamen, Thulasilamma and many others of the Irular tribe of Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Kerala are enriching experiences in ethno poetry. You will find many narratives created in response to endeavours to adjust to transitional social dynamics. The narratives also present exploitative forces which unleash the transitional phase or the personality conflict one encounters. *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe narrates the social conflict within his own Igbo tribe of Nigeria. You will also find narratives of exploitation in the transitional phase of tribal society. Gopinath Mohanty's *Paraja* is an example of exploitation of the Paraja people during the colonial period. Mahasweta Devi's *Chotti Munda and His Arrow*, for example, narrates the exploitation of the tribes and their response and struggle against it.

The exploitation and oppression by national governments of the natives in Australia, Canada and other such countries also form the theme of literary narratives. Edwidge Danticat's novel *The Dew Breaker* is a narrative of the sufferings of those Haitians who are believed to be political opponents or disloyal citizens. Lee Maracle's novel *Sundogs* is a narrative of the lives of aboriginal Canadians affected by their struggle for territorial rights. Socio-political, cultural and historical contexts are rich areas of literary creation in changing tribal communities. Feminist writings on the plight of women in patriarchal tribal communities are another area of literary activity. Many tribal writers pen down their life stories straddled between the boundary between tradition and modernity. Mamang Dai's *The Legend of Pensam* is an example of this category of literature. Tribal folklores provide more fertile ground for literary creation. Precisely, the invasion of the oral world by the written world enables tribal writers to produce literature on self-assertion and reconstruction of history. No doubt, in recent years, literature on religious movements in the tribal communities is an emerging area. It is true that the discipline of tribal studies enriches the discipline of literature and thus the two are very closely related.

(g) Tribal Studies and Archaeology

Archaeological studies are definitely essential for understanding the tribal situation. The dynamics of the tribal societies, like the process of migration, cultural contact and diffusion and evolution in phases, needs inputs from archaeological sources for better understanding. Since archaeology is basically concerned with the reconstruction of the extinct societies based on material traces, the simple facts of material culture of the tribal societies are immensely helpful in understanding the past-present continuum of these societies. Such concepts of archaeology like artefacts, monuments and conservation strategy have to be redefined in the context of tribal societies. The established pre-historic archaeological discourses also present a different picture and situation when applied in the context of tribal societies, many of which are in a pre-literate stage. Ethno-archaeological investigation which tries to unveil the unrecorded past with the help of ethnographic data is very much a dimension of tribal studies. Ethno-archaeology is, therefore, considered to be an important field of study in situations where archaeological sources are scant but tribal ethnography is conspicuous. Many of the age old practices considered as extinct facts of archaeology are still continuing in tribal societies, termed as 'Living Archaeology'. The scholars studying tribal cultures with the help of archaeological evidences call it 'Living Culture'.

Archaeological methods help understand the tribal culture as a continuum. Similarly, ethnographic data help explain archaeological facts. Obviously, archaeology and tribal studies have an overlapping area where they complement each other. From the archaeological point of view, the branch of knowledge is called ethno-archaeology while from the tribal studies point of view this could be archaeological ethnography. The only difference is in the approach, whether it is ethnography applied to archaeological facts or vice versa.

The knowledge of archaeology is also necessary for understanding the contemporary tribal situation, as tribal revivalism very often seems to manipulate the archaeological facts for glorification of the past and reconstruction of exclusive tribal history. Recently, archaeological facts have been judiciously used for understanding the ethno-history and this is considered very much relevant in many of the underdeveloped territories which were under colonial subjugation.

(h) Tribal Studies and Linguistics

Tribal communities provide a rich field of linguistic studies. Many theoretical perspectives in linguistics are linked to the study of tribal communities. Syncretic and diachronic approaches to study tribal cultures are perspectives from linguistics. The perspective in emic-etic debate also has its origin in linguistics. These terms were first introduced by linguist Kenneth Lee Pike, who argued that the tools developed for describing linguistic behaviours could be adapted to the description of any human social behaviour. The terms **emic** and **etic** are derived from the linguistic terms phonemic and phonetic respectively.

Linguistic structures which attempt at studying pairings of meaning and form can profitably be used to understand object names in a cultural perspective in tribal communities. Therefore, linguists study the tribal language system to understand the rules regarding language use that tribal speakers know. In fact, contemporary linguists believe in the fundamentality of spoken language rather than the written one. There are many tribal languages which are yet to be studied properly. Stephen Morey informs us that so many of the languages of North-East India are still very much under-recorded

NOTES

NOTES

and under-described. Therefore, many foreign linguists take interest in studying tribal languages. Mention may be made of Mark W. Post who wrote a grammar book on Galo language. Similarly, Stephen Morey has also worked on Singpho language (Turung variety) as well as the Tai languages of Assam. Morey and Post have also worked on Tai Ahom Dictionary and Galo Dictionary respectively.

By Language Documentation, we mean not only recording examples of language-stories, songs, rituals conversations, procedural texts (processes for agriculture, marriage, etc.), but also producing good quality mega data for those recordings and where possible, detailed transcriptions, translations and analysis of those texts. In addition, the work is also to produce dictionaries.

— Stephen Morey

Linguists describe and explain the features of language. To study a language effectively, it is necessary to know a great many things about its structure: its phonetics (sounds), phonology (sound system), lexicon (words), morphology (word structure), syntax (sentences), semantics (meanings) and pragmatics (use in communication). However, this is still not enough. It is also necessary to understand how language evolves and takes its shape in their social, cultural and environmental contexts. In this sense, linguistics form an essential component of tribal studies, and the discipline of tribal studies constitutes an essential framework in which linguistic research can be carried out. Such studies may develop new theoretical perspectives and methodological framework also.

Language being a component of culture, the study of a language system of a tribe unravels the cultural dynamics of the people. Moreover, linguists in recent years increasingly use field methods of investigation developed by anthropologists from their study of tribal communities. They try to understand the cognitive, historical and socio-linguistic processes of a language in the changing context.

In the discipline of tribal studies tribal linguistics would form a distinct but interrelated branch of knowledge. For the linguists there is ample scope for language documentation and translation of tribal languages. It is to be noted that Franz Boas, an American anthropologist emphasized on language documentation as early as 1900s. The ethnographic dimension of language documentation and description played a significant role in the development of disciplines like *socio-linguistics* and *anthropological linguistics*. The documenting endeavour has also assumed added significance in recent years when the attempt is directed to preserve endangered languages. Endangered languages are mostly the tribal languages. Linguistics and tribal studies can complement each other to study the relations of language, culture and society and to develop the knowledge in tribal linguistics.

(i) Tribal Studies and Law

The discipline of law without the recognition of tribal customary laws will not be a complete discipline. In fact, every tribe has its customary laws to deal with civil disputes like land disputes and criminal cases like theft, rape and murder. However, these customary laws are uncodified. In 1992, the Government of India decided to conduct an all India survey where an attempt has been made to codify the customary laws of many tribal societies. The Land Record Department of Guwahati High Court has documented customary laws of more than 35 tribes in North-East India. Many tribal communities are documenting their customary laws because they consider them central to their identity. In Arunachal Pradesh, many communities like Aka, Nyishi, Adi, Apatani have documented

their customary laws. The Constitutional provisions including the Sixth and Fifth Schedules are exclusively meant for tribal communities. These provisions have legal implications. Articles 371A and 371G accord constitutional recognition to the Naga and Mizo customary laws respectively. However, other tribes also run their civil affairs according to it.

There are various Acts exclusively for the tribals and others applicable to tribals along with other social categories. Two recent Acts, namely the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Area) Act (PESA) 1996 and the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act 2006 have been tribe specific in that their problems have been recognized and strategies formulated to address them.

There are other laws also which are meant to safeguard the interests of tribal people and other people as well. Some of them are: The Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Areas Money-lenders Regulation, 1963; The Agency Debt Bondage Abolition Regulation, 1964; The Assam Money-lenders Regulation, 1968; The Bihar Money-lenders (Regulation of Transaction) Act, 1939; The Bombay Agricultural Debtors Relief Act, 1947; The Kerala Money Lenders Act, 1958; The M. P. Anusuchit Jan Jati Rini Sahayata Ordinance, 1966; The Madras Indebted Agriculturists (Repayment of Debts) Act, 1955 and many others. Today, the tribals feel much more unsecured to preserve their common property resources when Multinational Companies (MNCs) occupy their resources to launch development projects under the provisions of mining laws, forest Acts, land laws and so on. There are laws which go against the tribal interest. There are also human rights dimension to tribal interests. All these require legal protection and herein comes the rule of law.

In India, the country's legal system recognizes tribal customary laws in many areas. Even during the colonial rule, the customary laws were taken as a point of reference to settle disputes relating to tribes. S. C. Roy's ethnographic account on the Mundas and J. K. Bose's account on Garo customary law were consulted to settle disputes of these communities. Even in Independent India, there are Acts, other than Panchayat (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996 (PESA) and The Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006 (Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers [Recognition of Forest Rights] Act) which recognize customary laws to a great extent. Nagaland Jhum Land Act, 1970; and The Nagaland Village and Area Councils Act, 1978 are two such Acts. The Sadiya Frontier Tract Jhum land Regulation, 1947 recognizes many aspects of customary laws though its main purpose was to regulate the customary rights over Jhum land.

In America, tribal legal studies are emerging as a distinct branch of academic discipline. The discipline deals with laws developed by and for the native people and the power of tribal courts and legal systems. In India, many law institutes undertake research in tribal customary laws and evaluation of rights in the context of tribal people. Tribal societies provide scope for in-depth study of the histories, structures, and practices of tribal justice systems, efforts to balance tribal legal heritage and Indian Penal Code. Criminal and civil jurisdictions, implementation of tribal children's right to education and civil rights, the issue of women empowerment, conflict resolution mechanisms in contemporary tribal law are some of the areas of research in tribal communities. No doubt, tribal studies and law have close linkages. It is not a surprise to note that the Central University of Jharkhand has set up the Centre for Tribal and Customary Law. Many University Law departments conduct research programmes relating to tribes.

NOTES

Check Your Progress

1. How did the study of tribal communities commence?
2. How did tribal studies acquire a different set of objectives with the end of colonialism?
3. 'The studies on tribes have generally two aspects.' What are they?
4. What does Mahasweta Devi's *Chotti Munda and His Arrow* deal with?
5. Name some of the areas of research in tribal communities.

1.3 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that,

- Tribal studies have been a matter of interest since the late sixteenth century. It was around this time that the Western world came to know of communities and cultures which were very different from them.
- Studies on tribes have contributed immensely to the growth of knowledge in academics. The origin and growth of anthropology—more precisely social (cultural) anthropology—has its roots in tribal studies.
- There is an increasing interest in tribal studies in contemporary times. Besides academic interest, government organizations and NGOs also have shown their increasing interest in tribal development and as such in tribal studies.
- With the end of colonialism, tribal studies acquired a different set of objectives. With nationalist governments in power in different countries, the focus shifted on more humanistic concerns.
- The methodology of holistic understanding derived from tribal studies has also made its impact on other disciplines.
- Interest shown in the study of the tribes has gone a long way since its beginning with the colonial interest in these communities. Studies are now taken up with academic interest and also with objectives having policy implications.

Check Your Progress

10. Why was a list of tribal communities drawn post-independence?
11. Who are the primitive tribes?
12. How does P. K. Bhowmick present a classification of the de-notified tribes?
13. State the mandate of the International Labour Organization.

- The studies on tribes have generally two aspects. One is the study of individual tribe and the other is the study of tribes from a cross-cultural perspective.
- Tribal studies have been focussing on studying tribal economies where one encounters a different kind of economic system.
- Tribal/indigenous literature is emerging as a genre in the field of literature as American Literature or Canadian Literature or Indian Literature.
- Archaeological methods help understand the tribal culture as a continuum. Similarly, ethnographic data help explain archaeological facts.
- Every tribe has its customary laws to deal with civil disputes like land disputes and criminal cases like theft, rape and murder. However, these customary laws are uncodified.
- Criminal and civil jurisdictions, implementation of tribal children's right to education and civil rights, the issue of women empowerment, conflict resolution mechanisms in contemporary tribal law are some of the areas of research in tribal communities.
- The term tribe is derived from the Latin term *tribus*, which was used for referring to the threefold division of the ancient people of Rome, identified as the Latin's, the Sabine's and the Etruscans.
- Before the British rule, no community in India was designated as a tribal community. The communities designated as tribes have/had their own terms of reference and reference by the outsiders.
- According to the evolutionary scholars, society or socio-politico development has occurred through four stages and the tribe represents the second stage in the pre-state social organization.
- Tribal communities in India are not static; they are always in the process of adoption and change. The process is more visible when these communities, whether scheduled or non-scheduled are integrated into the Nation's development agenda.
- The term tribe did not exist before the colonial period. However, most of the people with whom the term is associated used to live in forests and hills. Therefore, in India the notion of tribe has evolved from these people.
- The tribe is an administrative and political concept in India. The concept whether we accept it or not, has both administrative and political overtones. Scheduled Tribes, De-notified Tribes, and Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs), are examples.
- In India, tribe is an administrative concept. It refers to Scheduled Tribes, i.e. the tribes and communities listed in the Constitution of India. Other than the Scheduled Tribes, we come across two other administrative terms in the context of tribes: The Primitive Tribes and the Ex-criminal or the De-notified Tribes.
- According to V. K. Srivastava (2005), today when the anthropologist uses the term tribe in the context of India, they include all the communities included in the list of the Scheduled Tribes, although some of them may not be in accordance with the anthropological conception of tribe.
- The territorial dimension also emerges from the fact that the Scheduled Tribe is a state concept. The tribe of one state does not enjoy the same status in another state.

NOTES

NOTES

- The Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) is not a Constitutional category different from the Scheduled Tribes. It is a category within the Scheduled Tribe category.
- The term ‘primitive’, however, has derogatory overtones. Therefore, B. K. Roy Burman suggested renaming these communities as ‘Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups’.
- The de-notified tribes were earlier known as criminal tribes. After they were de-notified, they were also known as ex-criminal tribes.
- In 1937, the Criminal Tribes Committee was set up which was headed by V. N. Tiwari. The Committee was appointed by the Government of United Provinces.
- The native people of many countries did not like to be referred to as a ‘tribe’. In different countries, they have their own appellation. In Australia, these people are recognized as ‘Aborigines’, in New Zealand as ‘Maaori’, in Canada, as ‘First Nations’ and in Americas as ‘Indigenous people’.
- Indigenous movements, among other things, recognize the term ‘indigenous’ to designate people who were original settlers in their territory before the colonial contact.
- The use of the term ‘indigenous’ as a synonym of ‘tribe’ lacks definitional clarity when its universal applicability is concerned. Because of this ambiguity, the ILO Convention 169 (Article 1) recognizes both, indigenous and tribal people.
- The tribes in contemporary India have undergone many changes. Though the most primitive group in terms of indices of growth and development are the tribes but not all tribes are primitive.

1.4 KEY TERMS

- **Appellation:** It means the name or title by which someone is known.
- **Acephalous society:** It is the society without a political head or hierarchy, democratic type of societies.
- **Cephalous society:** It is the society with a central political head like the chief.
- **Endogamy:** It is the practice of marrying within the defined kin-group, be it clan, lineage, village or social class.
- **Exogamy:** It is the practice of marriage outside the kin-group.
- **Morphemes:** They are meaningful units into which a word can be divided.
- **Morphology:** It is the study of the morphemes of a language and how they are combined to make words.
- **Theocracy:** It is the system where there is a state religion.

1.5 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. The study of tribal communities commenced with anthropologists’ interest in the study of ‘other cultures’. Anthropology as a discipline emerged with the study of tribes.

2. With nationalist governments in power in different countries, the focus shifted on more humanistic concerns. In India, for example, the approach shifted to the welfare and development of tribal communities, rather than the colonial approach to keep them isolated.
3. The studies on tribes have generally two aspects. One is the study of individual tribe and the other is the study of tribes in a cross-cultural perspective.
4. Mahasweta Devi's *Chotti Munda and His Arrow*, for example, narrates the exploitation of the tribes and their response and struggle against it.
5. Criminal and civil jurisdictions, implementation of tribal children's right to education and civil rights, the issue of women empowerment, conflict resolution mechanisms in contemporary tribal law are some of the areas of research in tribal communities.
6. The term tribe is derived from the Latin term *tribus*, which was used for referring to the threefold division of the ancient people of Rome, identified as the Latin's, the Sabine's and the Etruscans.
7. Elman Service and Marshall Sahlins were the two most important figures who observed the evolution of the society from the point of view of different stages— socio-economic development.
8. Maurice Godelier also argues that the tribe is a type of social organization which can only be understood if we view it as a stage in the social evolution.
9. Buddhadeb Chaudhuri (1992) has suggested the term 'ethnic group' as an alternative to the term 'tribe' which is defined as a largely self-perpetuating group in biological terms, sharing the same descent, real or putative, which has a set of similar fundamental values realized in cultural forms.
10. Post-independence it was realized that the most backward communities in terms of development indicators like literacy, access to health care, nutrition, income, poverty are from the tribes of India. Therefore, a list of tribal communities was drawn to provide special assistance to them.
11. Primitive tribe is an administrative category used for those Scheduled Tribe communities who were identified as more isolated from the wider community and who maintain a distinctive cultural identity.
12. On the basis of their habitats, occupations and ways of life, Bhowmick presents a classification of these de-notified tribes into the following groups:
 - (i) Nomadic groups who have taken to criminal life
 - (ii) Fighting men and soldiers who having lost their jobs, have turned into criminals
 - (iii) Communities who used to work as village watchman and police, but have taken to criminal life
 - (iv) Wild tribes in distress who took to criminal living as a way out of the plight they had fallen in
 - (v) Beggars turned into criminals
 - (vi) Some settled castes and tribes who took to criminality due to poverty
13. The mandate of the International Labour Organization is the protection of the workers' rights.

NOTES

1.6 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

NOTES

Short-Answer Questions

1. How have the studies on tribes contributed immensely to the growth of knowledge in academics?
2. State the relevance of tribal studies.
3. Why are tribal societies in a transitional phase?
4. List the nature of tribal studies as a discipline.
5. What is the relationship between life sciences and tribal studies?
6. Name few laws which are meant to safeguard the interests of tribal people.
7. Write a note on tribe as a colonial construct in India.
8. State the reason behind the tribes being in a state of transition.
9. Why is Anthony Walker of the opinion that the term 'caste' has a 'considerable value' in comparison to the term 'tribe'?
10. List the criteria established by the Lokur Committee for declaring a particular community as a Scheduled Tribe.
11. The term 'primitive' has derogatory overtones. Give your views.
12. Give a background of the Criminal Tribes Act.
13. Who are the indigenous people? How are they different from the tribes?
14. What is the contemporary tribal situation of India?

Long-Answer Questions

1. What are tribal studies? How did they evolve?
2. Discuss the nature, scope and relevance of tribal studies.
3. Assess the relationship between tribal studies and other disciplines like economics, sociology and law.
4. Critically analyse the relationship between tribal studies and political science, history and literature.
5. Assess the colonial origin of the term tribe.
6. Describe tribe as a stage of evolution.
7. Evaluate the origin of the term tribe and its evolution in India.
8. Who are the Scheduled Tribes? Why is the concept of Scheduled Tribe a state concept?
9. Describe the Primitive Tribals Group (PTGs) as a category of the Scheduled Tribes.
10. Explain the category of the de-notified tribes and the reason behind their taking recourse to theft.

1.7 FURTHER READING

- Beteille, A. 1975. *Six Essays in Comparative Sociology*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Beteille, A. 1992. *Society and Politics in India: Essays in a Comparative Perspective*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Mibang, Tamo and M. C. Behera (ed). 2007. *Tribal Studies: Emerging Frontiers of Knowledge*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications.
- Gandhi, Malli. 2008. *Denotified Tribes: Dimensions of Change*. New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers.
- Devy, G. N.; Davis, Geoffrey V. and Chakravarty, K. K (ed.). 2011. *Voice and Memory: Indigenous Imagination and Expression*. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan.

NOTES

UNIT-II

UNDERSTANDING 'TRIBE'

NOTES

- 2.0 Introduction
- 2.1 Concepts and Categories of Tribes
 - 2.1.1 Colonial Origin of the Term 'Tribe'
 - 2.1.2 Academic Perspectives
 - 2.1.3 Origin of the Term Tribe and its Evolution in India
 - 2.1.4 Search for an Alternative to the Term 'Tribe'
- 2.2 Tribe as a Constitutional Category
 - 2.2.1 Scheduled Tribes
 - 2.2.2 Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs)
 - 2.2.3 De-notified Tribes/Ex-criminal Tribes
 - 2.2.4 Indigenous People
 - 2.2.5 'Indigenous' and 'Tribe' Distinguished
 - 2.2.6 Contemporary Tribal Situation in India
- 2.3 Summary
- 2.4 Key Terms
- 2.5 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 2.6 Questions and Exercises
- 2.7 Further Reading

2.0 INTRODUCTION

India has the largest tribal population in comparison to any other country in the world. According to the 2011 Census of India, the total population of tribes in India is nearly 104.3 million with a sex ratio of 990 per thousand. They constitute an important segment of the Indian population and account for nearly 8.6 per cent of the total population of India. Their literacy percentage is recorded at 58.96 per cent. Except for Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and Union Territories of Chandigarh and Puducherry, they are present in all the states and Union Territories of India. This does not mean that there are no tribes in these places. Every year hundreds of tribal students move to Delhi to join the Delhi University for higher education. What it means is that there are no tribal communities native to these places. Tribes occupy around 15 per cent of the total geographical area and are mostly located in the hills, forests and other relatively inaccessible places. Many tribal areas are very rich in natural resources like flora, minerals deposits and natural water bodies.

The term tribe is used for a very diverse set of communities, each of which is different from the other. They show wide diversity in terms of their cultural practices, social organizations, occupations, levels of literacy, languages, physical characteristics, degree of acquired traits, demographic characteristics and levels of economic development. Some, like the Khasis and the Garos of Meghalaya, are matrilineal while the Nagas and most of the tribes from Central India, like the Mundas and the Oraons, are strongly patrilineal. All the tribes of Arunachal Pradesh are also patrilineal. Polygyny i.e. socially approved union of one man with two or more women is accepted among the Varlis of Dadar and Nagar Havelli, and Nishis and Adis of Arunachal Pradesh, while polyandry i.e. socially approved union of one female with more than one man was known to be prevalent among the Todas of Tamil Nadu and the Monpas of Arunachal Pradesh.

A literacy rate of more than 90 per cent is reported among the Mizos and the tribes of Lakshadweep while tribes like the Chenchus and Cholanaiken have around 1 per cent

literacy. The lowest literacy rate is recorded among the tribes of Uttar Pradesh (0.06 per cent). Tribes like the Gonds and Bhumijas happened to establish a dynastic role for some time in the history of India. The Khamptis of Arunachal Pradesh, a Buddhist tribe, also ruled the Sadiya outpost of the Ahom kingdom during the first part of 19th century. Meenas from Rajasthan have a large representation in government jobs, others like the Kochuvelans and the Koragas of Tamil Nadu or the Puroiks of Arunachal Pradesh have negligible presence. Why do we still call all of them as tribes? How are they different from other communities? What are the important cultural characteristics of these communities and how are these communities different from others? This unit attempts to answer some of these questions. We shall begin with the relevance of tribal studies and then proceed to understand the concept of tribe and how it evolved in anthropology. Thereafter, we will see how tribes are defined in the Indian context.

2.1 CONCEPTS AND CATEGORIES OF TRIBES

In this section we shall conceptualize the term ‘tribe’ as a social category with special reference to India. We shall begin with its colonial connection in general and India in particular. Then we shall proceed to discuss the concept from an academic perspective, and as constitutional categories in India. Then we shall also discuss the indigenous debate to designate tribes as indigenous people. This frame of analysis will provide a comprehensive understanding of the concept right from its origin and subsequent evolution.

There is ambiguity in providing a universally accepted definition of the term tribe. Anthropologists, sociologists, social workers, administrators and such other scholars who have been involved with the tribes and their problems are still not in agreement regarding the concept and the definition of their subject. This is because the term tribe has evolved in different contexts under different historical and political conditions.

2.3.1 Colonial Origin of the Term ‘Tribe’

The term tribe is derived from the Latin term *tribus*, which was used for referring to the threefold division of the ancient people of Rome, identified as the Latin’s, the Sabine’s and the Etruscans. The three were referred to as the three Tribes of Rome, who founded the earliest Roman Empire. The word is believed to have its origin in Old French *tribu*, which in turn comes from a Latin word *tribus*. The English word ‘tribe’ occurs in the 12th century Middle English literature and refers to one of the twelve tribes of Israel. But the Portuguese used the term to designate the colonized people in Africa. Since then it is a colonial term of reference to groups whom colonial people considered as ‘others’ or different from the major groups living in a country.

‘Tribe’ as a Colonial Construct in India

In the pre-colonial times, we did not have a vernacular equivalent of the term tribe in any of the Indian languages. We have already discussed some of the terms by which the present ‘tribal’ communities were addressed. Besides, we also find the usage of the

Sanskrit term *Kirata* in ancient literature, perhaps in the context of the North-Eastern tribes. According to K. S. Singh (1997), there are respectable references to some of the tribes in classical literature. He quotes one of the Shlokas from 6th century AD:

The Kirata king is a master of the martial arts. Do not disregard him as mountaineer. Indra, the king of gods, entreated him to reside in the Himalayas to protect the earth.

Before the British rule, no community in India was designated as a tribal community. The communities designated as tribes have/had their own terms of reference and reference by the outsiders. The Adis of Arunachal Pradesh had

the appellation of ‘Abor’ by the outsiders. But they had their own terms of reference as Minyong, Padam, Bokar, Bori and Pasi in a wider context and the clan name in the context of self-introduction. As the communities had their own terms of reference and no community was designated as a tribe, there were no generic social categories of any sort before the colonial rule.

As the term ‘tribe’ was not used to designate a social category as such, the British administrators were confused to apply this term to some groups. They tried to understand these groups with reference to corresponding categories in America, Australia and Africa. But there were vast differences. Hence, they used different terms in successive censuses because the enumerators could not understand the prevailing Indian

dynamics within their theoretical construct when they attempted to fit some sections of the population as tribes. K. S. Singh (1998) writes:

The tribe is a colonial concept, an Anglo-Saxon word, defined for the first time in the Census of 1901, in contra-distinction to caste. The notion of tribe has evolved over the censuses, from a hill and forest tribe, to a primitive tribe, to a backward tribe, and finally, to the scheduled tribe.

Susana B. C. Devalle (1992) from her study of the Jharkhand tribes concluded that 'tribe is essentially a construct', and is a 'colonial category'. The characteristics attributed to tribes, such as egalitarianism, subsistence economy, little or no external control, autonomy and isolation of such a unit, Devalle argued, are not found among Jharkhand people, known as *adivasi*. There are no evidences found to prove that these characteristics existed in the past. Needless to say, according to her, there were no tribes in Jharkhand until the European understanding of the Indian reality constructed them. The category thus devised evolved into an administrative concept later.

2.3.2 Academic Perspectives

Though the term was used by the colonial administrators to designate some groups of people, academicians used it to conceptualize social dynamics from historical perspectives. Hence, the term is defined from different angles.

Definitions

One of the earliest definitions comes from George Peter Murdock. To him a tribe is a:

... social group in which there are many clans, nomadic bands, villages or other/subgroups which usually have a definite geographical area, a separate language, a singular and distinct culture and either a common political organization or at least a feeling of common determination against strangers.

The Imperial Gazetteer of India defines a tribe as:

A tribe, as we find it in India, is a collection of families or groups of families bearing a common name, which as a rule, does not denote any specific occupation; generally claiming common descent from a mythical or historical ancestor and occasionally from an animal, but in some parts of the country held together rather by the obligation of blood-feud than by the tradition of kinship; usually speaking the same language; and, occupying, or claiming to occupy, a definite tract of country. A tribe is not necessarily endogamous, i.e. it is not an invariable rule that a man of a particular tribe must marry a woman of that tribe.

John Milton Yinger defines it as:

...it is small, usually preliterate and pre-industrial, relatively isolated, endogamous (with exogamous sub-tribal divisions), united mainly by kinship and culture, and in many places also territorial boundaries, and strongly ethnocentric ('We are the people').

From the Indian perspective, D. N. Majumdar's (1967) definition is noteworthy. It can be briefly paraphrased as follows:

A tribe is a collection of families, bearing a common name, the members of which occupy the same territory, speak the same language and observe certain taboos regarding marriage, profession or occupation and have developed a well assessed system of reciprocity and mutuality of obligation.

It is evident from these few definitions that a tribal community possesses some characteristics. It should be made clear that all the characteristics may or may not be found in a particular community. Some general characteristics may be outlined as follows:

NOTES

NOTES

- Inhabiting a specific geographical area or territory
- Using a specific language or a dialect
- Known by a distinct name and exhibiting a strong sense of belongingness or identity
- Possessing customs and laws which often vary in some degree from those of neighbouring tribes
- Having their own rites and beliefs which frequently differ from those practised and held by the people around them
- Economically self-sufficient and politically autonomous
- Are not part of civilization

Tribe as a Stage of Evolution

Academicians used the term tribe to explain the evolution of society. They placed 'tribe' as a stage in the evolution of society through different stages.

Earlier, anthropologists like Lewis Henry Morgan (1818-81), Edward Burnett Tylor (1832-1917) and other evolutionists not only defined tribe as a type of society but also regarded them as representing a particular stage of evolution. A tribe was seen as a primitive social formation; primitive because they were supposed to represent the earlier stages through which the contemporary Western civilization has evolved.

Elman Service and Marshall Sahlins were the two most important figures who observed the evolution of the society from the point of view of different stages—socio-economic development. They placed 'tribe' as a stage in socio-economic development to explain the evolution of society.

According to the evolutionary scholars, society or socio-political development has occurred through four stages and the tribe represents the second stage in the pre-state social organization. Their scheme was:

Band —→ Tribe —→ Chiefdom —→ State
--

Band: Their first level of organization is a band. A small group of people are related through the ties of common descent. The members have face-to-face interaction and migrate together within a specific locality. Bands were generally exogamous and other than a marriage partner, each band was self-sufficient and independent of the other.

Tribe: For certain strategic significance, like conflict or exploitation of resources, some bands may come together to form a tribe. A tribe represents more than a mere collection of bands; it differs from bands in terms of nature of integration of society. Other than kinship affiliation, association was based on age grades, religious congregation and ceremonial parties. In the absence of any centralized authority, social order was maintained through the relative differences in statuses and roles.

Chiefdom: A third stage of pre-state social organization was marked by the emergence of a ruler. In the initial stages, the chiefdoms were theocracies, with the ruler or the members of his family also serving as high religious officials. When the chief died, the role was filled by someone from a particular line of descent.

State: It is a system of social organization marked by stratification with the separation of political power from religious power. The centralized government was bestowed with

political power and the state had the right to collect taxes, drag citizens for work and for war, and enact and enforce the law.

Tribe as a segmentary society: Marshall Sahlins (1968) places tribe as a stage of evolution. But he associates the term tribe, i.e. the stage with segmentary lineages as distinguished from centralized chiefdoms. According to him, tribe is a segmental organization. It is composed of a number of equivalent, unspecialized multifamily groups, each being the structural duplicate of the other—a tribe is a congregation of equal kin group blocks. The segments are the residential and proprietary units of the tribe. It is held together principally by likeness among its segments and pan-tribal institutions, such as the system of intermarrying clans, of age grades, or military or religious societies, which intersect the primary segment.

Self-contained primitive social formation: Maurice Godelier also argues that the tribe is a type of social organization which can only be understood if we view it as a stage in the social evolution. The 19th century evolutionists readily believed that the development of a more complex or a more advanced type of society would automatically lead to the effacement of the tribal type. For these scholars of tribal studies, it is a truism that the tribe has preceded the state and civilization on the broad scale of social evolution. Hence, Godelier and his associates placed tribe as opposite to civilization. Ideally, they saw a tribe as an isolated, self-contained primitive social formation, but not as a part of civilization by force or by choice. It was defined on the basis of the absence of those characteristics which we associate with civilization.

While studying the tribes, the concept of civilization has its own connotation. Henry Lewis Morgan's work of 1977 emphasizes on the 'practice of reading and writing'. It is also understood in the presence of 'great tradition' as defined by Robert Redfield in 1947. Naturally, the tribes do not have a 'great tradition', but have their local specific cultural behaviour, i.e., the 'little tradition'. In the sense of absence of the 'practice of reading and writing', they are not illiterate, but are 'preliterate'. Hence, while placing the tribes in the scale of civilization, they would not feature in the binary oppositions of 'civilized' and 'literate', i.e. they should not be designated as 'uncivilized' and 'illiterate'. Rather, they should be designated as 'non-civilized' or 'preliterate'. Therefore, Andre Beteille has suggested for a flexible attitude towards the definition of the term 'tribe'.

Tribes in transition: Tribes in India were never in isolation. The communities at different levels of civilization have co-existed with the non-tribal communities since time immemorial. Because of this co-existence, the tribal communities have been interacting with the non-tribal communities (caste societies) at different levels. Needless to say, tribal communities in India are not static; they are always in the process of adoption and change. The process is more visible when these communities, whether scheduled or non-scheduled are integrated into the Nation's development agenda. A. R. Desai (1969) has, therefore, aptly remarked that the tribes in India are in transition. According to A. R. Desai (1969), in India, majority of the tribes should be viewed as 'tribes in transition'. To define them as a tribe, one has to take a historical perspective. Beteille (1992: 76) advocates a historical perspective to define a tribe. According to him, only by getting to know the predecessor of a group can a group be considered as a tribe.

The transitional concept can also be understood with reference to syncretism or adaptation to different livelihood strategies. This concept portrays tribal society against the background of self-contained and static nature as was attributed in the earlier writings on tribes.

NOTES

NOTES

Among the Khamptis of Arunachal Pradesh, one would find a syncretic tradition of Buddhism and indigenous practices. They belong to the Theravada cult of Buddhism, but also believe in the deities of mountains, forests and many other animistic traditions. Ancestor worship is a part of their curative system. Such a syncretic tradition is noticed in the study of Subhadra Mitra Channa on the Jad of Harsil (one of the five ST groups of Uttarakhand included within the generic category of Bhotiya). The people do not subscribe to any clearly bounded social or religious category; but rather display a tradition betwixt and between the Hindu and Buddhist tradition. Tribe as a 'closed cultural group' is not evident in Khampti or Jad communities. Subhadra Mitra Channa further writes that Jad, being the pastoralists, move with their animals from one location to another as an adaptive strategy to different ecological niches. Obviously, they do not follow a singular adaptive strategy for themselves and their animals. Appropriately, she labels them as a 'mode of adaptation', a way of life with adjustment to different ecological conditions rather than a bounded unit as a tribe is understood to be in conventional scholarship.

Changes have been occurring in 'tribal' communities of India at different perceptible levels from pre-colonial period. Tribes do not stick to one locality. They migrate when the resource base is depleted. Against this background, 'tribes in transition' is one of the characteristics to explain the tribal communities in India.

Tribe-caste continuum: As has been mentioned earlier, tribes in India have never lived in isolation. Hence, a tribal community is never static. In other words, the community is in transition. There is another dimension to understand the tribal interaction with non-tribal community (caste-based societies). Tribes learned from caste-based societies and castes also learned some aspects of life of the tribals. Due to this process of interaction, assimilation, acculturation and adaptation have taken place between the tribal community and non-tribal community to different degrees.

This interaction has been a feature of the Indian society from the early stages and can be traced back to the days of Ramayana and Mahabharata. The groups were referred to as *Jana* in Ramayana. When Ram reached the borders of the forests of central India during his exile, the land was introduced to him as *Jana-sthan*, the land of tribal people. His meeting with Guha and the Bhil woman Savari is a popular episode in Ramayana. In Mahabharata, there are references to *kiratas*, Bhim's marriage with a tribal girl, Hidimba and Krishna's fight with Banasura. These were in fact interactions between tribes and non-tribes during that period.

Thus, in the process of this interaction, the tribals have adopted some aspects of non-tribal ways of life. The contrary is also true. There is a legend in Odisha about the incorporation of a tribal God into the Hindu tradition which evolved into 'Jagannath Cult'. The Badaga of the Nilgiri Hills were influenced by the neighbouring tribes. The Karma festival of the Oraons has also become a festival of many neighbouring communities in Jharkhand and Odisha.

It is very difficult to place the tribal communities at one end of a pole and the non-tribal peasant communities at the other end. If we place tribal and peasant communities at the opposite ends of a pole, there will be many tribal communities displaying characteristics of peasant and caste-based communities and many caste-based communities displaying characteristics of tribal communities to varying extents. There will not be a vacuum between tribal and caste-based societies placed at the end of the opposite poles. Hence, it is said that there is a continuum between tribal and caste-based societies, known as tribe-caste continuum.

We can cite some examples of such continuum. Anthony Walker (1998) having worked among the Toda community of the Nilgiri Hills for several years, arrived at the conclusion that in comparison to 'tribes', the term 'caste' has a 'considerable value', for it helps in placing them in the context of the South Indian cultural matrix, to which they actually belong. He finds it confusing when the Toda are designated as a 'tribe' in the sense in which this term has been used in anthropological and sociological literature. In a similar methodological perspective, Hockings (1993) after working among the Badaga of the Nilgiri Hills concludes that the Badagas have been referred to as a 'tribe', 'caste', and 'Hindu race' in literatures dealing with the community starting from 1922. He argues, like Walker, that instead of focusing on a unit and labelling it, the entire system of which the unit is a part of needs scrutiny. The Badaga had migrated to the Nilgiri Hills from the plains to the north. Theirs is an example of a caste group which adopted a tribal model through its regular interaction with the Toda, the Kurumba, and the Kota, the Scheduled Tribes of the Nilgiri Hills. Hockings considers the Nilgiri people as a 'case of a caste society' displaying 'several distinct indigenous cultures' which have their 'respective origins in pre-caste social formation'.

F. G. Bailey (1961), proposed this continuity in his concept of 'Tribe-Caste continuum', where he showed there are societies with both characteristics of tribes as well as caste. Surajit Sinha (1965), similarly proposed a continuum between the tribe and peasant societies in India. Further, with several changes occurring within the community in independent India, because of government programmes of planned change, many of the tribes have undergone rapid transformation.

2.3.3 Origin of the Term Tribe and its Evolution in India

The term tribe did not exist before the colonial period. However, most of the people with whom the term is associated used to live in forests and hills. Therefore, in India the notion of tribe has evolved from these people. Over the censuses during the colonial period, the nomenclature referring to tribes underwent successive modifications, involving primarily changes in the descriptive adjectives like hill and forest tribes, a primitive tribe or a backward tribe. The Constitution of India has dropped the qualifying adjectives and has adopted the notion of Scheduled Tribes for this category. In the first Census Report of 1891, J. A. Baines, the then Commissioner for Census of India, classified some groups of people as 'Forest Tribes' under the sub-heading of 'Agricultural and Pastoral Castes'. Their number was enumerated as 16 million. In the subsequent Census Records, the nomenclature underwent successive modifications. In 1901 Census, Sir Herbert Hope Risley classified them as 'Animists', in 1911 E. Gait further classified them as 'Tribal Animists' or people following 'Tribal Religion'. J. H. Hutton categorized them as 'Hill and Forest Tribes' in 1931 Census. These people by that time were numbering 22 million. The term 'tribe' or 'tribal religion', however, does not have any definitional note in the above Census Reports. In The Government of India Act, 1935, these people came to be recorded as 'Backward Tribes' without a definition of the term. Similarly, in 1941 Census they were designated as 'Tribes' accounting for 2.47 crore of people. Post-Independence, some of these people were listed in the Constitution of India and designated as Scheduled Tribes (STs).

Though the definition of tribe was not clear, it was more or less considered to be in contrast to castes which were occupational groups. In caste system, the principle of caste endogamy was strictly followed, which was in Risley's opinion not the case with the tribes. Contrary to Risley's definition, the tribes in contemporary India have an

NOTES

NOTES

occupation or set of occupations; they speak many languages. They are mobile and have migrated to different parts of the country even during and before colonial rule. For example, Santhals, Oraons and Mundas who are the native people of Jharkhand were brought to settle in Assam during the last part of 19th century. The Oraons, who are the tribes of Jharkhand, are also spread over Odisha. Their original homeland was somewhere in the hills of South India from where they migrated to Rohtasgarh in present day Chhattisgarh from where they again migrated to avoid Muslim attacks, much before the colonial rule. The Mudma fair in Mandar block of Ranchi district held every year is a conglomeration of Oraons to commemorate their migration from Rohtasgarh. In Jharkhand, Oraons also live with other tribes like Mundas and non-tribes, recently called *Moolbasis* in many villages. No doubt isolation has never been a characteristic of Indian 'tribes'. The application of the term tribe to groups does not have a clear basis in the Indian context.

It is not a surprise that concepts like *tribes in transition* and *tribe-caste continuum* have been coined to explain the Indian situation. Post-independence some people were treated as Constitutional categories and were designated as Scheduled Tribes. Among them are PTGs (particularly vulnerable tribal groups). Among the tribes and some other groups of people, the colonial rulers designated some groups as criminal tribes. These groups were treated as de-notified tribes by the Government of India. Among these de-notified tribes, there are some groups scheduled and some not scheduled in the Indian Constitution. Similarly, all the groups that were enumerated under the category of tribes are also not scheduled. Therefore, academicians, like scholars of tribal studies, designate them as non-scheduled tribes. There is also a debate on the designation of Indian tribes as indigenous people.

We shall discuss about scheduled tribes, Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs), de-notified tribes and indigenous people in the following sections. Let us discuss the non-scheduled tribes, the groups who display the characteristics of tribes but are not scheduled in the Constitution.

Non-Scheduled Tribes: As has been discussed, the tribe is an administrative and political concept in India. The concept whether we accept it or not, has both administrative and political overtones. Scheduled Tribes, De-notified Tribes, and Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs), are examples. There are also communities possessing all the characteristics which have been the criteria to enlist a community as a Scheduled Tribe. But still they are not scheduled in the Constitution. These communities are called Non-Scheduled tribes and unfortunately are deprived of the benefits which accrue to Scheduled Tribes according to the Constitutional provisions. The members of these communities feel that they are tribes. At the same time they feel that they are deprived of what their counterparts enjoy having been scheduled in the Constitution. It is not a surprise that the Gujars in Rajasthan and Koch Rajbongshi in Assam claim for Scheduled Tribe status. The Dhankuts of Bahraich district of Uttar Pradesh have all the characteristics of a tribe but are not scheduled in the Constitution. Similar is the case with the Yobin group of Arunachal Pradesh, and the Badaga of Nilgiri Hills who do not enjoy Scheduled Tribe status.

Interestingly, the Malai Kuravar is a Scheduled Tribe community in Kanyakumari district and non-ST (Scheduled Caste) community in Tirunelveli district of Tamil Nadu. Another interesting case of territorial dimension of identification of a tribe is the Bharia. C. S. S. Thakur, Professor of Sociology, Rani Durgavati Vishwavidyalaya, Jabalpur informs that Bharia is a primitive tribal group in Patalkot valley of Chhindwara district of Madhya Pradesh. Outside the valley but within the district they are recognized as a

Scheduled Tribe community. Further, outside the district the community is not scheduled. Similarly, Rabari community enjoys Scheduled Tribe status in Gujarat but Other Backward Class status in Rajasthan. These groups are considered to be non-scheduled tribes by the academicians.

Generic Identity: In India, a tribe is not always community specific. You will find many tribal communities sharing a common name. There is no community as Naga tribe. The appellation Naga is shared by many communities like Ao, Angami, Rengma, etc. In fact, Ao or Angami is a tribe both anthropologically and constitutionally, but not Naga. Nevertheless, Naga is an identity of these groups which is generic in nature. Similarly, in Uttarakhand Jad along with other four Scheduled Tribe groups shares the generic Bhotiya identity.

The *adivasi* in Assam is a generic term and includes communities like Oraon, Suara, Munda and Santhals. These are scheduled tribes in their respective states of origin but these groups are non-scheduled tribes in Assam. All of them are addressed as *adivasi*, and in the popular perception of North-East, the term denotes a single community who otherwise have their individual community identity.

Terms of address: In the earlier period the communities who are now called tribes were known by their community names like the Baigas, the Oraons and the Saoras. Over the years, for the term 'tribe' in India, a number of synonyms have evolved. These are *Adivasi* (original settlers), *Girijan* (forest dwellers), *Vanyajati* (forest caste), *Adim jati* (primitive caste), *Jana jati* (folk people), *Vavavasi* (inhabitants of forest), *Pahari* (hill dwellers) and *Anusuchit jati* (Scheduled Tribes). David Hardiman (1987) notes that in Gujarat, terms like *kaliparaja* (the 'black people') is used to refer to the tribal people. Persian terms like *qabila*, *qabilewale* were also in vogue to refer to tribes. There are empirical evidences which suggest that the term 'jati' was used as a suffix to tribal communities. Mention may be made of the appellations *Adivasi jati*, *Vanyajati*, and *Janaj-jati* (the 'kind of forest dweller'). Denis Vidal (1997) writes, 'In Sirohi (Rajasthan)... the same generic term (*jati*) was often used to refer indiscriminately [to] the castes or tribe'.

In fact *jati* does not bear the connotation of its English equivalent 'caste'. The word connotes to a 'kind or type' rather than 'caste'. In India, it is used in a variety of other contexts such as *manushya jati* to mean humankind, *devta jati* and *danav jati* to mean gods and demons respectively, *stri jati* to mean women, *pashu jati* to mean the 'category' of animals or *vanaspati jati* to mean plants.

Many tribal communities were also designated through fictitious names, sometimes a common nomenclature. Often, the designations by which tribes are known are outside constructs. Therefore, most of them are not known to the outside world by their respective indigenous names. Contrary to the terms that the outsiders have improvised for them, tribes refer to themselves by their respective community names like Munda, Santhal, Gond, Baiga, Sahariya, Gaddi, or by the generic term *jati*, or the hybrid term *Adivasi jati*. The outsiders may also be the neighbouring tribes or clans. The Laju Nocte, known to outsiders and to other clans of Nocte by this name, refer themselves as Olo. The Khamptis address themselves as Tai, though the term Khampti has meaning in their language system.

It becomes difficult to decipher the meaning of some names, even by the people to whom it is labelled. For example, the Tagin and Nyishi tribes of Arunachal Pradesh were designated as Dafla whose origin and meaning are still a matter of speculation. Niharranjan Ray (1972) has suggested the term *Jana*, used earlier to denote tribal

NOTES

NOTES

Check Your Progress

6. From where has the term 'tribe' been derived and what does it refer to?
7. Name the two important figures who observed the evolution of the society from the point of view of different stages of socio-economic development.
8. How can a tribe be understood according to Maurice Godelier?
9. What according to Buddhadeb Chaudhuri is an ethnic group?

communities like Savaras, Bhils, Nagas, Kirat, Pulindas, Kols, etc., in place of the term 'tribe'. He argues that *Jana* and *Jati* are both derived from the root *Jana* meaning 'to be born', 'to give birth to' and hence has a biological connotation. Their inhabited territories were known as *Jana Padas* in ancient India. G. S. Ghurye, however, uses the term 'Backward Hindus' for the tribes. This connotation is in conformity with the 'nation building' project, which requires the national identity, essentially of a Hindu nation, through the amalgamation of all people in a common bracket.

2.3.4 Search for an Alternative to the Term 'Tribe'

The term 'tribe' is a colonial construct, so also is the term 'indigenous'. In India, the term 'indigenous' is not applicable the way it is applicable in America, Canada, Australia and Africa. The scholars are engaged in finding a suitable designation for the groups who otherwise have a wide range of appellations academically, administratively and constitutionally.

It is to be noted that many scholars consider the term 'tribe' pejorative. Some have suggested to use the term 'community': say 'Santhal community', 'Birhor community' and 'Saharia community'. The word 'community' is also used for the members of a caste like 'carpenter community, weaver community', or urban neighbourhoods. Buddhadeb Chaudhuri (1992) has suggested the term 'ethnic group' as an alternative which is defined as a largely self-perpetuating group in biological terms, sharing the same descent, real or putative, which has a set of similar fundamental values realized in cultural forms. The members of an ethnic group normally have the same field of communication and interaction; they speak the same (or similar) language and understand its cultural nuances, and distinguish themselves from other categories of the same order. Jagannath Pathy (1988) however, prefers the term 'ethnic minority' because tribes are always sub-ordinated to the majority. Moreover, the term 'ethnic group' has also been used as a generic category for castes as well as religious communities.

Other terms suggested for tribes are 'autochthones' and 'indigenes'. However, none of these alternative terms have the same level of popularity and acceptance as does the term 'tribe'. That is why, notwithstanding the polemics surrounding the term, it is still the most widely used social category to describe certain sections of societies.

2.2 TRIBE AS A CONSTITUTIONAL CATEGORY

In India, tribe is an administrative concept. It refers to Scheduled Tribes, i.e. the tribes and communities listed in the Constitution of India. Other than the Scheduled Tribes, we come across two other administrative terms in the context of tribes: The Primitive Tribes and the Ex-criminal or the De-notified Tribes. Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) is a sub-category of Scheduled Tribes. But a number of communities, tribes and other communities were labelled as criminal tribes under the colonial rule. The Government of India by an Act later de-notified these communities. These communities are designated as Ex-criminal or the De-notified Tribes. In this section, we shall discuss these three administrative concepts.

2.4.1 Scheduled Tribes

Post-independence it was realized that the most backward communities in terms of development indicators like literacy, access to healthcare, nutrition, income, poverty are from the tribes of India. Therefore, a list of tribal communities was drawn to provide

NOTES

special assistance to them. Certain pockets in India are largely dominated by the tribal communities. These areas were known as 'excluded area' and were later designated as Scheduled Area. The tribes and other communities, especially in the 'scheduled area' were listed in the Indian Constitution and they came to be known as Scheduled Tribes as per Article 342. There was a debate on the use of a term for these communities. In the debate held in the Constituent Assembly, Jai Pal Singh, a tribal leader, favoured the term *adivasi* in place of Scheduled Tribe. But Dr B. R. Ambedkar, who was the Chairman of the Drafting Committee of the Constitution, argued that *adivasi* is a general term, which has no special legal *de jure* connotations. As the term Scheduled Tribe has a fixed meaning, because it enumerates the tribes, he favoured its use.

The Constitution of India, Article 366 (25) defines Scheduled Tribes as,

...such tribes or tribal communities or part of or groups within such tribes or tribal communities as are deemed under Article 342 to be Scheduled Tribes (STs) for the purposes of this Constitution.

It is to be noted that only those tribes which have been included in the list of Scheduled Tribes are given special treatment or facilities envisaged under the Constitution. The Scheduled Tribes are specified by the President under Article 342 by a public notification. The Parliament may, by law, include or exclude from the list of Scheduled Tribes any tribal community or part thereof in any State or Union Territory. In Article 342, the procedure to be followed for specification of a Scheduled Tribe is prescribed.

Article 342 of our Constitution states that:

The President may with respect to any State or Union Territory, and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor on... thereof, by public notification, specify tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities which shall for the purpose of this Constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State or Union Territory, as the case may be.

However, it does not contain the criterion for the specification of any community as Scheduled Tribes. The Lokur Committee has established the following criteria for declaring a particular community a Scheduled Tribe:

- **Geographical isolation:** They should be living in cloistered, exclusive, remote and inhospitable areas, such as hills and forests.
- **Backwardness:** Their livelihood should be based on primitive agriculture, a low-value closed economy with a low level of technology that leads to their poverty. They have low levels of literacy and health.
- **Distinctive culture, language and religion:** These communities should have developed their own distinctive culture, language and religion.
- **Shyness of contact:** They should have a marginal degree of contact with other cultures and people.
- They should be an ensemble of primitive traits.

The definition was not very precise and it would have been difficult to go about identifying tribes with it. For example, what is meant by primitiveness was nowhere defined. The Draft National Policy of Tribals, 2006 admits, 'The criteria laid down by the Lokur Committee are hardly relevant today. For instance, very few tribes can today be said to possess "primitive traits".' The Presidential Order, 1950 declared 212 tribes located in fourteen states as Scheduled Tribes. In fact the list was more or less similar to the list prepared in the 1931 Census. Their number increased to 427 in 1971, 437 in 1981, and to

NOTES

621 in 1991. Communities can be excluded or included in the list based on the recommendation of the President. The National Tribal Policy, 2006, puts the figure around 700 while in the First Draft, 2004, the number of ST communities was given to be 698, in 2013 the number of ST communities was given to be 705.

According to V. K. Srivastava (2005), today when the anthropologist uses the term tribe in the context of India, they include all the communities included in the list of the Scheduled Tribes, although some of them may not be in accordance with the anthropological conception of tribe.

The Scheduled Tribe is an administrative and political concept and applies to individual communities and to territories as is the case of Kinnaur, Jaunsar-Bawar and Pangwal. In these territories, people irrespective of their social categories have been declared as Scheduled Tribes.

The territorial dimension of the concept of Scheduled Tribe needs an explanation. Though Kinnauras are a territorial group which forms their socio-cultural identity, the Constitution of India has treated them differently unlike the Jaunsar-Bawar. T. S. Negi writes that originally there was the Kinnaura tribe—by legendary belief as well as some historical evidences and deduction—to be the descendant of the Kinnara Tribe of Hindu Mythology. But the tribe is stratified as Khasia, Chamang and Domang castes on the basis of specialized occupation. Those who followed the profession of shoe-making are called Chamang, and those who followed the profession of iron works are called Domang. Khasias are equated with the Rajputs. Consequent to these occupational divisions, the Rajputs are known as 'Sawarn'—the high caste, and Domang and Chamang as 'Harijan'. Interestingly, all these groups have their socio-cultural identity as Kinnauras. Strangely, in the Indian Constitution the Khasias are enumerated as Scheduled Tribes and the Domang and Chamang as Scheduled Castes.

Some of the areas like Jaunsar-Bawar in Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand were declared as scheduled areas in 1967. As such the communities living there were scheduled as Jaunsar-Bawar. Jaunsar is derived from the name Jamunasar referring to the Jamuna tract of the district. The communities living there have three distinct social divisions. These three divisions are Khasa, which includes the Rajputs and the Brahmins. The second one is the middle division under which Lohar, Sunar, Badi, Ode, Bajigi—the artisan communities are included. The third division is categorized as *harijans* and includes such communities as Dom, Koli, Kolta, Koir, Angi, etc. The Jaunsar-Bawar tribe in fact has a complete social categorization, in addition to it being a territorial construct. The territorial dimension of the tribal status is also reflected in case of many other tribes.

The territorial dimension also emerges from the fact that the Scheduled Tribe is a state concept. The tribe of one state does not enjoy the same status in another state. The *Adivasis* of Central India who belonged to Munda, Santhal, Saura, and other tribal communities were brought as tea plantation labourers to Assam during the British period. They are designated as *Adivasis* in Assam, the place to which they migrated, but without the status of Scheduled Tribe. This ambiguity stems from the Constitutional provision as is read in Article 342 (1).

Article 342 (1): The President may with respect to any State or Union Territory, and where it is a State, after consultation with the Governor thereof, by public notification, specify the tribes or tribal communities or parts of or groups within tribes or tribal communities, which shall for the purposes of this Constitution be deemed to be Scheduled Tribes in relation to that State or Union Territory as the case may be.

Article 342 (2): Parliament may by law include in or exclude from the list of Scheduled Tribes specified in a notification issued under clause (1) any tribe or tribal community or part of or group within any tribe or tribal community but save as aforesaid a notification issued under the said clause shall not be varied by any subsequent notification.

In the early anthropological literature, tribe is constructed as a community outside the state. But in India, there are tribal communities scheduled in the Indian Constitution which participated in state formation. Rajgond, Jaintia, Tripuri and Bhuyan are examples.

Hugh Chisholm (1910), informs us in *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*:

...The 16th century saw the establishment of a powerful Gond kingdom by Sangram Sah, who succeeded in 1480 as the 47th of the petty Gond rajas of Garha-Mandla, and extended his dominions to include Saugor and Damoh on the Vindhyan plateau, Jubbulpore and Narsinghpur in the Nerbudda valley, and Seoni on the Satpura highlands...

It is to be mentioned here that the tribal chiefs were not only the rulers of their own communities. There are 'non-tribal' communities which were also ruled by them. The Khamptis of present Arunachal Pradesh were sometimes rulers of the Sadiya outpost of the Ahom kingdom during the first half of 19th century. Interestingly, Sadiya was not the inhabited land of the Khamptis.

R. Singh (2000) in his book entitled *Tribal Beliefs, Practices and Insurrections* writes,

... The Gond rajas of Chanda and Garha Mandla were not only the hereditary leaders of their Gond subjects, but also held sway over substantial communities of non-tribals who recognized them as their feudal lords...

Raji, a small primitive tribe of Central Himalayas claim to be the rulers of the half of Northern Pithoragarh district. They are descendants of the Eskt dynasty. Similarly, the history of the Jaintia kingdom of Meghalaya is an example of participation of the Jaintia tribe in state formation. The state Tripura is named after the Tripuri tribe who once ruled the land through the Debabarman clan.

During the British period, the construct of a tribe was basically in contrast to a caste which is a construct of occupational groups. But there are scheduled tribal communities within which occupational diversification is clearly visible. Kolcha, a primitive tribal group in Valsad and Panchmahals districts of Gujarat are basket makers, agricultarists and forest labourers. But traditionally, this community used to handle carcasses. We have also discussed the caste-based social system among the Kinnaura and Jaunsar-Bawar tribal communities.

The Scheduled Tribe group also includes communities with class formation. The Bhoksa tribe of Central Himalayas live in two territorial divisions. Dehradun, Pauri Garhwal and Bijnor districts constitute the first zone, while Nainital district constitutes the second one. The Bhoksas of the second zone are economically better off as compared to those in the first zone and consider themselves superior.

The territorial dimension of Scheduled Tribes is also reflected in their nomenclature. The Khampti tribe of Arunachal Pradesh has derived its name from a place full of gold (*Kham*: gold; *ti*: land). The Tangsa tribe of the same state derives its name from a place called *Tang*, Tangsa meaning the children of *Tang*. The Nyishi tribe identify themselves as the people living in a territory lying between *Nyeme* (Tibet) and *Nyipak* (plains). The Scheduled Tribe communities do not exist in all the states of India. In the states of Punjab, Delhi and the Union Territory of Chandigarh, there are no communities identified as Scheduled Tribes. This does not mean that there are no Scheduled Tribe population in

NOTES

NOTES

these places. Thousands of students and members from the Scheduled Tribe communities come to these places to study and work. It is to be mentioned that the Scheduled Tribe category is not inclusive of the social category called tribe in anthropological literature. The social category called tribe in anthropological literature includes both scheduled tribes and non-scheduled tribes.

Significantly, there are no religious bars for specifying a person as a member of a Scheduled Tribe or a community to schedule in the Constitution. Thus, we have Muslim Scheduled Tribes such as 17 tribal groups of Lakshadweep and the Gaddi and Bakriwal of Jammu and Kashmir and Scheduled Tribes following Christianity such as the Nagas, and Mizos. Similarly, we have the Khamptis and Monpas of Arunahcal Pradesh who follow Hinayana and Mahayana cults of Buddhism respectively.

2.4.2 Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs)

The Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) is not a Constitutional category different from the Scheduled Tribes. It is a category within the Scheduled Tribe category. The distinction between the Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) and the Scheduled Tribes is a matter of degree of development. The ShiluAo Committee constituted by the Planning Commission in 1969 had observed that the impact of planned 'change and development' has not been uniform in all the tribal communities. Within the Scheduled Tribes, conditions of some of the communities have not improved. They remained extremely backward and some of them continued to be in the primitive food gathering stage.

Primitive tribe is an administrative category used for those Scheduled Tribe communities who were identified as more isolated from the wider community and who maintain a distinctive cultural identity. These hunting, food-gathering, and some agricultural communities, have been identified as less acculturated tribes among the tribal population groups and that is why they are in need of special programmes for their sustainable development. In these communities, the development indicators are most vulnerable. Understandably, these groups are more vulnerable to hunger, starvation, malnutrition, and poor health. Important communities among the PTGs are Chenchu, Asur, Birhor, Birjia, Korwa, Parhaiya, Savar, Kolgha, Kathodi, Kotwalia, Padhar, Siddi, Chuktia Bhunjia, Bondo, Didayi, Dongria Khond, Juang, Kharia, Kutia Khond, Lanjia Saura, Lodha, Jarwa, Onge, Buksa, Raji, Riang, Toda, Kota, Irular and some others. Some groups like the Andamanese, Shom Pan, Cholanayakan and Koraga are on the verge of extinction.

In order to ensure the development of these communities, certain groups within the Scheduled Tribes were historically classified as Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) for the first time in 1973. These groups were identified in 1975-76 and thereafter in 1993. These groups are regarded as the poorest of poor amongst the Scheduled Tribes. The criteria fixed for identification of such PTGs are:

- Pre-agricultural level of technology
- Remote isolated enclaves
- Small population
- Economic and social backwardness
- Very low level of literacy
- Declining or stagnant population

Based on the above mentioned criteria, 75 tribal communities were identified as PTGs spread over 17 States and one Union Territory. According to Census 2001, the

total population of PTGs in the country is 32, 62, 960. The Sahariya primitive tribal group has the highest number of population which stands at 4, 50,217 and the Sentineles the lowest at 39. Similarly, the population of PTGs in Madhya Pradesh is 9, 38,190, the highest among the states, and in Andaman and Nicobar Islands it is the lowest at 672. The National Tribal Policy has further mentioned two broad categories among the PTGs keeping in view their development requirements. The first group consists of communities which have been more or less insulated from the surrounding populations and are placed in isolated ecological environments. This group is named as 'heritage group' and includes such communities as the Jarawa, Sentinelese, Shompen and Cholanayakan. The second group does not have any name but includes the categories of PTGs which are located on the fringes of 'mainstream' population and have some contact with them. The Birhor, Chenchu, Jenu Kuruba, etc. come under the second category. The strategy of development will be group oriented in case of the heritage groups. But for the second group it will be a mix of group oriented and area development.

Although the concepts of Tribal Sub-Plan and the Special Assistance to the state governments have been in operation since the Fifth Five Year Plan, it was felt that these funds were not reaching the Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) in proportion to their requirements and as such not much development had taken place with respect to these communities.

The PTGs can also be understood with reference to Bhupinder Singh's distinction between the two types of tribal communities on the basis of their development requirements. The first category's requirement is 'first-aid treatment', meaning little help, while that of second category is 'hospitalization', meaning proper intensive care. According to him, the primitive tribes fall under the second category. He prefers to call the PTGs the 'Primary Tribes'.

The term 'primitive', however, has derogatory overtones. Therefore, B. K. Roy Burman suggested renaming these communities as 'Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups'. But, he could not get rid of the derogatory overtones and in short Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups also bear the acrimony of PTGs. Nevertheless, the connotation of the term 'vulnerable' is still problematic. There are no objective measurements to determine the degree of vulnerability amongst the PTGs and Scheduled Tribes. However, their socio-economic and cultural development would be considered by formulating conservation-cum-development micro plans suitable to their requirements. The main objective is to raise the socio-economic standard of these groups at par with other Scheduled Tribes by 2020.

2.4.3 De-notified Tribes/Ex-criminal Tribes

The de-notified tribes were earlier known as criminal tribes. After they were de-notified, they were also known as ex-criminal tribes. It is important to mention that ex-criminal tribes are those tribes who were earlier listed under the British Government's Criminal Tribes Act of 1871. Important groups listed as criminal tribes were Bawaria, Bhatu, Beria, Bhedkut, Dom, Karwal, Mina, Mantam, Yerkula Sugali, Yandi, Koravas, Lambadi, etc. The interesting thing is that the so-called criminal tribe population constitutes a group or section of a group within a tribe or caste or an entire tribe or caste. Thus, one would find in the category of criminal tribes group of people who may be considered as tribes, Hindu caste and the Muslims. Ethnically, criminal tribes were mixed groups.

NOTES

Background of the Criminal Tribes Act

NOTES

British rule in India created some social categories. As you know, one is the category of tribes. This category came in as a result of the colonial policy of 'divide and rule'. The other one is the 'criminal tribe' which later became the de-notified tribe in free India. The colonial policy of exclusion of people from their traditional livelihoods resulted in resorting to petty crimes by them as an alternative source of livelihood. Instead of understanding the reason for their criminal tendencies, they were brought to task by enacting criminal laws.

The British attitude towards the petty crimes committed by some people or groups of people was based on a false notion. The colonial ruler believed that crime was a hereditary calling of these people. It is to be noted that Dr Lombroso's widely accepted theory of 'inborn criminality' continued to influence the administrators for years together.

Criminal Acts: The Criminal Tribes Act was passed by the British Government as early as 1871 and was applied arbitrarily and unjustly against some of the aboriginal tribes, castes and Muslims of our country. In 1876, the law was extended to many other parts of British India, specially to lower Bengal. An amendment of the Act in 1897, even empowered the local government to separate the children of these groups aged between 4-18 years, from their irreclaimable parents. This law empowered local governments to declare any community or tribe or any part of a tribe, gang or class indulging in systematic commission of non-bailable offences as a criminal tribe. In 1911, further amendments were made which provided for the maintenance of a register of persons considered as criminals for detailed information of their whereabouts (place). The amendments made it obligatory on the part of the members of the criminal tribes to give their fingerprints and to report change of residence. It also empowered the Provincial Governments to restrict the movement of these communities within particular areas. The offenders were punished according to the nature of their crimes. Through gradual modification, this Act was more or less, consolidated in 1924.

Who are the people who took to crimes as a source of livelihoods?: The people who were clubbed as criminal tribes did not constitute a homogenous group. P. K. Bhowmick (1989) in his article entitled 'Problems of De-notified Tribes: A Case Study of the Interaction of Government and Diverse Ethnic Groups in Fringe Bengal' informs that the so-called criminal tribe population constitutes a group or section of a group within a tribe or caste or an entire tribe or caste. Some of them would be found to be members of one particular Scheduled Caste or another. A few also were found belonging to higher castes. At the same time, some sections of the Muslims also belonged to the criminal tribes category. Thus, one would find in the category of criminal tribes groups of people who may be considered as tribes, Hindu caste and the Muslims. It marks for a group as 'habitual' rather than 'natural' offenders. On the basis of their habitats, occupations and ways of life, Bhowmick presents a classification of these de-notified tribes into the following groups:

- (i) Nomadic groups who have taken to criminal life
- (ii) Fighting men and soldiers who having lost their jobs and have turned into criminals
- (iii) Communities who used to work as village watchman and police, but have taken to criminal life
- (iv) Wild tribes in distress who took to criminal living as a way out of the plight they had fallen in

- (v) Beggars turned into criminals
- (vi) Some settled castes and tribes who took to criminality due to poverty

Why did people take to crimes?: Most of the groups, who were clubbed under the category of 'criminal tribes', had their traditional source of livelihood patronized by rich persons and royal families. The products had a market among common people also. With the coming of the colonial rule, the royal families lost their status and hence the people who enjoyed their patronage, lost their livelihood sources too. Due to the availability of cheap machine made goods in the market, the traditional handicrafts lost their market. The colonial laws were also responsible for the deprivation of the communities, especially tribals from their sources of livelihoods. The government forest policy (the forest laws of the 1880s), for example, prevented free grazing of the cattle owned by these groups and prevented them from collecting forest produce. The Chenchus of Hyderabad were very much affected by the forest laws. Out of desperation, they turned into bandits. This also happened to Lodhas of West Bengal. Bhowmick writes that territorial and economic displacements along with the changing situations forced them to commit crime and offence.

The development of roads and railways also destroyed traditional trade and commerce. Because of development activities people lost their source of livelihood and due to the availability of cheap goods they also lost the market. As a result they lost their traditional means of livelihood. Mildred MacKenzie, in his book *The Mud Bank* writes:

The Yerukulas were originally merchants. Their forefathers carried salt, grain and other commodities inland, on the backs of the pack animals, but in the march of progress, rail, and roads came and transportation was taken out their lands. Their living was gone, they knew no trade and they resorted to crime.

These tribes led a vagrant life in the jungles, hills and deserts with no fixed abode. They wandered about with their bag and baggage and pitched their tents on the outskirts of a village or a city or in some secluded place. In the absence of any substantial means of living these people depended on begging, cattle lifting and crop stealing.

There were widespread and severe famines in many parts of the country in 1866, 1876-78 and 1898. It witnessed unprecedented outbreaks of dacoity, food riots and looting of markets, house-breakings and cattle-stealing. The Inspector General of Police (IGP) observed in 1877 that 'Dacoity as the "special famine crime" was committed by hungry people, not ordinary criminals'.

Meena Radhakrishna (2001) in her book *Dishonoured by History: Criminal Tribes and British Colonial Policy* has presented the trading Korava community of the then Madras Presidency, who were labelled as criminal tribes as her case study. The Korava community lost their salt trade due to the colonial salt policy, and access to forest resources due to the forest policy of 1890s. The forest products were important items of barter in their trade. The laws did not allow them to collect bamboo and leaves which they used for making mats, baskets and brooms. Common grazing lands were cordoned off and thus not available to their cattle. In the 1850s, road and railway networks were established throughout the Madras Presidency and the bullock cart as a mode of transport suffered a setback. The famines of late nineteenth century were devastating as far as salt trade was concerned. Large numbers of their cattle also died due to famine and restrictions on grazing in common lands. As a result of all the above factors, the Korava community suffered a massive economic setback in the period between 1850s and 1890s.

The Banjaras of Andhra Pradesh were peripatetic (walking about) common carriers for generations. But due to the development of transport facilities, they lost their

NOTES

jobs and became criminals. Ranoshis and Wagharis, who acted as guards near the hills, ghats and forts during the Maratha regime adopted the life of criminals after the loss of their jobs.

NOTES

By now you must have gathered that people resorted to petty crimes as a survival strategy. It is noteworthy that criminality does not happen in groups; it is an individual phenomenon. But unfortunately, the provisions of the Criminal Act applied to all the individuals of the group. Even women and children were considered to be suspects in the eyes of law. It may be said that a large percentage of the communities were led into criminality when they were stuck with the stigma of criminal tribes.

Repeal of this Act: In 1937, the Criminal Tribes Committee was set up which was headed by V. N. Tiwari. The Committee was appointed by the Government of United Provinces. Tiwari opined that criminal tribes were a legacy of unhealthy social environments and wrong methods pursued through many centuries in dealing with them. They are not the sinners, they have been sinned against. This Committee, thus, has recommended as well as introduced some welfare activities for their group.

The Madras Province repealed the Act in 1947 and Bombay in 1949. The Government of India appointed a Committee under the Chairmanship of Ananthasayanam Ayyangar in 1949.

The Committee after studying the conditions of the 'Criminal Tribes' in the entire country recommended the repeal of the Criminal Tribes Act. The Government of India accordingly repealed the Criminal Tribes Act and replaced it with Habitual Offenders Act 1952. The Habitual Offenders Act is a state government legislation. With the repeal of Criminal Tribes Act, the communities notified under this Act as 'Criminal Tribes' were de-notified and were recognized as 'De-notified Communities'. A list of the tribes which were de-notified with the repeal of the Criminal Tribes Act was issued by the respective state governments as the list of De-notified Tribes or *Vimukta Jatis*. Thus, the list of De-notified Tribes came into existence for each state. The list of De-notified Tribes of the erstwhile Madras State, for example was issued in 1952.

The Bauria, Bazigar, Barad (Barar), Bangala, Gandhila, Nat, and Sansi communities in Punjab celebrate their Independence on 31st August as on that day in 1952 they were de-notified and became de-notified tribes (*Vimukta Jatis*); the tag of criminality was removed legally from them.

Approach of the government of free India: After the repeal of the Criminal Tribes Act, a good number of people were freed from the stigma of criminality imputed to them. The Backward Classes Commission appointed by the Government of India made many suggestions for amelioration (to become better) of the conditions of these problem ridden communities. They are summarized below:

- Criminal tribes should be called 'De-notified communities' (*Vimukta Jati*).
- These communities should be included in the category of Scheduled Castes or Tribes and Backward classes according to their distinctive social features.
- They should be resettled in batches and gradually integrated within the larger society.
- Proper education for effecting national integration should be imparted to them for making them free citizens of free India.
- Reform activities should be undertaken for them.

- Collective criminal activities and the individual criminal activities should be clearly distinguished and understood for dealing with them.
- Proper education and employment for their children should be ensured.
- Economic rehabilitation should be ensured simultaneously.

In conclusion, it can be said that de-notified and ex-criminal tribes are the same. The only difference is that while the term de-notified tribe is an administrative category; ex-criminal tribe is a social category coined by the colonial rulers.

2.4.4 Indigenous People

The native people of many countries did not like to be referred to as a 'tribe'. In different countries, they have their own appellations. In Australia, these people are recognized as 'Aborigines', in New Zealand as 'Maaori', in Canada, as 'First Nations' and in Americas as 'Indigenous people'. All these appellations point to their original/earlier settlement. This originality again is related, as you will know, to the colonial contact. These people existed in their countries before the colonization of their territory. Therefore, they are indigenous. Indigenous movement has been a global phenomenon. In countries like India, China and some other Asian countries, different groups lived together before the colonial contact. Nevertheless, some groups of people from these countries who somewhat resemble the original people of Australia, America and Africa in social, cultural and economic life also have become a part of the indigenous movement.

Historical Background

The issue of indigenous people was almost non-existent in the Indian academics as well as political world before 1993. The United Nations declared 1993 as the 'International Year of the Indigenous People'. Arguments against and in favour of considering tribes in India as indigenous people have come up with the same degree of intensity. Many of those who defended the term 'indigenous' for tribes happened to be activists. The slogan—'The adivasis of the world unite'—acquired popularity. This slogan was printed on the cover of the booklets that the Indian Conference of Indigenous and Tribal People brought out in 1993 on the occasion of the UN Year of the Indigenous People of the World.

However, the indigenous movement that culminated in 1990s can be traced back to 1923. During this year, the Cayuga Chief Deskaheh, a representative of the Iroquois of Ontario in Canada went to the League of Nations to represent the 'Six Nations of the Great River'. He carried a passport issued by the 'authority of his people'. However, two years before this event in 1921, the General Body of the International Labour Organization (ILO) had showed concern for indigenous workers, who were among the most exploited. In 1926 its governing body adopted Convention No. 50 'Concerning the Regulation of Certain Special Systems of Recruiting Workers'. In 1939, it adopted Convention No. 64 'Concerning the Regulation of Certain Special System of Recruiting Workers'.

It is to be noted that the real indigenous rights movement began only with decolonization after the Second World War. Autonomy movement began in several independent countries. Mostly such movements took place in Latin America where indigenous populations were feeling doubly exploited. On one side foreign companies controlled their wealth and on the other the national elite collaborated with those foreign corporations. Many indigenous communities of the Americas questioned the genocide of their own ancestors. Additionally, the European indigenous people began to become more aware of their rights.

NOTES

NOTES

These movements created heightened awareness in some international organizations, especially ILO, whose mandate is protection of the workers' rights. The result was ILO Convention 107 of 1957 'Concerning the Populations in Independent Countries'. In this Convention, the term 'indigenous people' came in. The convention used the term as a 'population of special category analogous to the tribal and semi-tribal population'.

International Perspectives: Indigenous movements, among other things, recognize the term 'indigenous' to designate people who were original settlers in their territory before the colonial contact. International organizations such as the ILO added to their concerns positively by defining the term.

According to the General Council of the International Labour Organization (ILO, 1957):

Peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country, or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of conquest, or colonization or the establishment of present State boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions.

The aim of this convention was to protect and integrate indigenous and other tribal and semi-tribal populations in independent countries. However, notwithstanding the many positive stipulations, the ILO convention of 1957 was criticized for its 'ethnocentric bias and patronizing attitude.' Accordingly, the ILO adopted a revised Convention 169, where the concept of indigenous has been overtly de-linked from the concept of tribe. By implication, however, they have been treated as synonyms. The convention applies to:

- (a) Tribal peoples in independent countries whose social, cultural and economic conditions distinguish them from other sections of the national community, and whose status is regulated wholly or partially by their own customs and traditions or by special laws and regulations
- (b) Peoples in independent countries who are regarded as indigenous on account of their descent from the populations which inhabited the country or a geographical region to which the country belongs, at the time of the conquest or colonization or the establishment of the present state boundaries and who, irrespective of their legal status, retain some or all of their own social, economic, cultural and political institutions.

The General Assembly of the United Nations in a resolution states that:

Indigenous or aboriginal peoples are so called because they were living on their lands before settlers came from elsewhere; they are the descendants...of those who inhabited a country or a geographical region at the time when people of different cultures or ethnic origins arrived, the new arrivals later becoming dominant through conquest, occupation, settlement or other means.

Mme Erica-Irene Daes, former Chairperson of the UN Working Group on indigenous populations, provides another widely used definition. According to Daes:

Certain peoples are indigenous because they are descendants of groups which were in the territory of the country at the time when other groups of different cultures or ethnic origins arrived there; because of their isolation from other segments of the country's population, they have preserved almost intact the customs and traditions of their ancestors which are similar to those characterized as indigenous; and because they are, even if only formally, placed under a State structure which incorporates national, social and cultural characteristics alien to theirs.

Jose R. Martinez Cobo in 1986 in his work entitled *The Study of the Problem of Discrimination against Indigenous Populations* has proposed the following definition of indigenous people:

Indigenous communities, peoples and nations are those which, having a historical contiguity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing in those territories, or parts of them. They form at present non-dominant sectors of society and are determined to preserve, develop and transmit to future generations their ancestral territories, and their ethnic identity, as the basis of their continued existence as peoples, in accordance with their own cultural patterns, social institutions and legal systems.

Indigenous People: A Restricted Applicability: The term 'indigenous' to designate the original people of a territory was born in the Americas, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand where a clear line divides them from the colonial conquerors. In Australia and Africa for example, the natives who inhabited the land before the colonial contact and the new migrants including the colonizers live together in post-colonial period. Obviously, the population is divided into earlier settlers and new migrants. In countries of South Asia, however, different ethnic groups lived for millennia. As a result, there is a difference of opinion on who is indigenous to these countries.

The use of the term 'indigenous' as a synonym of 'tribe' lacks definitional clarity when its universal applicability is concerned. Because of this ambiguity, the ILO Convention 169 (Article 1) recognizes both, indigenous and tribal people. This means those who live in a way that sets them apart from the national community, whether or not they have descended from 'first inhabitants'. For instance, in several Central American countries, garifunas (or maroons, or other terms) are descendants of escaped African slaves, and thus are not indigenous in the literal sense, but they are tribal and are covered by the Convention.

It is to be noted that the definition of Daes on indigenous is taken as the unofficial UN definition of the term indigenous people. However, Miguel Alfonso Martinez (1999) does not agree with the universality of its application.

While working on a UNESCO report entitled 'Study on Treaties, Agreements and Other Constructive Arrangements between States, and Indigenous Populations' he has questioned the usage of the term indigenous people in Asian countries in general and in India in particular. We know that in India not only the tribal communities but all the communities which form the Indian nation-state in the post-colonial era were inhabitants even before the colonial contact. Needless to say, the parameter of colonizers' contact put all the communities of India, including the tribals, under the category of indigenous.

2.4.5 'Indigenous' and 'Tribe' Distinguished

The Portugal colonizers designated the earlier people of their colonies as tribes. But some of these tribal groups in many countries distinguished themselves from the colonizers and preferred to use the term indigenous. The essence of indigenous initially concerned the natives vis-a-vis colonial settlers. The term tribe is imposed while the term indigenous is self-chosen.

It is further clear from the ILO Convention 169 that the terms '**indigenous**' and '**tribal**' are not properly defined. It takes a practical approach and only provides criteria for describing the people in either of the two categories. Self-identification is considered as a fundamental criterion for the identification of indigenous and tribal people, along with the criteria outlined below:

NOTES

NOTES

Elements of tribal people include:

- Traditional lifestyles
- Culture and way of life different from the other segments of the national population, e.g. in their ways of making a living, language, customs, etc.
- Own social organization and traditional customs and laws

Elements of indigenous people include:

- Traditional lifestyles
- Culture and way of life different from the other segments of the national population, e.g. in their ways of making a living, language, customs, etc.
- Typical social organization and political institutions
- Living in historical continuity in a certain area, before others “invaded” or came to the area.

Tribal and Indigenous Interface in India

In India, the use of the term ‘tribe’ as a synonym to ‘indigenous’ is contested. In India those who live in post-colonial state also lived together during the pre-colonial period. But some scholars apply the concept to tribal communities considering their domination by the nation states. The state power is considered to be dominating the marginalized people including the tribals. It is often highlighted that these people are reduced to a colonial situation and are dominated by a system of values and institutions maintained by the ruling groups of the country.

However, this type of explanation of the relations between the power of the state and the marginalized communities is too partial an understanding. The dominating role of the state as ‘colonial invasion and domination’ does not hold to the principles of welfare commitments of the nation states like India. Policies and programmes are formulated for the general welfare of marginalized people with compensatory discrimination and affirmative action to raise their level of development at par with the national level.

There are other concerns which need scrutiny when one addresses the issue of the ‘indigenous’. The moot issue is whether to consider tribes that include Scheduled Tribes, non-Scheduled Tribes and de-notified tribes as indigenous people or only the Scheduled Tribe category under it. If we consider the Scheduled Tribe category, it becomes problematic. There are migrants from plains to hills like some communities of Jaunsar-Bawar and Gaddi of Himachal Pradesh who are included in the Scheduled Tribe category. Moreover, the Scheduled Tribe being a state specific category, the same community across the political boundary may not be considered as indigenous. If the tribe is called indigenous then that indigeneity is lost if they migrate to other places. The Santhals and Mundas, who are called *Adivasis* in their respective earlier settlements and in Assam to which they migrated, belong to tribal category in the anthropological sense. These people migrated to Assam which was then inhabited by Assamese people. Hence, in comparison to the Assamese population are the early settlers of Assam. Being *adivasis*, they could not be indigenous while the non-tribe Assamese would come under the definition of indigenous as they are the early settlers.

Many ethnographical studies on tribes point to the migratory nature of the Indian population in general and tribes in particular at different points of time. The Tani groups of tribes in Arunachal trace their migration in different batches from a place in Tibet over centuries till they came to their present habitation with short sojourn en-route.

In this context the remarks of Ludwig Gumplowicz and Irving Louis Horowitz (1980) in their work entitled *The Outlines of Sociology* is worth mentioning. They inform us that:

... The Negritos were the earliest inhabitants of India ... The Proto-Australoids who followed them had their type more or less fixed in India and therefore may be considered to be the true aborigines. Thereafter the Austro-Asiatic peoples came ... the Indo Aryans came and settled in India; so, too, did the Dravidians ... This being the state of our knowledge regarding the peopling of India, it would be hazardous to look upon one particular section of the population as the aborigines of India ...

On the basis of the findings of the People of India Project, K. S. Singh (1997) writes:

Four hundred and nine tribes (64.3 per cent) claim to be migrants to their present habitat. In fact all our tribal people have been migrants. Their migration is recorded in oral tradition and historical accounts. About eight per cent of the tribes record their migration in recent years.

The migration has led to various levels of interaction of different communities. In this context, S. C. Dube (1998:5) notes:

The Kol and Kirda of India have had long association with later immigrants. Mythology and history bear testimony to their [tribals'] encounters and intermingling.

It is a known fact that the indigenous debate is of a recent origin. It has political and colonial overtones. Therefore, the point is that the tribal world should be understood in the context of its cosmology and the thoughts of the people. In this context, Andre Beteille observes:

Where historical records are scarce and historical memory is short, the idea of 'indigenous people' provides abundant scope for the proliferation of myths relating to blood and soil.

Does it then mean that the term 'indigenous' does not have any use in the Indian context? The term *adivasi* is analogous to the term indigenous. The *adivasi* concept was accepted by the communities much before the indigenous issue emerged. Whereas, the term indigenous has an international dimension, that of *adivasi* has Indian specificity. When two communities co-exist in a particular place, there is a possibility that one community could be the earlier settler. If this earlier settler is a so called tribal community then the *adivasi* appellation has some meaning. If two communities are so-called Aryans, for example, the *adivasi* identity does not have any meaning for the earlier settlers. For all practical purposes, the *adivasi* word was used to refer to the tribal groups, who identified themselves in their community names like Gond and Bodo. To bring all of them to one category, the generic *adivasi* term has been coined. In this sense, indigenous as an equivalent to the term *adivasi*, perhaps will have a meaning in India. On the other hand, the term indigenous with its international connotation is a misnomer.

2.4.6 Contemporary Tribal Situation in India

The tribes in contemporary India have undergone many changes. Though the most primitive group in terms of indices of growth and development are the tribes but not all tribes are primitive. In many tribes, there are sections which are as influential as the sections of middle class anywhere. Internal heterogeneity in terms of differentiation of wealth is increasing. According to Srivastava (2006), with respect to the outside world, tribes have reacted in two ways.

NOTES

NOTES

There are tribal communities who have changed qualitatively. Economically, their condition has improved. They have better health profile, higher level of literacy and have entered new occupations. Examples of such communities are the Nagas, Mizo, Khasi, Mina and those sections of tribes of Central India who have embraced Christianity.

The second group constitutes of those who have not been benefited by the development programmes. Development has led to pauperization and marginalization. They have been displaced from their traditional habitat, forced to lead an ignoble existence as wage labourers, rickshaw pullers or domestic help to others. Majority of tribes belong to this category. This group represents the exploited and marginalized lots.

The main problem of the contemporary tribal communities is their exposure to development interventions. This has led to different problems which the tribals are victims of.

There is a rising awareness of unmet needs among the tribes in India. Resentment against exploitation is giving rise to violence. Extremist movements, like Naxalism, is gaining stronghold in many tribal areas. The tribes are deprived of the use of common property resources. There are also issues of identity assertion. All these problems have an economic dimension. In fact, economic problem is at the centre of tribal problems and it causes other problems like human trafficking, the system of bonded labour and political problems relating to insurgency, policy atrocities, declining common property resources and so on.

On the one hand, the tribals are being integrated to national development projects and on the other, majority of them have become victims of such exposures. There is a need to initiate corrective measures at the earliest to redress their problems, before the situation goes out of hand.

2.3 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that,

- Tribal studies have been a matter of interest since the late sixteenth century. It was around this time that the Western world came to know of communities and cultures which were very different from them.
- Studies on tribes have contributed immensely to the growth of knowledge in academics. The origin and growth of anthropology—more precisely social (cultural) anthropology—has its roots in tribal studies.
- There is an increasing interest in tribal studies in contemporary times. Besides academic interest, government organizations and NGOs also have shown their increasing interest in tribal development and as such in tribal studies.
- With the end of colonialism, tribal studies acquired a different set of objectives. With nationalist governments in power in different countries, the focus shifted on more humanistic concerns.
- The methodology of holistic understanding derived from tribal studies has also made its impact on other disciplines.
- Interest shown in the study of the tribes has gone a long way since its beginning with the colonial interest in these communities. Studies are now taken up with academic interest and also with objectives having policy implications.

Check Your Progress

14. Why was a list of tribal communities drawn post-independence?
15. Who are the primitive tribes?
16. How does P. K. Bhowmick present a classification of the de-notified tribes?
17. State the mandate of the International Labour Organization.

- The studies on tribes have generally two aspects. One is the study of individual tribe and the other is the study of tribes from a cross-cultural perspective.
- Tribal studies have been focussing on studying tribal economies where one encounters a different kind of economic system.
- Tribal/indigenous literature is emerging as a genre in the field of literature as American Literature or Canadian Literature or Indian Literature.
- Archaeological methods help understand the tribal culture as a continuum. Similarly, ethnographic data help explain archaeological facts.
- Every tribe has its customary laws to deal with civil disputes like land disputes and criminal cases like theft, rape and murder. However, these customary laws are uncodified.
- Criminal and civil jurisdictions, implementation of tribal children's right to education and civil rights, the issue of women empowerment, conflict resolution mechanisms in contemporary tribal law are some of the areas of research in tribal communities.
- The term tribe is derived from the Latin term *tribus*, which was used for referring to the threefold division of the ancient people of Rome, identified as the Latin's, the Sabine's and the Etruscans.
- Before the British rule, no community in India was designated as a tribal community. The communities designated as tribes have/had their own terms of reference and reference by the outsiders.
- According to the evolutionary scholars, society or socio-politico development has occurred through four stages and the tribe represents the second stage in the pre-state social organization.
- Tribal communities in India are not static; they are always in the process of adoption and change. The process is more visible when these communities, whether scheduled or non-scheduled are integrated into the Nation's development agenda.
- The term tribe did not exist before the colonial period. However, most of the people with whom the term is associated used to live in forests and hills. Therefore, in India the notion of tribe has evolved from these people.
- The tribe is an administrative and political concept in India. The concept whether we accept it or not, has both administrative and political overtones. Scheduled Tribes, De-notified Tribes, and Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs), are examples.
- In India, tribe is an administrative concept. It refers to Scheduled Tribes, i.e. the tribes and communities listed in the Constitution of India. Other than the Scheduled Tribes, we come across two other administrative terms in the context of tribes: The Primitive Tribes and the Ex-criminal or the De-notified Tribes.
- According to V. K. Srivastava (2005), today when the anthropologist uses the term tribe in the context of India, they include all the communities included in the list of the Scheduled Tribes, although some of them may not be in accordance with the anthropological conception of tribe.
- The territorial dimension also emerges from the fact that the Scheduled Tribe is a state concept. The tribe of one state does not enjoy the same status in another state.

NOTES

NOTES

- The Primitive Tribal Groups (PTGs) is not a Constitutional category different from the Scheduled Tribes. It is a category within the Scheduled Tribe category.
- The term 'primitive', however, has derogatory overtones. Therefore, B. K. Roy Burman suggested renaming these communities as 'Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups'.
- The de-notified tribes were earlier known as criminal tribes. After they were de-notified, they were also known as ex-criminal tribes.
- In 1937, the Criminal Tribes Committee was set up which was headed by V. N. Tiwari. The Committee was appointed by the Government of United Provinces.
- The native people of many countries did not like to be referred to as a 'tribe'. In different countries, they have their own appellation. In Australia, these people are recognized as 'Aborigines', in New Zealand as 'Maaori', in Canada, as 'First Nations' and in Americas as 'Indigenous people'.
- Indigenous movements, among other things, recognize the term 'indigenous' to designate people who were original settlers in their territory before the colonial contact.
- The use of the term 'indigenous' as a synonym of 'tribe' lacks definitional clarity when its universal applicability is concerned. Because of this ambiguity, the ILO Convention 169 (Article 1) recognizes both, indigenous and tribal people.
- The tribes in contemporary India have undergone many changes. Though the most primitive group in terms of indices of growth and development are the tribes but not all tribes are primitive.

2.4 KEY TERMS

- **Appellation:** It means the name or title by which someone is known.
- **Acephalous society:** It is the society without a political head or hierarchy, democratic type of societies.
- **Cephalous society:** It is the society with a central political head like the chief.
- **Endogamy:** It is the practice of marrying within the defined kin-group, be it clan, lineage, village or social class.
- **Exogamy:** It is the practice of marriage outside the kin-group.
- **Morphemes:** They are meaningful units into which a word can be divided.
- **Morphology:** It is the study of the morphemes of a language and how they are combined to make words.
- **Theocracy:** It is the system where there is a state religion.

2.5 ANSWERS TO 'CHECK YOUR PROGRESS'

14. The study of tribal communities commenced with anthropologists' interest in the study of 'other cultures'. Anthropology as a discipline emerged with the study of tribes.

15. With nationalist governments in power in different countries, the focus shifted on more humanistic concerns. In India, for example, the approach shifted to the welfare and development of tribal communities, rather than the colonial approach to keep them isolated.
16. The studies on tribes have generally two aspects. One is the study of individual tribe and the other is the study of tribes in a cross-cultural perspective.
17. Mahasweta Devi's *Chotti Munda and His Arrow*, for example, narrates the exploitation of the tribes and their response and struggle against it.
18. Criminal and civil jurisdictions, implementation of tribal children's right to education and civil rights, the issue of women empowerment, conflict resolution mechanisms in contemporary tribal law are some of the areas of research in tribal communities.
19. The term tribe is derived from the Latin term *tribus*, which was used for referring to the threefold division of the ancient people of Rome, identified as the Latin's, the Sabine's and the Etruscans.
20. Elman Service and Marshall Sahlins were the two most important figures who observed the evolution of the society from the point of view of different stages— socio-economic development.
21. Maurice Godelier also argues that the tribe is a type of social organization which can only be understood if we view it as a stage in the social evolution.
22. Buddhadeb Chaudhuri (1992) has suggested the term 'ethnic group' as an alternative to the term 'tribe' which is defined as a largely self-perpetuating group in biological terms, sharing the same descent, real or putative, which has a set of similar fundamental values realized in cultural forms.
23. Post-independence it was realized that the most backward communities in terms of development indicators like literacy, access to health care, nutrition, income, poverty are from the tribes of India. Therefore, a list of tribal communities was drawn to provide special assistance to them.
24. Primitive tribe is an administrative category used for those Scheduled Tribe communities who were identified as more isolated from the wider community and who maintain a distinctive cultural identity.
25. On the basis of their habitats, occupations and ways of life, Bhowmick presents a classification of these de-notified tribes into the following groups:
 - (i) Nomadic groups who have taken to criminal life
 - (ii) Fighting men and soldiers who having lost their jobs, have turned into criminals
 - (iii) Communities who used to work as village watchman and police, but have taken to criminal life
 - (iv) Wild tribes in distress who took to criminal living as a way out of the plight they had fallen in
 - (v) Beggars turned into criminals
 - (vi) Some settled castes and tribes who took to criminality due to poverty
26. The mandate of the International Labour Organization is the protection of the workers' rights.

2.6 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

NOTES

Short-Answer Questions

15. How have the studies on tribes contributed immensely to the growth of knowledge in academics?
16. State the relevance of tribal studies.
17. Why are tribal societies in a transitional phase?
18. List the nature of tribal studies as a discipline.
19. What is the relationship between life sciences and tribal studies?
20. Name few laws which are meant to safeguard the interests of tribal people.
21. Write a note on tribe as a colonial construct in India.
22. State the reason behind the tribes being in a state of transition.
23. Why is Anthony Walker of the opinion that the term 'caste' has a 'considerable value' in comparison to the term 'tribe'?
24. List the criteria established by the Lokur Committee for declaring a particular community as a Scheduled Tribe.
25. The term 'primitive' has derogatory overtones. Give your views.
26. Give a background of the Criminal Tribes Act.
27. Who are the indigenous people? How are they different from the tribes?
28. What is the contemporary tribal situation of India?

Long-Answer Questions

11. What are tribal studies? How did they evolve?
12. Discuss the nature, scope and relevance of tribal studies.
13. Assess the relationship between tribal studies and other disciplines like economics, sociology and law.
14. Critically analyse the relationship between tribal studies and political science, history and literature.
15. Assess the colonial origin of the term tribe.
16. Describe tribe as a stage of evolution.
17. Evaluate the origin of the term tribe and its evolution in India.
18. Who are the Scheduled Tribes? Why is the concept of Scheduled Tribe a state concept?
19. Describe the Primitive Tribals Group (PTGs) as a category of the Scheduled Tribes.
20. Explain the category of the de-notified tribes and the reason behind their taking recourse to theft.

2.7 FURTHER READING

- Beteille, A. 1975. *Six Essays in Comparative Sociology*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Beteille, A. 1992. *Society and Politics in India: Essays in a Comparative Perspective*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Mibang, Tamo and M. C. Behera (ed). 2007. *Tribal Studies: Emerging Frontiers of Knowledge*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications.
- Gandhi, Malli. 2008. *Denotified Tribes: Dimensions of Change*. New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers.
- Devy, G. N.; Davis, Geoffrey V. and Chakravarty, K. K (ed.). 2011. *Voice and Memory: Indigenous Imagination and Expression*. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan.

NOTES

UNIT-III SOCIAL STRUCTURE ANDPROCESS

NOTES

Structure

- 3.0 Introduction
- 3.1 Unit Objectives
- 3.2 Structure, Function and Organization of a Society
 - 3.2.1 Social Structure
 - 3.2.2 Function and Functionalism
 - 3.2.3 Organization
- 3.3 Social Mobility
 - 3.3.1 Types of Social Mobility
 - 3.3.2 Social Mobility among Tribes
 - 3.3.3 Tribe-Caste-Peasantry Contrast and Continuum
- 3.4 Summary
- 3.5 Key Terms
- 3.6 Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 3.7 Questions and Exercises
- 3.8 Further Reading

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The structure, content and organization of any society or culture are far from static and monolithic. Changes in the society and culture are imminent due to two factors: external and internal or endogenous. External forces like acculturation most often bring about changes in society and culture. Sometimes endogenous forces also attract changes in the social structure that come from within the society itself to adapt to a difficult or changing environment. Therefore, social scientists study the structure of a society and its process of change to understand its dynamism.

Let us understand and appreciate the fact that no society or culture exists in a state of chaos and conflict for long, but are organized in a particular manner. For example, social norms in the form of rules, regulations, prescriptions and prohibitions keep the societies running, however chaotic they might seem on the surface. But even these organizational aspects are far from static and change in response to changing environments around them. Therefore, there is a need to study the changing dimensions of social organizations as well.

In this unit, we shall discuss some concepts that relate to societies and culture and try to understand and appreciate their dynamic nature.

NOTES

3.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Define the concepts of structure, function and organization as they are often used in anthropology and sociology and tribal studies
- Explain the concept of social mobility and its operation among the tribes and castes of India
- Explain the concept of social process, particularly the way tribalization, detribalization and re-tribalization take place in the Indian context
- Evaluate the process of Sanskritization as a form of social mobility in rural and tribal India

3.2 STRUCTURE, FUNCTION AND ORGANIZATION OF A SOCIETY

A society is an abstract idea, but it expresses itself through its structure, function and organization. However, there is a lot of confusion in the usage of these concepts. In this section, you will learn about the meaning and nature of these concepts to clearly understand a society and to distinguish them from each other.

3.2.1 Social Structure

There are different writers who have made attempts to understand the society in terms of its structure. In this section, you will be able to learn what a structure is and what a social structure means.

What is a structure?

The term 'structure' is derived from the Latin word, *struere*, which means to build. In order to understand the idea behind a structure, let us examine the following analogy. Most of us live in multi-roomed houses or dwelling units. Each room in a house has a special function. The purpose of the sitting room is different from that of the kitchen. The arrangements inside these rooms are also different. For example, we may not have furniture in our kitchen, but it is perfect to keep them in our bedroom. Therefore, each of the rooms has a distinct identity, yet they are essential to the very concept of a house, and contribute to the structure of a house. But most of the traditional tribal houses are single-roomed dwelling units. In these houses, while one corner of the room is used for cooking, the other corner is used for worshipping the ancestral spirits. There may be a fire place at the centre. The corners here have distinct identities, yet they contribute to our conception of a house. Please note that rooms in a multi-roomed house or the corners in a single-roomed unit are not put together haphazardly, but are 'arranged' or 'organized' in a particular design.

Let us discuss an example of a traditional house of the Adis in the village of Riga of Arunachal Pradesh which was studied by M. C. Behera as a cultural space. The house is rectangular in shape. The house has the following pattern and is shown in figure 3.1:

1. **Bale**: The staircase, also called the *ebang*
In fact, a big sized ladder is called *bale* while a small one is called an *ebang*. Its location does not vary from house to house.
2. **Batum**: Temporary place for pigs, mithuns, etc.
3. **Gojok**: Left side corridor of the house
4. **Tungo**: Right side corridor under the main roof, inner portion of a *tungo* is called *garang*
5. **Gotek**: *Tungo* + *atek* (extra) extension of *tungo* beyond the main roof
6. **Eyap/yapgo**: Front door, entrance
7. **Kok gojok**: Attached corridor to the right side of the house
8. **Asi dupu lingko**: The place for keeping water container
9. **Yapok sodung/hodung**: Place for sleeping (guests, family members, etc.)
10. **Hodang**: Place nearer to fire place from the door
11. **Gulung**: The fire place
12. **Rising**: Place for male members of the family
The female members are not allowed there. It is believed that if the female members enter this space then the male efficiency will be adversely affected. The popular slang for an ineffective hunter is—*mlme kisa na*—like a female.
13. **Kiipar**: Place for kiipar/kipar (rice pounder)
14. **Kodang**: Main working space in the house
Dead body of a member is kept in this portion of the house before taking for cremation.
15. **Kok eyap/yapgo** also called *kodang yapgo*: Side door (the second door to the left side of the house is a custom in Riga area)
It opens into the attached corridor to the right side of the house.
16. **Erang**: Place for female members
17. **Erang yupko**: Sleeping place for female members
18. **Bango rüsing/rising**: Place for rituals after successful hunting, only male members are allowed
19. **Yugum**: Pig sty
20. **Adang**: The two main pillars of the house

NOTES

NOTES

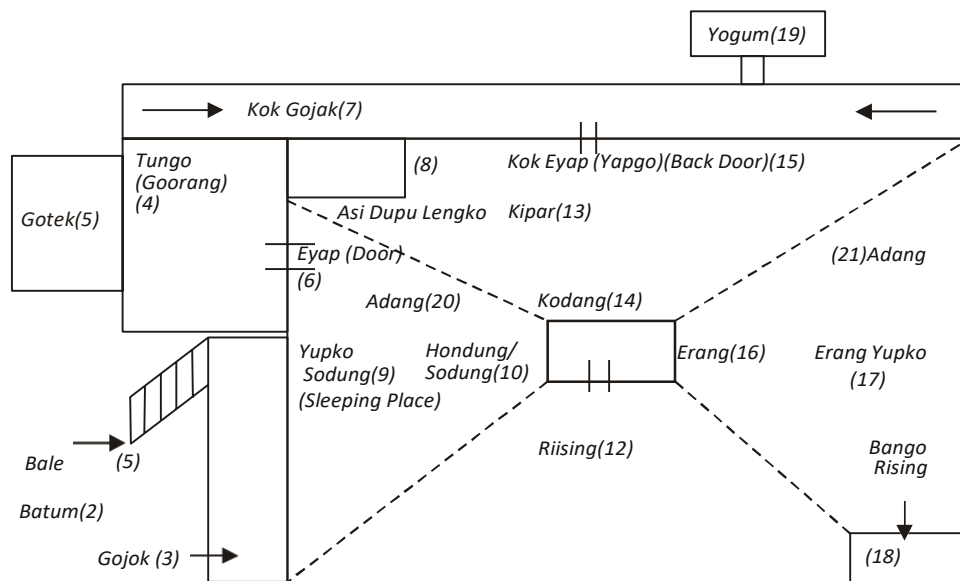


Fig. 3.1 An Adi House Structure at Riga

The idea of this analogy is to appreciate that the concept of a structure is very much linked to the concept of proper arrangement of its parts. A house is not only a physical structure; it has its patterned functional structure also. However, in the concept of social structure, the pattern includes abstract ideas, norms, etc.

History of the Concept of Structure

The concept of social structure has a long history in the social sciences. Earlier, structure was used to form the concept of ‘social structure’, it had different meanings in different centuries. It goes back to the writings of Herbert Spencer, the class structure analysis of Karl Marx or the 19th century work of Georg Simmel. In the works of these writers, we understand social structure as abstract patterns underlying human interaction.

The notion of social structure is intimately related to a variety of central topics in social science. It has been extensively developed in the twentieth century from a variety of analytical perspectives. For example, the structuralist perspectives drawing on the structuralism of Levi-Strauss, Feminist or Marxist perspectives, functionalist perspectives such as those developed by Talcott Parsons and his followers have contributed to the understanding of the concept of ‘social structure’.

Use of the term structure before its use in social sciences: We have already mentioned that the word ‘structure’ has been derived from the Latin word *struere* which means to build. The word was widely used in this sense in the 15th century to refer to the construction of a building. It retained this meaning through much of the 17th and 18th centuries. Its main uses were in practical architecture and the science of geometry. In the science of geometry, it was used as abstract mathematical properties of different kinds of structure. In the 19th century, it was used in the branch of engineering with the introduction of *elastic* and *plastic* structures. The extension of structural idea from architecture to engineering encouraged their use in other scientific disciplines. During the 19th century, the word ‘structure’ came to be used in biology. There, it referred to a combination of connected and interdependent parts that make up an organism. At the same time, the term ‘structure’ had begun to be used in geology to describe the patterns of rock formation; in chemistry, it was used to explain the arrangement of atoms in molecules.

NOTES

Until the publication of *The Origin of Species* by Charles Darwin in 1859, in all the uses mentioned above, the word 'structure' was used to give a static idea about the forms. It did not give any idea about the development or transformation of forms. But Darwin believed in linking the idea of structure to that of development. He suggested that structural analysis could be dynamic as well as static. With this shift in thought, the sociologists felt the need to use the concept of social structure for scientific studies of the subject matter. However, the concept of social structure became popular among sociologists and anthropologists in the decade following the Second World War. It became fashionable to apply this concept to almost any ordered arrangement of social phenomenon. Other scholars on tribal studies also applied the concept to understand the tribal social structure.

Understanding Social Structure

The Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (1999) gives three meanings of the term structure, they are: (i) the way in which something is organized, built, or put together (e.g., the structure of the human body); (ii) a particular system, pattern, procedure, or institution (e.g., class structure, salary structure); and (iii) a thing made up of several parts put together in a particular way (e.g., a single-storey structure).

When an anthropologist or a sociologist speaks of structure, the anthropologist/sociologist has all the three meanings in his mind. By structure, the anthropologist/sociologist means an 'interconnectedness' of parts, i.e., the parts of a society are not isolated entities, but are brought together in a set of relationships to each other.

Secondly, social structure means the enduring nature of such relationships. Thirdly, the concept is used to mean enabling institutional frames/norms to govern these relationships in practice/action.

It was Herbert Spencer who was one of the first scholars to talk about structures of societies with a biological analogy. In chapter IV of his book, *The Principles of Sociology* (1876), he puts forth that social structures are analogous to the organs of a living body in so far as they tend to be specialized in particular tasks or activities. These tasks are the functions. A whole society, then, is a set of connected structures, or a 'system of organs'.

Later, the French sociologist, Émile Durkheim, was greatly attracted to the organic analogy, and said that the idea of function in social sciences was based on an analogy between the living organism and the society. He used the term 'social morphology', by which he meant what we mean by the term 'social structure'. He postulates that social structure has two attributes: first, 'collective relationships', which are internal arrangements of a society like its kinship; second, 'collective representations', which are the mental phenomena and include beliefs, ideas, values, symbols and expectations of the members of the society. He holds that the social structure of a society consists of a complex combination of collective relationships and collective representations that give society a unique identity.

Lopez and Scott (2000) have defined social structure from two perspectives—
institutional and relational.

In the first sense, 'social structure is seen as comprising those cultural or normative patterns that define the expectations of agents hold about each other's behaviour and that organize their enduring relations with each other'. In the second sense, 'social structure is seen as comprising the relationships themselves, understood as patterns of

NOTES

causal interconnection and interdependence among agents and their actions, as well as the positions that they occupy’.

Social structure is also defined in relation to social groups. Social structure when defined in this pattern results into **segmentary social structure**.

There are two ways of observing social structure: One is the notion of social structure with family as a basic unit. It was propounded by E. E. Evans-Pritchard. The other way is to study the society with individuals as the basic unit where the social behaviour of each person is the essence of study. This person to person relationship exists at various levels or segments of the society such as family, lineage and clan. It is because in his study of the tribe *Nuer*, he observed the society through different segments like clans, lineages, consanguineal and affinal kins. In case of *Nuer*, he started with homestead. He studied the *Nuer* under the relationship of the homestead with the wider group of a village. Then he studied the village in relation to a group of villages called tertiary group; tertiary group in relation to secondary group which is composed of several tertiary groups; the secondary group with the primary group which is composed of several secondary groups till the whole tribe was included. His approach to study the society with family or the homestead as the basic unit gives us the concept of segmentary social structure.

Social structure is also studied in relation to **social roles**. The components or units of social structure reflect interpersonal relations. The units, however, become part of the social structure in relation to interpersonal relations which exist within the unit. This interpersonal relation defines the status positions occupied by individuals in the unit. The status of a person defines the person’s role which he has to perform. We can cite the example of a priest/shaman as a social unit and relate his role in terms of relations with other individuals. We can see the structure of the society in relation to the role and status of the priest and other individuals or social units. Thus, social roles within the units of social structure help in understanding the society. This is the social structure approach in relation to social roles to study the society. S. F. Nadel in his book, *The Theory of Social Structure* (1969) has defined social structure in relation to social roles. He has emphasized on the roles played by the individual actors in the society and the consequent social status. He writes, ‘We arrive at the structure of a society through abstracting from the concrete population and its behaviour the pattern or network (or “system”) of relationships obtaining between actors in their capacity of playing roles relative to one another.’

Radcliffe-Brown and Social Structure

The British social anthropologist, A. R. Radcliffe-Brown, was greatly influenced by the idea of organic analogy of Durkheim and contributed immensely to the study of social structure. His name is associated with the ‘structural-functional approach’ in the analysis of the structure of society. Let us examine some of the salient points of Radcliffe-Brown’s concept of social structure.

Radcliffe-Brown has related the concept of social structure to the concept of social function. The concept of function, according to him is the ‘contribution which a partial activity makes to the total activity of which it is a part’. This concept involves the notion of a structure consisting of a set of relations amongst unit entities. He argues that social structures are ‘just as real as are living organisms’ and that social structure is ‘the

set of actually existing relations, at a given moment of time, which link together human beings'. He says that social structures encompass 'all social relations of person to person'. Precisely, social structure consists of arrangement of people in relation to each other.

The continuity of the structure is maintained by a life-process made up of the activities of the constituent units. He referred to the structural aspect of a society as **social morphology**, and the functional aspect as **social physiology**. Thus, for Radcliffe-Brown social structure consists of a network, of person to person relations and when we study social structure we are concerned with the set of actually existing relations at a given point of time.

Radcliffe-Brown has introduced the concept of **dyadic relations** to understand all social relations of person to person. For example, the kinship structure of any society consists of a number of dyadic relations, such as father and son, mother and daughter, brother and sister, and so on. These relations, according to Radcliffe-Brown, are the basis of the social structure of a given society.

He includes under the social structure, the differentiation of individuals and classes by their social role. He also states that social structures encompass 'the differentiation of individuals and of classes by their social role'. This means that the relations between the headman or the priest and an ordinary villager, between men and women, between the employer and the employee, come under the purview of social structure. To him, social structure is not an abstraction but an empirical reality.

Radcliffe-Brown is also of the opinion that social structure is a dynamic concept, and not a static one. As the living body replaces the dead cells by new ones and replenishes the level of energy, similarly the 'social life renews the social structure'. This obviously means that relations between persons change over time. It is also clear from his statement that the continuity of the structure is maintained by a life-process made up of the activities of the constituent units. Another British anthropologist, E. E. Evans-Pritchard differs from Radcliffe-Brown with regard to the conception of social structure, when the former says that social structures 'refer(s) only to persistent social groups', and thereby, not recognizing person to person relationships as such.

Lévi-Strauss and Social Structure

The French anthropologist, Claude Lévi-Strauss, has also contributed to the study of social structure. In contrast to Radcliffe-Brown, Lévi-Strauss says that the term 'social structure' has nothing to do with empirical reality. It precisely refers to 'models' that are built up from empirical realities. For Lévi-Strauss, social structure is an 'abstraction' from what we observe as person to person or group to group relationships. These observable relations, Lévi-Strauss says, are just 'social relations' and not 'social structures'. He says '...the object of social-structure studies is to understand social relations with the help of models'. He adds that social structure is a model; it is a method of study.

According to Lévi-Strauss a structure consists of a model meeting the following requirements:

- The structure exhibits the characteristics of a *system*. It is made up of several elements, none of which can undergo a change without effecting changes in all the other elements.

NOTES

NOTES

For any given model there should be a possibility of ordering a series of transformations resulting in a group of models of the same type.

- The model should be constituted so as to make immediately intelligible all the observed facts.
- The above properties make it possible to predict how the model will react if one or more of its elements are submitted to certain modifications.

The British anthropologist, Edmund Leach, also made a significant contribution to the idea of social structure as a model, although there are many significant differences between the approaches of Lévi-Strauss and Leach to structuralism. For instance, whereas Lévi-Strauss is interested in formulating the ‘universal structures’—structures applicable to all human societies at all points of time—Leach applies the method of structuralism to understand the local (or regional) structures. Because of this, some term Leach’s approach as ‘neo-structural’.

3.2.2 Function and Functionalism

Many writers opine that a society exists and continues because of the functions it performs for its members. From this idea, the concept of functionalism has developed. In this section, we shall discuss the meaning of function and the concept of functionalism.

What is function?

Literally, the word ‘function’ refers to activity of some kind for the fulfillment of a given objective. The Oxford Dictionary defines function as the ‘activity, proper or natural, to a person or thing; the purpose or intended role of a person or thing; an office, duty, employment, or calling, also, a particular activity or operation (among several); an organizational unit performing this’. We understand the term with reference to the function of a machine, function of an institution, function of a job or an occupation. In anthropological, sociological and tribal studies, function refers to the activities performed by a culture or a social institution, such as family and marriage for the maintenance of that society or culture. In this section, you will learn function in terms of performance and interconnectedness of different aspects of culture in tribal communities.

Functionalism in Anthropology and Tribal Studies

Functionalism dates back to the 1920s. It is concerned with finding: (a) reasons why people act the way they do, and (b) interrelations between the different aspects of society. Whereas personality was mainly an American interest, functionalism was predominantly a British focus. The leaders of functionalism were Bronislaw Malinowski and A. R. Radcliffe-Brown.

Bronislaw Malinowski was the pioneer of modern fieldwork methods. He emphasized functional relations which ethnographers could observe in the field. He also tried to emphasize relations between biological needs and cultural life.

Radcliffe-Brown emphasized the interrelation between social systems: kinship, politics, economics and religion. He was also interested in the function of social institutions (e.g. marriage, initiation) within these systems. Above all, he believed that the goal of anthropology ought to be the comparison of societies and formulation of general laws to explain how the society works. Sometimes Radcliffe-Brown’s approach is referred to as structural functionalism and Malinowski’s as pure functionalism.

NOTES

Functionalism was a dominant theory in the British and American anthropology and sociology from the beginning of the 20th Century till the end of the Second World War. It was based on four basic assumptions. First, ideally the societies and cultures are very well integrated wholes and are in a state of homeostasis. Second, study on functions should be synchronic rather than diachronic, necessitating long-term intensive fieldwork in simple societies with participant observation. Third, holism is the hallmark of cultural studies, and to understand one aspect of a culture, such as kinship, one has to understand all the other aspects like politics, religion, economy, and so on. And fourth, it should aim at studying any institution to understand how it contributes to the maintenance of integrity of the whole society.

Malinowski and Functionalism

The contributions of Bronislaw Malinowski have been considered paramount in establishing the foundation of functionalism in British social anthropology. His prolonged fieldwork in the Trobriand Islands has resulted in an important method in anthropology, known as **participant observation**. Malinowski viewed function from a physiological point of view. He says, function may be defined as ‘... the satisfaction of an organic impulse by the appropriate act. Form and function, obviously, are inextricably related to one another.’ He believes that cultural institutions are integrated responses to a variety of human needs. For example, he says that kinship as an institution is a response to the biological urge for reproduction. In order to comply with acquiring a mate, establishing a family, procreating children, ensuring livelihood and social status for them, care is taken by the institution of kinship. Therefore, the function of kinship is to satisfy the human urge for reproduction.

Malinowski argues that contrary to popular belief that ‘magic’ is a mere superstition or empty gesture in a simple society, it has multiple functions, such as to kill enemies and prevent being killed, to ease the birth of a child, to enhance the beauty of dancers, to protect the fishermen, or to ensure a better harvest. He says that magic still persists in societies because it works or functions well. Malinowski, thus, believes that no institution in a culture is unimportant; all of them function so as to contribute to the holistic functioning of the culture.

Problems with Functionalism

Despite its strong appeal to understand the integrity of societies and cultures through their institutions, functionalism is fraught with many problems. It is criticized, largely because of its inability to deal with changes in the society and culture. Further, it is realized that synchronic approach alone cannot make us understand the culture; it needs to be combined with historical or diachronic approach. Its somewhat mechanistic models and assumptions have not been favoured by many later scholars.

The structural perspective forwarded by French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss provided an alternative to understand social structure. His perspective has become popular as structuralism.

Structuralism is the perspective which argues that meaning is only revealed through the relation between things. Things have no meaning independently. This perspective was borrowed from linguistics and was developed by Lévi-Strauss and his British admirers such as Sir Edmund Leach.

In rituals, meaning is embedded in the juxtaposition of ritual actions. In mythology, meaning is found in contrasts between events or between characters. This structural explanation became problematic for functional explanation.

NOTES

3.2.3 Organization

The literal meaning of organization is to arrange something systematically. The Oxford Dictionary defines organization as ‘the way in which something is organized; coordination of parts in an organic whole; systematic arrangement’. If we extend this concept to society, it would be referred to as ‘social organization’ or the systematic arrangement of a society.

Social Organization

Humans are social animals and live in groups throughout their lives. We may enjoy isolation for some time, but we cannot live in complete isolation, because of our dependence on other humans for many things. We get our food, shelter, security through other fellow members of the society. Therefore, humans form numerous social groups to live a decent life. In fact, we are members of many social groups at the same time. We may be family members, employees in a company, citizens of the country, members of clubs, religious organizations, political parties, occupational groups (like doctors and engineers), and ethnic groups and so on. In pre-literate tribal societies, people are grouped around their kinship network. For example, a stranger in these societies is questioned regarding his tribe or clan rather than his name.

Many anthropologists have endorsed this definition of social organization. For example, Robert Lowie advocates that the study of social organization deals primarily with the significant grouping of individuals. Humans do not and cannot live alone. They have to fulfill their basic biological as well as social needs. They need food, clothes, shelter, recreation, safety and security, for which they form groups of various kinds. These groupings are nothing but the organization of the society. British anthropologist, Raymond Firth, therefore, says that all community life involves methods of grouping and grading people for an effective carrying out of various types of activities necessary for common existence.

Social Structure and Social Organization

Confusion may arise between the concepts of ‘social structure’ and ‘social organization’. Social structure, in a general sense, is ‘any ordered arrangement of social phenomenon’ for a ‘permanent and enduring social relationship’. An organization or social organization is a formal group of people with one or more shared goals. The word itself is derived from the Greek word *organon* meaning *tool*.

In the social sciences, organizations are studied by researchers from the point of view of several disciplines. The study of organizations is available in sociology, economics, political science, psychology, management, anthropology and tribal studies. In sociology ‘organization’ is understood as a planned, coordinated and purposeful action of human beings to construct or compile a common tangible or intangible product or services.

This action is usually framed by formal membership and form (institutional rules). Sociology distinguishes the term organization into planned formal and unplanned informal (i.e. spontaneously formed) organizations. In tribal communities, organizations are mostly informal in nature. Social organizations can take many forms, depending on a social

context. For example, for family context the corresponding social organization is of course the 'family'. The social organization next to 'family' may be 'lineage' or 'clan'. The *Patang* of Apatanis is an organization of division of labour. Similarly, the *Mukchum* of the Khamptis or the *Kebang* of the Adis is a political organization. Needless to say, the sociological understanding of informal institutions is applied to study organizations in tribal societies.

Social organization is more concrete, formal and goal oriented. Social structure, on the other hand, is more general, inclusive and comprehensive. However, some scholars use these two concepts interchangeably. But Raymond Firth in his book *Elements of Social Organization* (1956) has made a distinction between the two concepts.

He regards both these terms as only heuristic devices or tools rather than precise concepts. According to him, social organization is concerned with the choices and decisions involved in the actual social relations: while the concept of social structure deals with the more fundamental social relations, which gives a society its basic form, and which provides limits to the range of action organizationally possible within it.

Firth says that in the aspect of structure, the continuity principle of society is found, while the variation or change principle is to be found in the aspect of organization. The latter aspect allows evaluation of situations with a scope for individual choice.

Firth studied the social structure and organization of small communities, such as the Tikopians of Solomon Islands. He found that the structure and organization of the community life possess certain constituents which are essential for social existence within a community. These constituents are: social alignment, social control, social media and social standards.

Social Organization among the Tribes of India

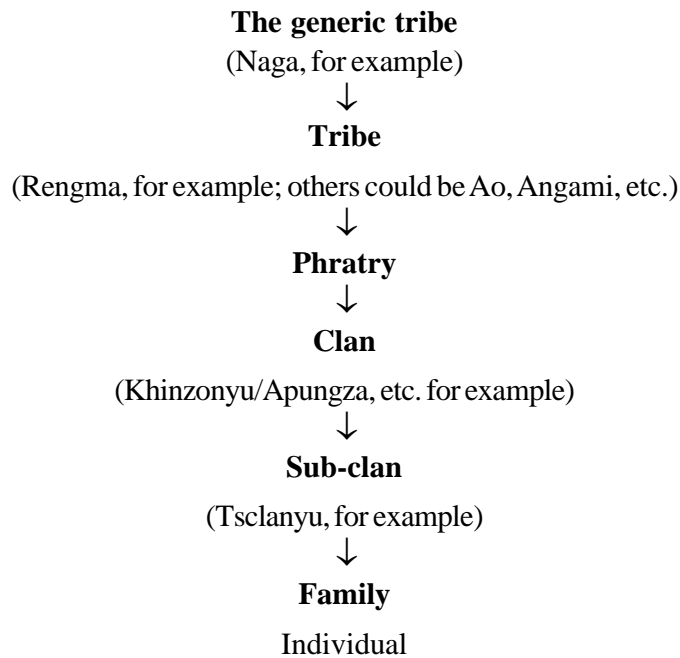
Indian tribes invariably organize themselves by grouping and grading their fellow members to meet the demands of a collective life with the help of their kinship network. This conscious exercise of grouping and grading ensures a smooth collective life. These groupings may be of two types: kin-based and non-kin-based. In India, we find that individuals of the tribal societies form families, families form lineages, lineages form clans, clans form phratries, and **phratries** form tribes. Many tribes are divided into two or more sub-tribes or into two **moieties**, each moiety being endogamous. Hence, moieties are popularly known as 'half-tribes'. Sometimes a group of tribes come together with the same generic name, as in the case of the Nagas. In fact, Ao Nagas, Rengma Nagas, Konyak Nagas, etc. are individual tribes and generically call themselves as Nagas.

Although individual tribes have their own typical way of organizing their society, which varies considerably between the tribes, we will discuss two examples of social organization. Our first example is the social organization of the Rengma Nagas inhabiting Nagaland and the second example is of the Kondhs of Odisha.

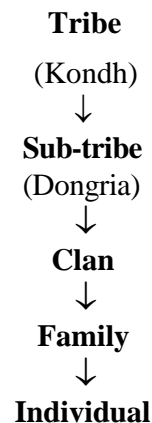
The Rengma Naga is a member tribe of the Naga group as discussed above. But they are territorially divided into the Eastern Rengmas and the Western Rengmas. J. P. Mills in the book *The Rengma Nagas* (1937) informs us that the Western Rengmas are further divided into six exogamous groups or phratries. Each of these six phratries is further divided into a number of clans. The Eastern Rengmas have no such phratries, but are divided into three clans. The clans have sub-clans, which are divided into families and families into individuals. Therefore, for the Rengma Naga, the social organization is:

NOTES

NOTES



The Kondhs in Odisha are territorially divided into Kutia Kondhs, Desia Kondhs and Dongria Kondhs, which are the sub-tribes of the main tribe. Each sub-tribe is further divided into many exogamous totemic clans, constituted by a number of families. Each family is again constituted by many individuals. Therefore, the Kondhs organize their society in the following pattern:



Besides these kin-based social organizations, Indian tribes also have non-kin-based organizations in the form of age-grades and age-sets. The age-based groups among the tribes are termed as age-grades by the anthropologists. For example, in the youth dormitories of the Oraon of Jharkhand, known as *Tur*, there used to be three grades of members: *Puna Jokhar* or novices entering at the age of 11 or 12, *Majh Turia Jokhar* or the middle class members, and *Koha Jokhar* or the oldest members. While the first two age-grades are of three years duration each, the last grade continues until the member is married, and sometimes until the member has a child. Among the Padams of Arunachal Pradesh, *musup* is a male institution similar to the youth dormitory in other tribes to some extent. The members in a *musup* are graded as *Musup ko*, *Minil*, *Ruutum* and *Pator Mijing*.

In some societies, age-grades are clearly recognized as distinct identifiable groups of people. Anthropologists refer to these groups as age-sets. They are members of

similar age and usually of the same gender, who share a common identity and maintain close ties throughout their lives. They also pass through age-related statuses together as a group. Age-sets are especially common in sub-Saharan Africa. Among the Masai cattle herding people of southern Kenya and northern Tanzania, for instance, male age-sets have been traditionally very important. The Masai strongly differentiate between three major age-based male groups—boys, warriors, and elders. The latter two groups are also informally divided into junior and senior warriors, and junior and senior elders.

In many tribal societies of India, social groupings are made on the basis of gender also. This differentiation is more visible in the tribal youth dormitories. Among the Oraon of Jharkhand and the Juang of Odisha, the youth dormitories were divided on gender lines, which means that there used to be separate dormitories for unmarried boys and unmarried girls. Among the Padams of Arunachal Pradesh, there is *musup* and *raseng* for boys and girls respectively. Among Ao Nagas, *Ariju* existed for boys and *Tsiiki* for girls. Of course, many of these dormitories are now extinct among the tribes of India. But among the Padams both the institutions exist in the villages of the hills.

3.3 SOCIAL MOBILITY

Mobility stands for shift, change and movement. The change may be of place or from one position to another. Further, change is value free i.e. it cannot be said that change is for good or bad. When we prefix ‘social’ along with mobility it would imply that people or individuals occupying a social position, move to another position or status. In the social ladder, this movement may be upward or downward or it may be inter-generational or intra-generational. *In short, social mobility stands for change in the position of an individual or a group of individuals from one status to another.*

Social change in traditional societies is culture determined. In such societies, money and market in their present form do not exist. Hence, the status is determined not in terms of occupation or quantity of money, but in terms of social position as culturally recognized. But traditional societies, such as tribal societies, in recent years are not exclusively traditional. These societies have been exposed to money, market forces and development interventions. Therefore, status and position are also determined by contemporary factors like occupation, education and so on. In this section, we shall discuss the concept and process of social mobility in general and with reference to the tribal societies in particular.

The study of social mobility is important for a number of reasons. We can observe changes in the class system of a society by studying social mobility. If the society and its members are more mobile, we can conclude that it is more open. In closed societies, social mobility is relatively difficult. We can also understand people’s life histories through the study of social mobility.

Meaning and Definitions

As we have noted earlier, no society or culture is static, but always in a state of flux. Along with the changes in the society and culture, social positions also undergo changes. Therefore, Pitirim A. Sorokin, an eminent sociologist, in his book, *Social and Cultural Mobility* (1959) says: ‘By social mobility is understood any transition of an individual or social object or value—anything that has been created or modified by human activity—from one social position to another.’

NOTES

Check Your Progress

1. From whose writings can the concept of social structure be traced?
2. What did the term ‘structure’ refer to in biology in the 19th century?
3. Whose name is associated with the ‘structural-functional approach’ in the analysis of the structure of society?
4. What is ‘function’ in anthropological, sociological and tribal studies?
5. How is organization defined in the field of sociology?

NOTES

Barber (1957) defines social mobility as ‘movement, either upward or downward between higher or lower social classes; or more precisely, movement between one relatively full time, functionally significant social role and another that is evaluated as either higher or lower.’ This movement is to be conceived as a process occurring over time, with individuals moving from one role and social class position to another because of what has happened to them in various kinds of social interaction. Mobility arises in social interaction, as each individual reacts to others in a changing series of social roles.

In case of individuals, it is common in industrial societies that people move from one level of occupation to another with the change in the social position, which is an example of social mobility. In tribal societies, when an ordinary citizen is selected or elected as the headman or the priest of the village, there is a change in his social position, which exemplifies social mobility. Similarly, groups of individuals also change their social positions, and the mobility of castes in India is an example of this kind of social mobility.

3.3.1 Types of Social Mobility

There are two principal types of social mobility—horizontal and vertical.

1. Horizontal Social Mobility

By horizontal social mobility is meant the transition of an individual or a social object from one social position to another situated on the same level. An example of horizontal social mobility is given here. When a person changes his religion from animism to say, Christianity, it signifies a horizontal social mobility, as all religions are on the same level. Similarly, when a person changes his citizenship from one country to another, or changes his factory or workplace with the same occupation (say, a mechanic, a fitter, a doctor), or changes his family by divorce and remarriage, or changes his place of residence, we call it horizontal social mobility. In all these cases, ‘shifting’ may take place without any noticeable change of the social position or status of an individual or social object.

Sorokin explains the concept of horizontal mobility more broadly. According to Sorokin, ‘Horizontal mobility refers to territorial, religious, political party, family, occupational and other horizontal shifting without any noticeable change in vertical position.’ A clan or a tribe, for example, may migrate to another place. In the new place, it may have a new identity. But in relation to its original tribe its status does not change. This is an example of horizontal mobility.

2. Vertical Social Mobility

When there is a change in the social position of an individual or a group or a social object because of mobility, we call it vertical social mobility. In the words of Sorokin, ‘by vertical social mobility is meant the relations involved in transition of an individual (or a social object) from one social stratum to another.’

According to the direction of transition, there are two types of vertical social mobility: (a) ascending (also called social climbing or upward mobility), and (b) descending (also called social sinking or downward mobility).

- (a) **Upward mobility:** When a person of a lower social position moves to a higher social position, the mobility is of ascending vertical type. For example, when a ward member of a local Panchayat becomes a member of the Legislative Assembly of the state, there takes place an ascending vertical mobility for that person. This may be true for a group also.

When some members of an existing group form a new group and insert this group into a higher stratum, there takes place an ascending vertical mobility of that group. The shifting of students' associations into powerful political parties is an example of this type.

- (b) **Downward mobility:** When a person of a higher social position is dropped to a lower social position, it is called vertical descending mobility. Reduction in the amount of wealth, losing elections, going to jail for criminal activities, etc. denote sinking of the social position of an individual, and hence, are examples of descending vertical mobility. This may be true for a group also. When a political party loses the election, it causes sinking of social position of its members. Among the Apatanis of Arunachal Pradesh, if someone commits a crime towards a member of a family, then he has to pay some fine to compensate the family. In case of failure, he becomes a *Mura* of the family till he repays the fine. Similar is the case among other Tani group of tribes. The *Mura/Nera* is dropped to a lower social position. However, this practice does not exist now.

Social mobility can be observed taking into consideration the generational factor as well. Accordingly, there may be two types of social mobility: inter-generational and intra-generational social mobility. These two types of mobility are noticeable in modern tribal societies also.

Inter-generational: When change in the social position is noticed in two or more generations, it is termed as inter-generational social mobility. For example, the son of a farmer becomes a civil servant, there is evidently social mobility across generations. Hence, usually, inter-generational mobility is used to compare the level of the parents with that of their children. This type of mobility means that one generation changes its social status in contrast to the preceding generation. However, this mobility may be upward or downward.

Intra-generational: If a person has risen in the level of his career in his own lifetime, the mobility is of the intra-generational type. For example, if a tribesperson during his life time becomes a shaman, his status in the community changes. It is an upward intra-generational mobility. In tribal societies a good hunter has a higher status than a common man. If misfortune touches a tribesman and he fails to repay debt, then he may be a bonded labourer to the lender's family. His social status sinks. It is an example of downward intra-generational mobility.

3.3.2 Social Mobility among Tribes

We are aware of the fact that the tribes of India are undergoing a rapid process of transformation, which induces social mobility among them. This is not to discount the fact that still they have retained a large part of their traditional cultures and values. Vidyarthi and Rai (1985) discuss two broad types of factors that bring about social transformation among the tribes of India—traditional and modern.

The traditional factors include the impact of certain traditions of the major neighbouring communities on the tribes, which have been continuing for a long period. These are the processes of Hinduization, Sankritization, revitalization and many other reform movements.

The modern factors of social transformation are due to the processes of Christianization, urbanization, industrialization, tribal development programmes, spread

NOTES

NOTES

of communication, modern education, democratization, and so on, which have a direct bearing on tribal cultures. There are also some other factors like motivation, achievements and failures, skills and training, and migration which affect the status of people. These eventually induce social mobility among the tribes.

Now we will discuss some concrete cases of social mobility among the tribal groups of India. The central Himalayan tribes, the Tharu and the Khasa studied by Srivastava (1958) and Majumdar (1962), have been accepted as the Hindu Kshatriyas due to constant interaction with the neighbouring Hindus. The Tharu wear sacred threads like the Kshatriyas, call themselves 'Thakurs' and have succeeded in establishing marital relationship with the Hindu Thakurs. Similarly, the Khasa have declared themselves as Hindu Rajputs and have established social connections with the Brahmans and Rajputs of the plains. One can notice here the instances of social mobility from tribes to caste Hindus of these tribes.

The Santhals of central India, distributed over the states of Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal, have witnessed social mobility in some areas. Those of them who adopted the Baptist way of Christianity during the British days, and others who revitalized their tribal religion and cultural values sought for a higher social status. Many of them emphasized on thrift and abstinence from liquor, avoidance of wasteful ostentation, and valued the ethical principles of high living of the Hindus or Christians, eventually attaining a higher social status. Therefore, Roy Burman (1970) prefers to call them 'post-primitives' in place of 'primitive tribes'.

3.3.3 Social Mobility among Castes

Castes in India are considered to be very rigid and closed theoretically. Surajit Sinha has defined caste:

...as a hierarchy of endogamous groups, organized in a characteristic heredity of division of labour. The endogamous segments, castes or *jatis*, are committed to internal structural solidarity as well as to organic coordination with the large multi-caste social system. This coordination is brought about through functional specialization of the endogamous groups as also through hierarchical relationship among the *jatis*.

Two important features of caste are evident from this definition: endogamy and hereditarily ascribed status. Endogamy refers to marriage within the caste boundary, and ascribed status means the status gained by a person by his/her birth. For example, a person born in the caste of a barber or a potter remains as a member of the same caste throughout his life.

However, there are many instances of social mobility among the castes of India. M. N. Srinivas has attributed the process of Sanskritization to social mobility among the castes as well as tribes in India. We shall discuss about Sanskritization later in this unit. In Sanskritization, lower castes imitate the lifestyle of the neighbouring higher castes, and try to attain a higher caste status in course of time.

3.3.4 Tribe-Caste-Peasantry Contrast and Continuum

Here, we will see the differences between the concepts of 'tribes', 'castes' and 'peasants' and also the areas of overlapping between them. Our first task will be to distinguish between tribes and castes. First, there is a relative isolation of tribes as compared to castes. This means that the tribe has very limited external social ties, whereas a caste is

linked with many other castes by multifarious ties. Second, the tribes speak a number of dialects/languages, although they inhabit the same locality or region. For example, in any district of Arunachal Pradesh, many tribes live together and speak their own dialects. In case of a caste, many castes living in the same region speak the same language or dialect. Third, most of the tribes are animists, while castes profess Hinduism as their religion.

Now let us examine the concept of peasants. Beteille, for example, identifies three important features of the peasants. First, peasants are attached to land either as owners or as tenants or as labourers without any right over land, yet earning their livelihood through labour. Second, peasants occupy a lower social and economic status in the society compared to the gentry or the nobility. Third, they represent a class of exploited people in the hands of various classes.

Despite conceptual differences, in terms of operational realities, it is difficult to see the tribes, the castes and the peasants as disjointed or compartmentalized categories; it would be prudent to view them in terms of a continuum. A continuum is nothing but a scale, on which tribes, castes and peasants are located, due to the overlapping of their values and ideal behaviours. Ghurye's characterization of tribes as 'backward Hindus' differing only in degree from other segments of the Hindu society gives credence to the idea of a continuum between tribes and castes. In his celebrated article, 'Hindu Methods of Tribal Absorption', Bose (1941) has shown how the tribes of India gradually get absorbed into the Hindu fold by observing Hindu rituals and sharing Hindu values. He says 'such a slow movement of economic change, spread over at least a hundred years or more, has led to the gradual absorption of some sections of tribal people into the Hindu fold.'

Surajit Sinha had once commented on the amorphous boundaries that exist between the tribes, castes and peasants, which are in a state of continuum. He refers to various central Indian tribes and castes and says, 'The Bhumij, the Santhal, the Kharia and the Pahira of Singhbhum; the Bhatra, Dorla and the Dhurwa of M.P.; and the Riang of Tripura; and the Paundra, a scheduled caste of West Bengal represent a series in the degree of intensive articulation with the regional Hindu hierarchical system. While the Bhumij and the Paundra have been more or less fully integrated into the Hindu social order, the Kharia and the Pahira of Manbhum, the Dorla of Bastar and the Riang of Tripura still maintain a much greater distance from the mainstream of the Hindu social order surrounding them. The position of the Santhal of Manbhum, the Dhurwa and the Bhatra of Bastar fall somewhere between the two extreme types mentioned above' (Sinha 1965).

Many tribes in India are peasants for all practical purposes. The Raj Gond of Andhra Pradesh, the Munda of Jharkhand, the Bhuiyan of Odisha satisfy all the criteria of a peasant described above. Many tribes in India were rulers of their small kingdoms during the pre-British times and were claiming to have a Kshatriya or warrior origin. History is replete with many myths that were in circulation, legitimizing the Kshatriya status of these rulers. There have been many instances of the rulers upgrading the status of tribes to peasant castes and vice-versa, rendering the boundaries between them spurious. Thus, the contrast between tribes, castes and peasants are merely conceptual; in reality, they were along a continuum due to highly fluid boundaries between them.

NOTES

Check Your Progress

6. Define social mobility.
7. Name the two principal types of social mobility.
8. What are the modern factors of social transformation?
9. What is a continuum with regard to tribes, castes and peasants?

NOTES

3.3 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that,

- A society is an abstraction but it expresses itself through its structure, function and organization.
- The term 'structure' is derived from the Latin word, *struere*, which means to build.
- The concept of a structure is very much linked to the concept of proper arrangement of its parts. A house is not only a physical structure; it has its patterned functional structure also.
- The concept of social structure has a long history in the social sciences. It goes back to the writings of Herbert Spencer, the class structure analysis of Karl Marx or the 19th century work of Georg Simmel.
- During the 19th century, the word 'structure' came to be used in biology. There, it referred to a combination of connected and interdependent parts that make up an organism.
- It was Herbert Spencer who was one of the first scholars to talk about structures of societies with a biological analogy.
- Émile Durkheim used the term 'social morphology', by which he meant what we mean by the term 'social structure'. He postulates that social structure has two attributes: first, 'collective relationships', which are internal arrangements of a society like its kinship; second, 'collective representations', which are the mental phenomena and include beliefs, ideas, values, symbols and expectations of the members of the society.
- There are two ways of observing social structure: One is the notion of social structure with family as a basic unit. It was propounded by E.E. Evans-Pritchard. The other way is to study the society with individuals as the basic unit where the social behaviour of each person is the essence of study.

Check Your Progress

10. Define detribalization.
11. What are the major factors of detribalization?
12. What is re-tribalization?
13. Give an example of Sanskritization.

- Radcliffe-Brown has related the concept of social structure to the concept of social function. The concept of function, according to him is the 'contribution which a partial activity makes to the total activity of which it is a part'.
- Radcliffe-Brown has introduced the concept of dyadic relations to understand all social relations of person to person.
- The French anthropologist, Claude Lévi-Strauss, has also contributed to the study of social structure. In contrast to Radcliffe-Brown, Lévi-Strauss says that the term 'social structure' has nothing to do with empirical reality.
- In anthropological, sociological and tribal studies, function refers to the activities performed by a culture or a social institution, such as family and marriage for the maintenance of that society or culture.
- Functionalism dates back to the 1920s. It is concerned with finding: (a) reasons why people act the way they do, and (b) interrelations between different aspects of society.
- Bronislaw Malinowski was the pioneer of modern fieldwork methods. He emphasized functional relations which ethnographers could observe in the field.
- Radcliffe-Brown emphasized the interrelation between social systems: kinship, politics, economics and religion.
- Despite its strong appeal to understand the integrity of societies and cultures through their institutions, functionalism is fraught with many problems. It is criticized, largely because of its inability to deal with changes in the society and culture.
- The literal meaning of organization is to arrange something systematically. The Oxford Dictionary defines organization as 'the way in which something is organized; coordination of parts in an organic whole; systematic arrangement'.
- Indian tribes invariably organize themselves by grouping and grading their fellow members to meet the demands of a collective life with the help of their kinship network.
- The Kondhs in Orissa are territorially divided into Kutia Kondhs, Desia Kondhs and Dongria Kondhs, which are the sub-tribes of the main tribe.
- Social mobility stands for change in the position of an individual or a group of individuals from one status to another.
- There are two principal types of social mobility—horizontal and vertical. By horizontal social mobility is meant the transition of an individual or a social object from one social position to another situated on the same level.
- When there is a change in the social position of an individual or a group or a social object because of mobility, we call it vertical social mobility.
- The Santhals of central India, distributed over the states of Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal, have witnessed social mobility in some areas.
- Despite conceptual differences, in terms of operational realities, it is difficult to see the tribes, the castes and the peasants as disjointed or compartmentalized categories; it would be prudent to view them in terms of a continuum.
- A society is not a static reality. It changes over time. There are various factors affecting this change. These factors may vary from society to society. The study

NOTES

NOTES

of these factors give us an idea about the process of social change in different societies.

- Many tribal communities received the profound impact of 'Hinduization' due to their interaction with the neighbouring Hindu peasants, thus, elevating their social position to the Hindu castes. But it is also true that in some tribal pockets the reverse trend of caste Hindus adopting tribal customs and rituals have been noticed. This may be known as the process of 'tribalization' of the castes.
- Detribalization is the process of tribal cultures losing their cultural identities in favour of another culture.
- Besides religion, locational proximity and the pressure exerted by larger organized groups are said to be the major factors of detribalization.
- Re-tribalization is an exercise towards identity reinforcement among some of the tribal communities of India, which had previously undergone the process of detribalization.
- The term Sanskritization has been coined by M. N. Srinivas, a distinguished Indian sociologist. This term has been used to symbolize the process by which the people of the lower castes in the caste hierarchy emulate the behaviour and practices of the upper castes to seek social mobility.

3.4 KEY TERMS

- **Function:** It refers to the activities performed by a culture or a social institution, such as family and marriage for the maintenance of that society or culture.
- **Functionalism:** It is a theory about the nature of mental states. According to functionalism, mental states are identified by what they do rather than by what they are made of.
- **Structuralism:** It is the perspective which argues that meaning is only revealed through the relation between things.
- **Organization:** In sociology 'organization' is understood as planned, coordinated and purposeful action of human beings to construct or compile a common tangible or intangible product or services.
- **Phratry:** It is a grouping of clans or other social units within a tribe.
- **Social mobility:** It stands for change in the position of an individual or a group of individuals from one status to another.
- **Horizontal social mobility:** By horizontal social mobility is meant the transition of an individual or a social object from one social position to another situated on the same level.
- **Vertical social mobility:** When there is a change in the social position of an individual or a group or a social object because of mobility, we call it vertical social mobility.
- **Detribalization:** It is the process of tribal cultures losing their cultural identities in favour of another culture.
- **Re-tribalization:** It is an exercise towards identity reinforcement among some of the tribal communities of India, which had previously undergone the process of detribalization.

3.5 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

1. The concept of social structure has a long history in the social sciences. It goes back to the writings of Herbert Spencer, the class structure analysis of Karl Marx or the 19th century work of Georg Simmel.
2. During the 19th century, the word ‘structure’ came to be used in biology. There, it referred to a combination of connected and interdependent parts that make up an organism.
3. The British social anthropologist, A. R. Radcliffe-Brown’s name is associated with the ‘structural-functional approach’ in the analysis of the structure of society.
4. In anthropological, sociological and tribal studies, function refers to the activities performed by a culture or a social institution, such as family and marriage for the maintenance of that society or culture.
5. In sociology ‘organization’ is understood as a planned, coordinated and purposeful action of human beings to construct or compile a common tangible or intangible product or services.
6. Social mobility stands for change in the position of an individual or a group of individuals from one status to another.
7. There are two principal types of social mobility—horizontal and vertical.
8. The modern factors of social transformation are due to the processes of Christianization, urbanization, industrialization, tribal development programmes, spread of communication, modern education, democratization, and so on, which have direct bearing on tribal cultures.
9. A continuum is nothing but a scale, on which tribes, castes and peasants are located, due to the overlapping of their values and ideal behaviours.
10. Detribalization is the process of tribal cultures losing their cultural identities in favour of another culture.
11. Besides religion, locational proximity and the pressure exerted by larger organized groups are said to be the major factors of detribalization.
12. Re-tribalization is an exercise towards identity reinforcement among some of the tribal communities of India, which had previously undergone the process of detribalization.
13. A prominent example of Sanskritization is the implementation of vegetarianism by members of a community belonging to the low castes who are traditionally not opposed to non-vegetarian food. This change was brought about through the emulation of the practice of *dvija*, the twice-born castes.

NOTES

3.6 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

1. What is a structure? Describe the use of the term structure as it was used before its appearance in social sciences.
2. How does the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary define structure?

NOTES

3. What does the term 'social morphology' mean as used by Durkheim?
4. Write a note on the segmentary social structure.
5. What is the concept of dyadic relations introduced by Radcliffe-Brown?
6. What is the meaning of social structure according to Evans-Pritchard? How does he differ from Radcliff-Brown?
7. Why has functionalism been criticized by various scholars?
8. How is the tribal society of India organized?
9. State the differences between tribes and castes.
10. Write short notes on the following giving examples:
 - (i) Tribalization
 - (ii) Detribalization
 - (iii) Sanskritization

Long-Answer Questions

1. Discuss the concept and the history of the concept of social structure.
2. Explain the concept of social structure with reference to segmentary social structure and social roles.
3. Assess the contrasting approaches of Radcliffe-Brown and Claude Lévi-Strauss to social structure.
4. 'Functionalism was a dominant theory in the British and American anthropology and sociology.' Discuss.
5. Critically analyse the relationship between social structure and social organization.
6. Describe the concept of social mobility.
7. Evaluate the concept of social mobility among the tribes and castes.
8. Describe social processes such as tribalization, detribalization, re-tribalization and Sanskritization with regard to tribal studies.
9. Discuss how Sanskritization works in raising the social position of some tribes to the level of Hindu castes. Discuss how the tribes achieve that.

3.7 FURTHER READING

- Beteille, A. 1975. *Six Essays in Comparative Sociology*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Beteille, A. 1992. *Society and Politics in India: Essays in a Comparative Perspective*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Mibang, Tamo and M. C. Behera (ed). 2007. *Tribal Studies: Emerging Frontiers of Knowledge*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications.
- Gandhi, Malli. 2008. *Denotified Tribes: Dimensions of Change*. New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers.
- Devy, G. N.; Davis, Geoffrey V. and Chakravarty, K. K (ed.). 2011. *Voice and Memory: Indigenous Imagination and Expression*. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan.

I

n

d

i

UNIT-IV

PROCESS OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

- 4.0^g Introduction
- 4.1^e Unit Objectives
- 4.2ⁿ Social Processes
 - o 4.2.1 Tribalization
 - u 4.2.2 Detribalization
 - s 4.2.3 Re-tribalization
 - 4.2.4 Sanskritization
- 4.3^l Summary
- 4.4^l Key Terms
- 4.5^m Answers to 'Check Your Progress'
- 4.6^a Questions and Exercises
- 4.7^g Further Reading

4.0 INTRODUCTION

a

The structure, content and organization of any society or culture are far from static and monolithic. Changes in the society and culture are imminent due to two factors: external and internal or endogenous. External forces like acculturation most often bring about changes in society and culture. Sometimes endogenous forces also attract changes in the social structure that come from within the society itself to adapt to a difficult or changing environment. Therefore, social scientists study the structure of a society and its process of change to understand its dynamism.

Let us understand and appreciate the fact that no society or culture exists in a state of chaos and conflict for long, but are organized in a particular manner. For example, social norms in the form of rules, regulations, prescriptions and prohibitions keep the societies running, however chaotic they might seem on the surface. But even these organizational aspects are far from static and change in response to changing environments around them. Therefore, there is a need to study the changing dimensions of social organizations as well.

In this unit, we shall discuss some concepts that relate to societies and culture and try to understand and appreciate their dynamic nature.

s

4.1 UNIT OBJECTIVES

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

- Define the concepts of structure, function and organization as they are often used in anthropology and sociology and tribal studies
- Explain the concept of social mobility and its operation among the tribes and castes of India
- Explain the concept of social process, particularly the way tribalization, detribalization and re-tribalization take place in the Indian context
- Evaluate the process of Sanskritization as a form of social mobility in rural and tribal India

4.2 SOCIAL PROCESSES

b

A society is not static. It changes over time. There are various factors affecting this change. These factors may vary from society to society. The study of these factors gives us an idea about the process of social change in different societies. We shall

discuss the process of social change with reference to tribal communities in India.

Social Processes in Tribal India

Social process is a phrase that carries multiple meanings. But let us define it in a crude manner. It includes generic processes that structure the time-space fabric of a society. It may include political, economic, and socio-cultural processes, and human interactions arising out of these processes. If we restrict ourselves to the socio-cultural processes among the tribal or pre-capitalist social formations, we notice the use of kinship, exchange relations, social control mechanisms and the human interactions arising out of them that ensure the continuity of the society. These are characteristically different from the capitalistic societies with their emphasis on capital, class and state. In this section, we shall discuss a few social processes that operate in the tribal societies of India in the form of tribalization, detribalization, re-tribalization and sanskritization.

4.2.1 Tribalization

In the previous section we learnt that many tribal communities received the profound impact of 'Hinduization' due to their interaction with the neighbouring Hindu peasants, thus elevating their social position to the Hindu castes. But it is also true that in some tribal pockets the reverse trend of caste Hindus adopting tribal customs and rituals have been noticed. This may be known as the process of 'tribalization' of the castes. Kalia (1959) is of the opinion that the process of 'tribalization' is found in many tribal pockets of the country with gradual internalization of the tribal customs, mores and religion by the neighbouring caste groups, which are in many respects antithetical to the caste ideology in India. In the following paragraph, we shall discuss some examples of tribalization in India.

In his study among the Kondh of Odisha, F. G. Bailey (1955) observes that the tribal Kondh dominated region has also a considerable Pano population, who are Scheduled Castes and had migrated from the plains prior to the migration of Oriya foot warriors (*Paika*) as a part of the army raised by the local chiefs/kings in the hills. Bailey prefers to call them the 'Kondh Pan' in contradistinction to the 'Oriya Pan', as the former speak Kui—the Kondh language—participate in their rituals, share their worldviews and values, and are adept in Kondh dancing and music. With regard to the Oriya population living in the Kondh inhabited region, Bailey observes that although both these communities live in separate villages, 'there has been intermarriage, although not extensively, since such marriages offend the rules of caste. It is also clear from records and tradition that Oriyas were fully committed in the Kond ritual of human sacrifice. Even today many rites in an Oriya village are in essence Kond rites' (Bailey 1955). This is an excellent example of tribalization of Oriya caste people in the Kondh hills of Odisha.

Behura and Misra in their study have highlighted the process of tribalization with the help of the concept of 'encysted castes'. They observe that three artisan castes

NOTES

from the plains, such as, the blacksmiths, potters and weavers have settled down among the Koya, Kondh and Gadaba tribes of south Odisha for generations, and have been serving them for pecuniary advantages. These three artisan castes are so much assimilated with their host tribal populations that except endogamy they can be easily identified by their 'encysting tribes' (Behura and Misra, 1985). They opine that 'The encysted castes have even adopted tribal dialects and tribal way of life, to the extent of participating in community festivals with them, quite often headed by a tribal priest. It is, therefore, plausible to assume that despite many strong claims of tribes and castes of Odisha belonging to two separate cultural genres, in reality the boundary has been much more fluid and porous facilitating tribe-caste continuum on a long-term basis' (ibid).

4.2.2 Detribalization

Detribalization is the process of tribal cultures losing their cultural identities in favour of another culture. In an earlier discussion we have learnt that tribal cultures undergo transformations due to both traditional as well as modern factors. While the traditional factors include the processes of Hinduization, Sankritization, revitalization and many reform movements, the modern factors are the processes of Christianization, urbanization, industrialization, tribal development programmes, spread of communication, modern education, democratization, and so on, which have direct bearing on tribal cultures. The factor maybe any of the above two factors, but when the tribal culture starts losing its identity, we say that detribalization has taken place.

Besides religion, locational proximity and the pressure exerted by larger organized groups are said to be the major factors of detribalization. It is said that '... these (indigenous or tribal) people were able to maintain somewhat their socio-religious, economic and cultural identity. But because of their close locational proximity and the steady pressure of the larger and techno-economically more organized communities, they were obliged to enter into social and cultural and more importantly, economic contacts, communication and exchanges with their neighbours who were socially, culturally and economically more dominant' (Ray, 1972). N. K. Bose is of the opinion that culture '... seems to flow from an economically dominant group to a poorer one when the two are tied together to form a larger productive organization through some historical accident' (Bose, 1967). This implies that it is rather obvious that when tribes are surrounded by economically stronger Hindu peasants, the former lose their tribal characters and get detribalized. Sinha attributes the role of tribal markets, which accelerate the process of detribalization, and hence, he says, 'These tribal communities have been in touch with the traditional network of weekly markets whereby they are involved in economic symbiosis with at least ten or more Hindu castes'.

Detribalization may take place in the entire tribe or a group or section of the group within a tribe. A section of a group or groups of a tribe may convert to an alien religion, thereby losing many aspects of their culture. Similarly, we see a section of a tribe becoming economically better off because of the benefit its members derive from development schemes. This section of tribe enjoys the marital culture alien to their culture. These are few instances of the process of detribalization.

We have already discussed the cases of the Tharu, Khasa and Bhumij, who have been detribalized to a large extent and are considered as caste Hindus in their respective regions of habitation. Similarly, the Gond, Bhuiyan and many other tribes have lost their tribal characters, thus being detribalized.

NOTES

4.2.3 Re-tribalization

Re-tribalization is an exercise towards identity reinforcement among some of the tribal communities of India, which had previously undergone the process of detribalization. It is clearly a revivalistic phase of glorifying the tribal origin, language, religion, cultures and customs, portraying a tribal cultural identity with a new vigour, different from the non-tribals. A couple of examples here would help us understand the concept and its empirical manifestations.

Revival of tribal languages and creation of tribal scripts are some of the components of the process of re-tribalization. Revival of the Kui-lipi (Kui script) by the Kondh, the Ol Chiki for the Santhali and other Munda languages, the Warang Chiti for the Ho language, etc. are some of the trends of re-tribalization of the tribal communities. In the Lohit district of Arunachal Pradesh, there have been considerable efforts to re-create the Khampti script. It is a definite marker of self-assertion and re-tribalization by the Khampti (Misra 1994).

Revamping the old religions into more ethical religions is another dimension of re-tribalization. For example, the new Sarna religion of the Santhal, the emergence of Donyi-Polo faith in Arunachal Pradesh and similar efforts in other tribes indicate the process of revitalization of renewed tribal identities in a changing context. There is revivalism of traditional socio-political institutions and youth associations, as in case of the Christian Ao Naga, towards the process of re-tribalization and resurgence.

In order to concretize the process of re-tribalization and bring together all the members into the fold of the tribe, many tribal communities have formed their own associations very much like the caste associations. The examples of Utkal Kui Samaj of the Kondh of Odisha, the Kula Mela (community assembly) of Suddha Savara of Odisha, Gond Jatiya Mahasabha (Pan-Gond Caste Super Association) of the Gond and Bhauma Samaj of the Hill Bhuiyan, are clear evidences of re-tribalization or identity reinforcement among the tribes of India.

In recent times, re-tribalization has gained momentum due to the Constitutional safeguards for the Scheduled Tribes and greater benefits in education, politics and service sectors arising out of that.

It is debatable if the recent trends regarding some of the former tribes such as the Kurmi-Mahtos of Chota Nagpur, who were de-scheduled as a tribe in 1931, and of other communities, seeking tribal status to avail themselves of the privileges of being a 'tribe' granted under the Constitution of India could be considered a dimension of tribalization. The Mahtos of Chota Nagpur do claim that they share many social characteristics with tribes, but these are not spelt out. Similarly, the Bhumij who once claimed to be Kshatriyas have now discovered fresh merit in 're-tribalization.' The Bhotiyas of U.P., who acted as traders across the Himalayas before the Indo-China conflicts, once claimed the status of Rajputs. Later, as border trade came to a standstill and their economic condition deteriorated, they laid claims to be members of a Scheduled Tribe. Claiming tribal status is one thing; accepting tribal mores is another thing. Evidences on the part of such claimants regarding their newly discovered affinities with tribes, participation in tribal festivals and worship at tribal shrines is still weak. However, with the increasing politicization of such communities as live on the borderline of a tribe and a backward community, this trend deserves to be noted.

4.2.4 Sanskritization

As we have noted earlier, it is but natural that with more organized cultures and religions around, tribal people imitate the rituals, cultures and customs, in an effort to raise the social position of their group in the hierarchical Indian society. It was M. N. Srinivas, who first used the concept 'Brahminization' and later 'Sanskritization' to refer to this process.

The term **Sanskritization** has been coined by M. N. Srinivas, a distinguished Indian sociologist. This term has been used to symbolize the process by which the people of the lower castes in the caste hierarchy emulate the behaviour and practices of the upper castes to seek social mobility.

Srinivas defines Sanskritization as a process by which:

...a 'low' Hindu caste, or tribal or other group, changes its customs, ritual ideology, and way of life in the direction of a high and frequently 'twice-born' caste. Generally such changes are followed by a claim to a higher position in the caste hierarchy than that traditionally conceded to the claimant class by the local community...

A prominent example of Sanskritization is the implementation of vegetarianism by members of a community belonging to the low castes who are traditionally not opposed to non-vegetarian food. This change was brought about through the emulation of the practice of *dvija*, the twice-born castes.

Realizing social mobility among the tribes to achieve the status of a caste and ensuring a place in the local caste hierarchy, Srinivas adds that a tribe may undergo the process of Sanskritization 'claiming to be a caste, and therefore, **Hindu**'. We have already seen the examples of the Bhumij, the Paundra, the Gond, the Bathudi, the Bhuiyan, etc. who are almost integrated with the caste structure of the Hindus. In order to be recognized as a Hindu caste, many of them lead a life recommended in the Hindu scriptures, usually written in Sanskrit. In Robert Redfield's terms, there is an effort to emulate the values of the 'Great Tradition' of the Hindus by the tribes by worshipping Hindu deities, believing in Hindu values and practising Hindu ways of ideal behaviour. Therefore, M. N. Srinivas is of the opinion that Sanskritization not only includes the adoption of new customs and beliefs but also comprises the revelation to new ideas and values appearing in the Sanskrit literature. He informs us that the terms *Karma*, *dharma*, *papa*, *maya*, *samskara* and *moksha* are the most used theological Sanskrit ideologies which appear into the daily usage of the terms among people who are sanskritized.

Perhaps one of the glaring examples of Sanskritization or Hinduization by a tribe comes from the writings of L. K. Mahapatra (2005). Describing the process among the Saora of South Odisha, he notes economic specialization, purity/pollution differentiation and caste-like exclusiveness among them. Some of them consider themselves superior to others by abjuring beef (but not the flesh of sacrificial buffalo), giving up abhorrent and unacceptable eating habits from the Hindu point of view, and naming themselves as *Suddha* (pure) Saora. There are many such examples of Sanskritization process among the tribes of India.

The theory of Sanskritization was first proposed by M. N. Srinivas in his D. Phil. Thesis at the Oxford University. This thesis was later published as a book in 1952 titled *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India*. This book was an

NOTES

NOTES

ethnographical study of the Coorg community of Karnataka, India. Srinivas writes in the book:

The caste system is far from a rigid system in which the position of each component caste is fixed for all time. Movement has always been possible, and especially in the middle regions of the hierarchy. A low caste was able, in a generation or two, to rise to a higher position in the hierarchy by adopting vegetarianism and teetotalism, and by Sanskritizing its ritual and pantheon. In short, it took over, as far as possible, the customs, rites, and beliefs of the Brahmins, and adoption of the Brahminic way of life by a low caste seems to have been frequent, though theoretically forbidden. This process has been called 'Sanskritization' in this book, in preference to 'Brahminization', as certain Vedic rites are confined to the Brahmins and the two other 'twice-born' castes.

The book *Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India* challenged the idea which was rampant in that period regarding caste being non-flexible and an invariable institution. The concept of Sanskritization addressed the actual complexity and fluidity of caste relations. It brought into academic focus the dynamics of the renegotiation of status between various castes and communities in India.

4.3 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt that,

- A society is an abstraction but it expresses itself through its structure, function and organization.
- The term 'structure' is derived from the Latin word, *struere*, which means to build.
- The concept of a structure is very much linked to the concept of proper arrangement of its parts. A house is not only a physical structure; it has its patterned functional structure also.
- The concept of social structure has a long history in the social sciences. It goes back to the writings of Herbert Spencer, the class structure analysis of Karl Marx or the 19th century work of Georg Simmel.
- During the 19th century, the word 'structure' came to be used in biology. There, it referred to a combination of connected and interdependent parts that make up an organism.
- It was Herbert Spencer who was one of the first scholars to talk about structures of societies with a biological analogy.
- Émile Durkheim used the term 'social morphology', by which he meant what we mean by the term 'social structure'. He postulates that social structure has two attributes: first, 'collective relationships', which are internal arrangements of a society like its kinship; second, 'collective representations', which are the mental phenomena and include beliefs, ideas, values, symbols and expectations of the members of the society.
- There are two ways of observing social structure: One is the notion of social structure with family as a basic unit. It was propounded by E.E. Evans-Pritchard. The other way is to study the society with individuals as the basic unit where the social behaviour of each person is the essence of study.

Check Your Progress

14. Define detribalization.
15. What are the major factors of detribalization?
16. What is re-tribalization?
17. Give an example of Sanskritization.

- Radcliffe-Brown has related the concept of social structure to the concept of social function. The concept of function, according to him is the ‘contribution which a partial activity makes to the total activity of which it is a part’.
- Radcliffe-Brown has introduced the concept of dyadic relations to understand all social relations of person to person.
- The French anthropologist, Claude Lévi-Strauss, has also contributed to the study of social structure. In contrast to Radcliffe-Brown, Lévi-Strauss says that the term ‘social structure’ has nothing to do with empirical reality.
- In anthropological, sociological and tribal studies, function refers to the activities performed by a culture or a social institution, such as family and marriage for the maintenance of that society or culture.
- Functionalism dates back to the 1920s. It is concerned with finding: (a) reasons why people act the way they do, and (b) interrelations between different aspects of society.
- Bronislaw Malinowski was the pioneer of modern fieldwork methods. He emphasized functional relations which ethnographers could observe in the field.
- Radcliffe-Brown emphasized the interrelation between social systems: kinship, politics, economics and religion.
- Despite its strong appeal to understand the integrity of societies and cultures through their institutions, functionalism is fraught with many problems. It is criticized, largely because of its inability to deal with changes in the society and culture.
- The literal meaning of organization is to arrange something systematically. The Oxford Dictionary defines organization as ‘the way in which something is organized; coordination of parts in an organic whole; systematic arrangement’.
- Indian tribes invariably organize themselves by grouping and grading their fellow members to meet the demands of a collective life with the help of their kinship network.
- The Kondhs in Orissa are territorially divided into Kutia Kondhs, Desia Kondhs and Dongria Kondhs, which are the sub-tribes of the main tribe.
- Social mobility stands for change in the position of an individual or a group of individuals from one status to another.
- There are two principal types of social mobility—horizontal and vertical. By horizontal social mobility is meant the transition of an individual or a social object from one social position to another situated on the same level.
- When there is a change in the social position of an individual or a group or a social object because of mobility, we call it vertical social mobility.
- The Santhals of central India, distributed over the states of Jharkhand, Odisha and West Bengal, have witnessed social mobility in some areas.
- Despite conceptual differences, in terms of operational realities, it is difficult to see the tribes, the castes and the peasants as disjointed or compartmentalized categories; it would be prudent to view them in terms of a continuum.
- A society is not a static reality. It changes over time. There are various factors affecting this change. These factors may vary from society to society. The study

NOTES

NOTES

of these factors give us an idea about the process of social change in different societies.

- Many tribal communities received the profound impact of 'Hinduization' due to their interaction with the neighbouring Hindu peasants, thus, elevating their social position to the Hindu castes. But it is also true that in some tribal pockets the reverse trend of caste Hindus adopting tribal customs and rituals have been noticed. This may be known as the process of 'tribalization' of the castes.
- Detribalization is the process of tribal cultures losing their cultural identities in favour of another culture.
- Besides religion, locational proximity and the pressure exerted by larger organized groups are said to be the major factors of detribalization.
- Re-tribalization is an exercise towards identity reinforcement among some of the tribal communities of India, which had previously undergone the process of detribalization.
- The term Sanskritization has been coined by M. N. Srinivas, a distinguished Indian sociologist. This term has been used to symbolize the process by which the people of the lower castes in the caste hierarchy emulate the behaviour and practices of the upper castes to seek social mobility.

4.4 KEY TERMS

- **Function:** It refers to the activities performed by a culture or a social institution, such as family and marriage for the maintenance of that society or culture.
- **Functionalism:** It is a theory about the nature of mental states. According to functionalism, mental states are identified by what they do rather than by what they are made of.
- **Structuralism:** It is the perspective which argues that meaning is only revealed through the relation between things.
- **Organization:** In sociology 'organization' is understood as planned, coordinated and purposeful action of human beings to construct or compile a common tangible or intangible product or services.
- **Phratry:** It is a grouping of clans or other social units within a tribe.
- **Social mobility:** It stands for change in the position of an individual or a group of individuals from one status to another.
- **Horizontal social mobility:** By horizontal social mobility is meant the transition of an individual or a social object from one social position to another situated on the same level.
- **Vertical social mobility:** When there is a change in the social position of an individual or a group or a social object because of mobility, we call it vertical social mobility.
- **Detribalization:** It is the process of tribal cultures losing their cultural identities in favour of another culture.
- **Re-tribalization:** It is an exercise towards identity reinforcement among some of the tribal communities of India, which had previously undergone the process of detribalization.

4.5 ANSWERS TO ‘CHECK YOUR PROGRESS’

14. The concept of social structure has a long history in the social sciences. It goes back to the writings of Herbert Spencer, the class structure analysis of Karl Marx or the 19th century work of Georg Simmel.
15. During the 19th century, the word ‘structure’ came to be used in biology. There, it referred to a combination of connected and interdependent parts that make up an organism.
16. The British social anthropologist, A. R. Radcliffe-Brown’s name is associated with the ‘structural-functional approach’ in the analysis of the structure of society.
17. In anthropological, sociological and tribal studies, function refers to the activities performed by a culture or a social institution, such as family and marriage for the maintenance of that society or culture.
18. In sociology ‘organization’ is understood as a planned, coordinated and purposeful action of human beings to construct or compile a common tangible or intangible product or services.
19. Social mobility stands for change in the position of an individual or a group of individuals from one status to another.
20. There are two principal types of social mobility—horizontal and vertical.
21. The modern factors of social transformation are due to the processes of Christianization, urbanization, industrialization, tribal development programmes, spread of communication, modern education, democratization, and so on, which have direct bearing on tribal cultures.
22. A continuum is nothing but a scale, on which tribes, castes and peasants are located, due to the overlapping of their values and ideal behaviours.
23. Detribalization is the process of tribal cultures losing their cultural identities in favour of another culture.
24. Besides religion, locational proximity and the pressure exerted by larger organized groups are said to be the major factors of detribalization.
25. Re-tribalization is an exercise towards identity reinforcement among some of the tribal communities of India, which had previously undergone the process of detribalization.
26. A prominent example of Sanskritization is the implementation of vegetarianism by members of a community belonging to the low castes who are traditionally not opposed to non-vegetarian food. This change was brought about through the emulation of the practice of *dvija*, the twice-born castes.

NOTES

4.6 QUESTIONS AND EXERCISES

Short-Answer Questions

11. What is a structure? Describe the use of the term structure as it was used before its appearance in social sciences.
12. How does the Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary define structure?

NOTES

13. What does the term 'social morphology' mean as used by Durkheim?
14. Write a note on the segmentary social structure.
15. What is the concept of dyadic relations introduced by Radcliffe-Brown?
16. What is the meaning of social structure according to Evans-Pritchard? How does she differ from Radcliff-Brown?
17. Why has functionalism been criticized by various scholars?
18. How is the tribal society of India organized?
19. State the differences between tribes and castes.
20. Write short notes on the following giving examples:
 - (i) Tribalization
 - (ii) Detribalization
 - (iii) Sanskritization

Long-Answer Questions

10. Discuss the concept and the history of the concept of social structure.
11. Explain the concept of social structure with reference to segmentary social structure and social roles.
12. Assess the contrasting approaches of Radcliffe-Brown and Claude Lévi-Strauss to social structure.
13. 'Functionalism was a dominant theory in the British and American anthropology and sociology.' Discuss.
14. Critically analyse the relationship between social structure and social organization.
15. Describe the concept of social mobility.
16. Evaluate the concept of social mobility among the tribes and castes.
17. Describe social processes such as tribalization, detribalization, re-tribalization and Sanskritization with regard to tribal studies.
18. Discuss how Sanskritization works in raising the social position of some tribes to the level of Hindu castes. Discuss how the tribes achieve that.

4.7 FURTHER READING

- Beteille, A. 1975. *Six Essays in Comparative Sociology*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Beteille, A. 1992. *Society and Politics in India: Essays in a Comparative Perspective*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Mibang, Tamo and M. C. Behera (ed). 2007. *Tribal Studies: Emerging Frontiers of Knowledge*. New Delhi: Mittal Publications.
- Gandhi, Malli. 2008. *Denotified Tribes: Dimensions of Change*. New Delhi: Kanishka Publishers.
- Devy, G. N.; Davis, Geoffrey V. and Chakravarty, K. K (ed.). 2011. *Voice and Memory: Indigenous Imagination and Expression*. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan.

Indigenous Imagination and Expression. Hyderabad: Orient Blackswan.




**INSTITUTE
OF DISTANCE
EDUCATION** **IDE**
Rajiv Gandhi University

Institute of Distance Education Rajiv Gandhi University

A Central University

Rono Hills, Arunachal Pradesh

Contact us:

 +91-98638 68890

 Ide Rgu

 Ide Rgu

 helpdesk.ide@rgu.ac.in