

ANANTAM IAS • OPTIONAL NOTES

Anthropology Optional Emergence and Growth of Anthropology in India; The Indian Village

Paper 2 • Unit 4

How anthropology in India moved from the census-taker's list to the fieldworker's village, who built that shift, and what they got right about caste, tribe and the minority.

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UPSC SYLLABUS

5.1 Emergence, growth and development of anthropology in India: contributions of the 18th, 19th and early 20th century scholar-administrators; contributions of Indian anthropologists to tribal and caste studies. 5.2 Indian village: significance of village study in India; the Indian village as a social system; traditional and changing patterns of settlement and inter-caste relations; agrarian relations; impact of globalization on Indian villages. 5.3 Linguistic and religious minorities and their social, political and economic status.

The Three Phases: Vidyarthi's Periodization

The whole unit hangs on one framework. L.P. Vidyarthi, in 'Rise of Anthropology in India' (1976), divided the discipline's Indian career into three periods, and the periodization is not just chronology: it tracks a shift from the outsider's classification to the insider's fieldwork, from book-view to field-view.

- Formative period, which Vidyarthi dates 1774 to 1919: anthropology done by colonial administrators, missionaries and army officers, not by trained anthropologists. The work was descriptive and classificatory, an inventory of castes and tribes gathered to govern them. Its institutional anchor was the Asiatic Society, founded at Calcutta by Sir William Jones in 1784.
- Constructive period, 1920 to 1949: anthropology becomes a university discipline staffed by Indians. Postgraduate teaching began at the University of Calcutta in 1920, the first department in India. S.C. Roy is the central figure and his journal 'Man in India' (1921) is the marker. The concern was to build a professional, monographic tradition on Indian material.
- Analytical period, 1950 onward: field-based, theory-building anthropology by Indians trained in India and abroad. Concepts are generated from Indian data, not borrowed wholesale, and the village replaces the tribe as the flagship object. M.N. Srinivas, with Sanskritization and dominant caste, is the emblem.
- The through-line is method. The formative phase worked from the book, the questionnaire and the anthropometric caliper, an outsider ordering a population. The analytical phase works from the field, from participant observation, an insider interpreting a way of life. Srinivas named exactly this contrast as book-view versus field-view.
- Two institutional landmarks bridge the phases: the Anthropological Survey of India, established in 1945 with B.S. Guha as first director, still the only state anthropological survey of its kind in the world; and the journal culture, from Roy's 'Man in India' (1921) to D.N. Majumdar's 'The Eastern Anthropologist' (1947).

Vidyarthi's three phases of anthropology in India

Phase	Dates	Who did it	Character	Emblematic figure or marker
Formative	1774-1919	Colonial administrators, missionaries, surveyors	Descriptive, classificatory, done to govern; book-view	Risley's 'The People of India' (1908); the census
Constructive	1920-1949	First professional Indian anthropologists	University-based, monographic, tribe-focused	S.C. Roy and 'Man in India' (1921); Calcutta dept (1920)
Analytical	1950 onward	Fieldwork-trained Indian anthropologists	Theory-building from Indian data; field-view; village-focused	M.N. Srinivas; Sanskritization; village studies

KEY TERMS

Book-view vs field-view — Srinivas's contrast: knowledge of Indian society derived from classical texts and the observer's categories versus knowledge derived from direct fieldwork among living people. The analytical phase is the victory of the second.

Scholar-administrator — The colonial official who doubled as ethnographer, gathering caste and tribe data as an instrument of rule; the characteristic producer of the formative phase.

The Formative Phase: The Colonial Ethnographers

The point to make is not that these men were amateurs, but that they produced the tribe and caste as objects to be counted, ranked and administered. Their surveys are still mined for data, and their errors, especially the racial ones, still have to be argued against.

- H.H. Risley is the towering and the most criticized figure. 'The Tribes and Castes of Bengal' (1891) and 'The People of India' (1908) built a racial classification of the Indian population into seven physical types. As Census Commissioner for 1901 he made the census rank castes by social precedence, turning enumeration into an official hierarchy.
- Risley's signature and discredited idea is the nasal index: he claimed the social status of a group varies inversely with the width of its nose, so that the higher the caste the finer the nose, reading caste rank off physical type. This correlation of race with caste is the position modern Indian anthropology defines itself against.
- Edgar Thurston, 'Castes and Tribes of Southern India' (seven volumes, 1909), Superintendent of the Madras Government Museum, extended the same anthropometric, encyclopaedic method to the south.
- Edward Tuite Dalton, 'Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal' (1872), and R.V. Russell, 'The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India' (1916), and William Crooke, 'The Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces and Oudh' (1896), and R.E. Enthoven for Bombay, produced the great provincial castes-and-tribes compendia. These are gazetteer anthropology: exhaustive lists, thin on analysis.
- The census itself was the largest ethnographic instrument. Successive commissioners theorized as they counted: J.H. Hutton, Census Commissioner for 1931, later wrote 'Caste in India' (1946) and monographs on the Sema and Angami Nagas, work that already straddles the formative and constructive phases.
- The honest verdict, and the one an examiner rewards: the colonial ethnographers gave Indian anthropology an enormous factual archive and its first institutions, but they framed Indians through race and hierarchy, in categories built for administration. The discipline's later work is in large part a correction of theirs.

KEY TERMS

Nasal index — Risley's ratio of the breadth to the height of the nose, used to sort the population into races and to claim a physical basis for caste rank; now rejected as pseudo-science.

Ethnographic state — The idea, associated with later critics like Nicholas Dirks, that the colonial state governed India by classifying it, so that caste as we know it was partly hardened by the census and the survey.

The Constructive Phase: S.C. Roy and the Making of Indian Ethnography

This phase turns anthropology from an administrative by-product into a vocation. Its founding figure is a Ranchi lawyer who became the first Indian to do sustained, first-hand tribal ethnography, and who is

remembered as the father of Indian ethnography.

- Sarat Chandra Roy, a practising lawyer at Ranchi, produced the first serious Indian monographs on the tribes of Chotanagpur: 'The Mundas and Their Country' (1912), 'The Oraons of Chota Nagpur' (1915), 'Oraon Religion and Customs' (1928) and 'The Birhors' (1925). He is called the father of Indian ethnography because he replaced the compiler's list with the fieldworker's monograph.
- Roy founded 'Man in India' in 1921, the oldest anthropological journal in India and still published, giving the emerging discipline a permanent Indian forum rather than dependence on colonial or European outlets.
- Roy's method mattered as much as his data. As a lawyer he sat in courts and land settlements where tribal custom was contested, so his ethnography is close to lived tribal law and land tenure, not to the questionnaire. His account of Munda khuntkatti tenure fed directly into protective legislation.
- The institutional scaffolding of the phase: the department at Calcutta (1920), followed by teaching and research centres at Lucknow, Delhi and elsewhere; the shift from the gifted administrator to the university-trained specialist.
- The constructive phase is tribe-heavy for a reason. The tribe was the classic anthropological subject, the small-scale society amenable to holistic study, and India's tribal populations offered exactly that. Caste and village came into their own only in the analytical phase.

KEY TERMS

Man in India — The journal S.C. Roy founded in 1921, the oldest Indian anthropology journal, the institutional marker of the constructive phase.

Monograph — The intensive, single-community study based on first-hand fieldwork; Roy's Munda and Oraon works were the first Indian examples and set the form for the discipline.

The Analytical Phase: The Founders and What Each Contributed

This is the section examiners test hardest, because the temptation is to blur five founders into one paragraph of praise. Do the opposite: pin each to a specific concept, book and stance. Getting the attribution exactly right is the whole game here.

- G.S. Govind Sadashiv Ghurye, at Bombay, is the father of Indian sociology and a bridge into anthropology. 'Caste and Race in India' (1932) took on Risley directly: caste is sustained not by race but by endogamy and other mechanisms, so Ghurye replaced a racial explanation with a social one while conceding a racial element in origins. Trained under W.H.R. Rivers at Cambridge, he carried a diffusionist streak. On tribes he is the assimilationist: tribes are backward Hindus who should be absorbed, the position argued in 'The Aborigines So-Called and Their Future' (1943). He founded the Indian Sociological Society (1951) and the journal 'Sociological Bulletin'.
- N.K. Nirmal Kumar Bose, Gandhi's secretary and later Director of the Anthropological Survey of India, worked on Indian civilization as a whole. 'The Hindu Method of Tribal Absorption' (1941), based on the Juang of Odisha, is his key idea: Hindu society absorbed tribes not by conquest but by offering a secure occupational niche within the caste order, so the tribe entered as a caste and traded autonomy for subsistence security. He also wrote on temple architecture ('Canons of Orissan Architecture') and on the city ('Calcutta 1964: A Social Survey').
- D.N. Dharendra Nath Majumdar, at Lucknow, combined physical and social anthropology. 'A Tribe in Transition' (1937), on the Ho of Bihar, is a landmark study of tribal culture change, and 'The Affairs of a Tribe' developed it. He wrote 'Races and Cultures of India' and studied caste in a village near Lucknow

(Mohana). He carried serological and anthropometric interests, and founded the Ethnographic and Folk Culture Society and its journal 'The Eastern Anthropologist' (1947).

- Iravati Karve, at Deccan College, Pune, was India's first woman anthropologist and its foremost scholar of kinship. 'Kinship Organization in India' (1953) mapped India into regional kinship zones, northern, southern, central and eastern, each with a distinctive system, the definitive Indian statement on the subject. She trained under Ghurye and took a doctorate in Germany in physical anthropology. 'Yuganta' (1967), her humane rereading of Mahabharata characters, won the Sahitya Akademi Award and shows anthropology turned on India's own texts.
- M.N. Mysore Narasimhachar Srinivas is the analytical phase in one person. 'Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India' (1952) produced Sanskritization, the process by which a lower caste takes over the rituals, beliefs and lifestyle of a higher, usually twice-born, caste to raise its status. 'The Remembered Village' (1976), on Rampura, is the classic Indian field monograph. He gave the discipline dominant caste, Westernization, and the book-view versus field-view contrast. Trained under Ghurye, then under Radcliffe-Brown and Evans-Pritchard at Oxford, he brought British structural-functionalism to Indian fieldwork.
- Read them as a division of labour, not a hierarchy: Ghurye on caste and the assimilation of tribes, Bose on tribal absorption and civilization, Majumdar on tribal culture change and physical anthropology, Karve on kinship regions, Srinivas on caste mobility and the village. Together they moved anthropology from describing Indians to theorizing India.

The analytical-phase founders: who said what

Scholar	Base	Signature work	Signature concept or contribution
G.S. Ghurye	Bombay	Caste and Race in India (1932)	Caste rests on endogamy, not race; assimilationist 'backward Hindus' view of tribes; founded Indian Sociological Society
N.K. Bose	Calcutta; Anthropological Survey of India	The Hindu Method of Tribal Absorption (1941)	Tribes absorbed into caste society by an offered occupational niche, not by force; Indian civilization studies
D.N. Majumdar	Lucknow	A Tribe in Transition (1937)	Tribal culture change; blend of physical and social anthropology; founded The Eastern Anthropologist
Iravati Karve	Deccan College, Pune	Kinship Organization in India (1953)	Regional kinship zones of India; first woman anthropologist; anthropology of Indian texts (Yuganta)
M.N. Srinivas	Baroda; Delhi; Bangalore	Religion and Society among the Coorgs (1952); The Remembered Village (1976)	Sanskritization, dominant caste, Westernization, field-view

KEY TERMS

Sanskritization — Srinivas's term for a low or middle caste raising its position by adopting the customs, rituals and ideology of a higher, twice-born caste; a form of positional, not structural, mobility.

Dominant caste — Srinivas's concept for the caste that commands a village through numerical strength, land, political and ritual standing, and later education and jobs; the pivot of village power.

The Indian Village: Significance and the Village-Studies Tradition

Why the village became the unit of Indian social anthropology, and why that choice was immediately contested, is the substance here. The village studies of the 1950s are where field-view arrived in force.

- The colonial image was of the village as a self-sufficient, unchanging little republic. Charles Metcalfe's 1830 minute called Indian villages little republics; Henry Maine ('Village Communities in the East and West', 1871), Baden-Powell ('The Indian Village Community', 1896) and Karl Marx's picture of the static, isolated village community all shared this book-view: the village as autonomous, timeless, self-contained.
- The 1950s village studies overturned that picture through fieldwork. The village emerged as neither isolated (tied into wider caste, market and state networks) nor static (visibly changing) nor a republic (internally stratified by caste and land). This is the empirical foundation of modern Indian anthropology.
- The landmark collections and monographs: M.N. Srinivas (ed.), 'India's Villages' (1955); McKim Marriott (ed.), 'Village India' (1955); S.C. Dube, 'Indian Village' (1955), on Shamirpet near Hyderabad, and 'India's Changing Villages' (1958); Oscar Lewis, 'Village Life in Northern India' (1958), on Rampur near Delhi, which gave the concept of faction; William Wiser's earlier 'The Hindu Jajmani System' (1936).
- McKim Marriott's contribution was conceptual. Applying Robert Redfield's little tradition and great tradition to Kishangarhi, he coined universalization, the upward spread of a local practice into the pan-Indian Sanskritic tradition, and parochialization, the downward absorption of a Sanskritic element into local form. The two traditions constantly feed each other.
- The significance of village studies is threefold: they established participant observation as the Indian method, moving the discipline decisively from book-view to field-view; they made the village the laboratory for studying caste, jajmani, factions and change; and they gave empirical content to Gandhi's claim that India lives in her villages, treating the village as a microcosm of Indian civilization.
- The village was never the whole of India, and the studies knew it. They took the village as a convenient, bounded field site, a window on caste and agrarian society, not as a claim that Indian society is fundamentally village-shaped. That distinction is exactly what the next debate turned on.

KEY TERMS

Little and great tradition — Redfield's pair, applied to India by Marriott and others: the local, folk, oral tradition of the village and the reflective, textual, pan-Indian Sanskritic tradition, in constant two-way exchange.

Universalization and parochialization — Marriott's twin processes: a local rite rising into the great tradition, and a Sanskritic element descending and taking local colour. The mechanism of interaction between the two traditions.

Jajmani system — The hereditary, patron-client exchange in which service castes (kamin) serve landholding patrons (jajman) for customary payment in grain; the economic spine of the traditional village, described by W.H. Wiser.

The Indian Village as a Social System: Structure and Change

Is the village a real sociological unit at all, or just a place where the real units, caste and kinship, happen to meet? This debate, and the account of how the village has actually changed, is the core of 5.2.

- The village-as-unit debate is the set piece. Louis Dumont and David Pocock, in the first volume of 'Contributions to Indian Sociology' (1957), argued that the village is not a sociological unit but a mere collection of people: the institutions that structure Indian society, caste and kinship, transcend the village, so to take the village as the object is to mistake the field site for the structure.

- Srinivas answered that the village has a reality of its own. Against the trans-village institutions he set the vertical unity of the village, its solidarity and patriotism, the many-caste cooperation in agriculture, festival and dispute that binds residents across caste lines. His concept of the dominant caste explains how one caste integrates a village politically. The village is not the ultimate structure, but it is not a mirage either.
- Dumont pushed his own line to its logical end in 'Homo Hierarchicus' (1966): caste, organized by the opposition of purity and pollution, is the encompassing ideology of Indian society, and it is trans-local by definition. This is book-view structuralism, and it is the standing rival to the field-view village studies.
- The traditional structure, as the studies found it: a caste hierarchy anchored in landholding; the jajmani economy of hereditary service relations paid in kind; the joint family; factions cutting across caste (Lewis); and a dominant caste holding it together. Land, caste and ritual were broadly congruent.
- The forces of change, and this is what recent questions want: land reform (abolition of intermediaries, weak tenancy and ceiling laws); the Green Revolution, which commercialized agriculture and sharpened class differences among cultivators; universal adult franchise and Panchayati Raj (from the Balwantrai Mehta report and 1959 onward, entrenched by the 73rd Amendment in 1992), which introduced vote-bank politics; the spread of the cash economy, education, migration and the decline of jajmani.
- The theoretical readings of that change: Srinivas's Sanskritization and Westernization as the two idioms of mobility; Andre Beteille's 'Caste, Class and Power' (1965), on Sripuram in Tanjore, showing caste, class and power once congruent and now dissociating; Yogendra Singh's 'Modernization of Indian Tradition' (1973) synthesizing tradition and modernity.
- Globalization is the current layer. Contract farming, agrarian distress and farmer suicides, out-migration to cities, MGNREGA, mobile phones and cash transfers, and the reach of markets and media have loosened the village's economic self-containment further, even as caste and kin networks persist and often reorganize rather than dissolve.
- The examiner-safe synthesis: the village is a useful unit of observation and has real internal solidarities, but it is not the fundamental unit of Indian social structure; caste and kinship are trans-village, and the village today is an open, changing node in wider agrarian, political and global networks.

The village as a sociological unit: the two positions

Position	Chief exponent	Claim	Weakness
The village is not the unit	Dumont and Pocock, Contributions to Indian Sociology (1957); Dumont, Homo Hierarchicus (1966)	Caste and kinship transcend the village; the village is a mere collection of people; caste is the encompassing structure	Book-view; underrates the observed vertical solidarities and the village's real political life
The village has a reality	M.N. Srinivas; village-studies tradition	Vertical unity, village solidarity and patriotism, dominant-caste integration make the village a working social system	The village is not the ultimate structure; caste is indeed trans-local, as Dumont says

KEY TERMS

Vertical unity of the village — Srinivas's phrase for the cross-caste solidarity, cooperation and shared identity that make the village a working whole, set against the horizontal, trans-village solidarity of caste.

Faction — Oscar Lewis's concept from Rampur: a vertical, leader-centred political grouping that cuts across caste lines within a village, the informal unit of village politics.

Linguistic Minorities: Status and Safeguards

India's linguistic plurality is the deepest of its diversities, and the state's response, reorganizing itself on language and then protecting those left in a minority, is what 5.3 asks about on the linguistic side.

- The scale: George Abraham Grierson's 'Linguistic Survey of India' (1898-1928) recorded 179 languages and 544 dialects, the first systematic mapping. The census groups India's many mother tongues under four families: Indo-Aryan (roughly three-quarters of speakers), Dravidian (about a fifth), Austro-Asiatic (Austic) and Tibeto-Burman (Sino-Tibetan), with Andamanese as a residue. The Eighth Schedule of the Constitution now recognizes 22 scheduled languages, up from the original 14.
- A linguistic minority is a group whose mother tongue differs from the principal language of the state or region it lives in, so the category is relational: a Tamil speaker is a linguistic minority in Karnataka, a Kannada speaker in Tamil Nadu. Minority status is defined at the state level, not the national.
- The states were reorganized on language. The demand, dramatized by the death of Potti Sriramulu and the creation of Andhra in 1953, led to the States Reorganisation Commission (Fazl Ali, 1953-55) and the States Reorganisation Act 1956, which redrew India's internal map along linguistic lines. This created linguistic majorities in each state and, necessarily, linguistic minorities within them.
- The constitutional safeguards: Article 29 protects the right of any section with a distinct language, script or culture to conserve it; Article 30 gives religious and linguistic minorities the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice; Article 350A provides for instruction in the mother tongue at the primary stage; Article 350B, inserted by the Seventh Amendment (1956), created the Special Officer, the Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities, to safeguard these rights and report to the President.
- The socio-economic and political stakes: mother-tongue instruction and the three-language formula in schooling; access to administration and courts in one's language; the sons-of-the-soil and domicile pressures that fall on internal linguistic migrants; and identity assertion, since language in India is a primary marker of community and a live axis of politics.
- The anthropological angle, not just the civics: language maps onto ethnicity, region and often tribe, so linguistic minority status frequently overlaps with religious or tribal minority status, compounding disadvantage. The Austro-Asiatic and Tibeto-Burman speakers, largely tribal, are linguistic minorities twice over, in their state and in the national linguistic order.

KEY TERMS

Eighth Schedule — The constitutional list of scheduled languages, now 22, that carry official recognition and claims on state promotion; originally 14, expanded by amendment (for example Bodo, Dogri, Maithili and Santhali in 2004).

Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities — The Special Officer under Article 350B, created by the Seventh Amendment (1956), charged with investigating safeguards for linguistic minorities and reporting to the President.

Religious Minorities: Status and the Anthropological Question

The religious-minority half of 5.3 needs both the constitutional map and the anthropological observation that no religious community in India is a sealed unit: caste, region and syncretism run through all of them.

- The legal definition is administrative, not doctrinal. Under the National Commission for Minorities Act (1992), the Union has notified six religious minorities: Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Zoroastrians (Parsis) and, added in 2014, Jains. As with Scheduled Tribes, the category is a notified list, and inclusion carries entitlements, so it is fought over.

- The demographic frame, from Census 2011: Hindus about 79.8 per cent, Muslims about 14.2 per cent, Christians about 2.3 per cent, Sikhs about 1.7 per cent, Buddhists about 0.7 per cent, Jains about 0.4 per cent. Parsis are a tiny and declining community, estimated around 57,000. Treat the smaller figures as census estimates, not fixed facts.
- The constitutional protections: Articles 25 to 28 guarantee freedom of conscience and the free profession, practice and propagation of religion; Articles 29 and 30 protect minorities' cultural and educational rights, including minority-run institutions; Articles 15 and 16 bar discrimination on grounds of religion.
- The anthropological point that a good answer makes: religious minorities are internally stratified, not homogeneous. Imtiaz Ahmad's edited volumes, beginning with 'Caste and Social Stratification among Muslims in India' (1973), showed caste-like ranking among Indian Muslims (ashraf, ajlaf, arzal), and comparable stratification runs through Christian and Sikh communities. Conversion did not erase caste.
- Syncretism and acculturation are the second anthropological theme: shared shrines, saints and festivals, the veneration of Sufi dargahs by Hindus and Muslims alike, and the local absorption of practices across the religious line. Religious identity in India is layered, not sealed, which is why the minority is best studied as a lived community and not only as a legal category.
- The socio-economic status question rests on evidence. The Sachar Committee (2006) documented that Muslims, the largest minority, lag on most development indicators, in some respects below the Scheduled Castes and Tribes, on education, formal employment and access to credit. Cite Sachar as the authoritative official finding when arguing that minority status and socio-economic disadvantage overlap.
- The safe synthesis: religious minorities in India enjoy strong constitutional protection of faith and of cultural and educational autonomy, but legal protection and socio-economic security do not coincide; the anthropologist adds that these communities are stratified and syncretic, so they cannot be read as uniform blocs.

KEY TERMS

Notified religious minority — A community declared a minority by Union notification under the National Commission for Minorities Act (1992); six are notified, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Parsis and Jains (2014).

Ashraf, ajlaf, arzal — The three-tier ranking found among Indian Muslims (high-born, converted middle, and the lowest), documented by Imtiaz Ahmad; evidence that caste-like stratification survives conversion.

Last-mile revision

- Vidyarthi's three phases: formative (1774-1919, colonial administrators, book-view), constructive (1920-1949, S.C. Roy, professionalization), analytical (1950 on, Srinivas, field-view). The arc is book-view to field-view.
- Formative phase: Risley (nasal index, racial caste theory, 1901 census ranking), Thurston (south India), Dalton, Russell, Crooke, Enthoven (provincial castes-and-tribes compendia). An archive built to govern.
- S.C. Roy, father of Indian ethnography: first Indian tribal monographs (Mundas 1912, Oraons 1915, Birhors 1925) and 'Man in India' (1921). Anthropological Survey of India founded 1945 under B.S. Guha.
- Ghurye: caste rests on endogamy not race (Caste and Race in India, 1932); tribes are 'backward Hindus', assimilate. Bose: Hindu method of tribal absorption via an occupational niche.
- Majumdar: tribal culture change (A Tribe in Transition, 1937), physical plus social anthropology, The Eastern Anthropologist. Karve: regional kinship zones (Kinship Organization in India, 1953), first woman anthropologist, Yuganta.
- Srinivas: Sanskritization and dominant caste (Coorgs, 1952), The Remembered Village (1976), Westernization, field-view versus book-view.
- Village studies (1950s): India's Villages (Srinivas, 1955), Village India (Marriott, 1955), Indian Village (Dube, Shamirpet), Village Life in Northern India (Lewis, faction). They killed the self-sufficient-republic myth.
- Marriott: little and great tradition, universalization (local rite rises) and parochialization (Sanskritic element descends). Wiser: the jajmani system.
- Village-as-unit debate: Dumont and Pocock (1957) say the village is a mere collection of people, caste and kinship transcend it; Srinivas answers with the vertical unity and dominant caste. Safe verdict: real field site, not the ultimate structure.
- Change in the village: land reform, Green Revolution, Panchayati Raj (73rd Amendment 1992), franchise and factions, decline of jajmani, globalization. Beteille's Sripuram: caste, class and power dissociating.
- Linguistic minorities: four language families, 22 Eighth Schedule languages; States Reorganisation Act 1956; safeguards in Articles 29, 30, 350A, and Article 350B (Commissioner for Linguistic Minorities).
- Religious minorities: six notified (Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists, Parsis, Jains-2014) under the NCM Act 1992; Articles 25-30. Anthropology adds internal caste stratification (Imtiaz Ahmad) and syncretism; Sachar (2006) on Muslim disadvantage.

Common errors to avoid

- Blurring the three phases or misdating them. The formative phase is 1774-1919 (Vidyarthi), constructive 1920-1949, analytical 1950 onward. The dividing line is book-view versus field-view.
- Crediting Risley with a sound idea. The nasal index and the race-equals-caste theory are exactly what modern Indian anthropology rejects; cite him as the position to argue against, not as authority.
- Confusing the founders. Sanskritization and dominant caste are Srinivas; the Hindu method of tribal absorption is Bose; regional kinship zones are Karve; A Tribe in Transition is Majumdar; Caste and Race in India is Ghurye. Swapping these is the costliest error in the unit.
- Calling Ghurye an anthropologist of tribes who wanted to protect them. Ghurye is the assimilationist: tribes are backward Hindus to be absorbed. Do not confuse his stance with Elwin's or Nehru's.
- Saying the colonial village really was a self-sufficient little republic. That is the book-view (Metcalf, Maine, Marx) that the 1950s village studies disproved. The village was stratified, linked and changing.
- Attributing universalization and parochialization to Redfield. Redfield gave little and great tradition; Marriott coined universalization and parochialization for the Indian case.
- Treating the village-as-unit debate as settled for the village. Dumont and Pocock have the stronger structural point (caste and kinship are trans-village); Srinivas has the empirical point (the village has real solidarity). Present both.
- Writing that the states were reorganized on religion. The 1956 reorganization was linguistic (Fazl Ali Commission). Article 350B created the Commissioner for Linguistic, not religious, minorities.
- Listing five religious minorities and forgetting Jains, notified only in 2014, making six. And do not confuse the constitutional freedom-of-religion articles (25-28) with the minority cultural-educational articles (29-30).
- Presenting religious minorities as internally uniform. The anthropological value-add is precisely the opposite: caste-like stratification (Imtiaz Ahmad's ashraf-ajlaf-arzal) and syncretism run through them.
- Quoting minority population percentages as exact. They are Census 2011 estimates; the very small ones (Parsis, Jains) especially should be flagged as approximate.