

ANANTAM IAS · OPTIONAL NOTES

Sociology Optional Introducing Indian Society: Perspectives and the Colonial Impact

Paper 2 · Unit 1

The three founding lenses on Indian society, what each one sees and refuses to see, and how the colonial encounter produced both modern India and the categories we still use to describe it.

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UPSC SYLLABUS

A. Introducing Indian Society: (i) Perspectives on the study of Indian society: (a) Indology (G.S. Ghurye). (b) Structural functionalism (M N Srinivas). (c) Marxist sociology (A R Desai). (ii) Impact of colonial rule on Indian society: (a) Social background of Indian nationalism. (b) Modernization of Indian tradition. (c) Protests and movements during the colonial period. (d) Social reforms.

Indology as an Approach, and G.S. Ghurye's Version of It

Indology treats Indian society as a civilization whose organizing ideas are recoverable from its texts. The claim is not that texts describe behaviour, but that they encode the normative order that behaviour orbits. G.S. Ghurye, first head of the Department of Sociology at Bombay (1924), founder of the Indian Sociological Society (1951) and its journal Sociological Bulletin (1952), built Indian sociology on this premise and trained a generation, including M.N. Srinivas and A.R. Desai, who then broke with him.

- Ghurye went to Cambridge in 1920 to work under W.H.R. Rivers, the diffusionist; Rivers died in 1922 and the thesis was completed under A.C. Haddon. It was published as 'Caste and Race in India' (1932). The diffusionist training explains why Ghurye reads Indian history as waves of cultural contact and absorption rather than as internal contradiction.
- Method: systematic reading of Sanskrit sources (Vedas, Brahmanas, Upanishads, Smritis, Puranas, epics) plus epigraphy, iconography, architecture and, in the caste work, Risley's anthropometric data. Ghurye is not a pure textualist: he is a comparative culture historian who uses texts as his archive.
- Range of the corpus shows the ambition: 'Caste and Race in India' (1932), 'The Aborigines So-Called and Their Future' (1943), 'Indian Costume' (1951), 'Indian Sadhus' (1953), 'Family and Kin in Indo-European Culture' (1955), 'Gods and Men' (1962), 'Social Tensions in India' (1968), 'Rajput Architecture'.
- Ghurye's thesis about India: Hinduism is an assimilative civilization that absorbed tribes, sects and invaders into a single caste-ordered whole. Cultural unity, not political unity, is the fact to be explained; the Brahmins are the carriers of that unity.
- This is the 'book view'. Its unit is the pan-Indian tradition, its data is the normative order, its time-scale is millennia. The village, the field, the informant do not appear.
- Standard critique: prescriptive texts are read as descriptive society; the sources are overwhelmingly Brahmanical, so the Brahmanical account of India becomes India's account of itself; regional, oral, tribal, Dalit and Islamic material is thinned out; the assimilation story converts domination into integration.
- Sharper critique: Ghurye's writing on Hindu-Muslim relations and on tribes as absorbable Hindus has been read as Hindu nationalist in sensibility. Say this analytically in an answer, do not editorialize.
- Defence worth making: Indology is indispensable where the archive is textual and the question is about the ideology of an institution. Dumont, who is no Indologist of Ghurye's kind, still had to work through the texts to find the purity principle. The problem is not using texts; it is using only texts.

KEY TERMS

Indology — The study of Indian society through its classical texts and its civilizational history, treating written tradition as the key to the social order.

Book view — Knowledge of Indian society derived from scripture and text, as against the field view derived from observation of living communities.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS

- Differentiate between 'Western' and 'Indological' perspectives on the study of Indian society. Bring out the major aspects of G.S. Ghurye's contribution to 'Indological' approach. [2024, Paper II, Q2a, 20 marks]
- Critically examine G.S. Ghurye's Indological approach to the understanding of Indian society. [2022, Paper II, Q2a, 20 marks]
- Write a note on G.S. Ghurye's Indological perspective of understanding Indian society. [2018, Paper II, Q1a, 10 marks]
- Write short notes with a sociological perspective on the following in 150 words: G.S. Ghurye's Indological approach to understand society in India. [2014, Paper II, Q1a, 10 marks]

Ghurye on Caste and on Tribes

Ghurye's two most examinable substantive positions are his six features of caste and his verdict on tribes. Both follow from the assimilation thesis. Both are attacked from opposite directions, and knowing who attacks which is half the answer.

- Six features of caste, from 'Caste and Race in India' (1932): (1) segmental division of society, (2) hierarchy, (3) restrictions on feeding and social intercourse, (4) civil and religious disabilities and privileges of the different sections, (5) lack of unrestricted choice of occupation, (6) restrictions on marriage.
- Ghurye treats endogamy as the essence of caste: the other five features can loosen without the system dying, but the day marriage rules go, caste goes. Ambedkar reaches the same conclusion from the other end, arguing endogamy superimposed on a formerly exogamous population is the mechanism of caste.
- Origin: Ghurye locates caste in the Brahmanical urge to guard ritual and racial purity among the Indo-Aryans of the Gangetic plain, then radiating outward. He uses Risley's anthropometric data but rejects Risley's pan-Indian racial theory of caste, arguing that the correlation of caste rank with physical type holds in northern India and breaks down elsewhere. This qualification is what makes his position defensible and worth quoting.
- Tribes: Ghurye's 'The Aborigines So-Called and Their Future' (1943), retitled 'The Scheduled Tribes' in 1959, calls India's tribes 'imperfectly integrated classes of Hindu society', that is, backward Hindus at an earlier stage of the same absorption process, not a separate people.
- The policy fight this produces: Ghurye argues for assimilation, on the ground that tribes are already Hinduizing and that isolation freezes them in poverty. Verrier Elwin, especially in the 1930s and early 1940s, argued for protected space against exploitative contact, a position caricatured as the 'national park' idea. Elwin later moved substantially towards integration; do not present him as a lifelong isolationist.
- Nehru's 'Panchsheel' for tribes and the Constitution's Fifth and Sixth Schedules land closer to integration than to either pole. The isolation, assimilation and integration triad is a live examiner favourite.
- Critique of Ghurye on tribes: it dissolves a distinct political question (land, forest, autonomy, self-rule) into a cultural one (stage of Hinduization). It cannot explain why absorption arrived with dispossession, or why the Santhal, Munda and Bhil responses to it were armed. Marxists read tribal 'integration' as proletarianization. Assertion movements read it as erasure.
- Counterpoint worth carrying: the boundary between caste and tribe genuinely is porous in the field. Sinha's studies of Bhumij and Rajput status claims, and the general record of tribes becoming castes, show that Ghurye had hold of a real process even if he drew the wrong political conclusion from it.

KEY TERMS

Segmental division — Ghurye's term for the fact that caste society is composed of closed, bounded units with their own councils and membership by birth, not a continuum of ranks.

Imperfectly integrated classes of Hindu society — Ghurye's characterization of India's tribes: Hindus at an incomplete stage of absorption into caste society, not a distinct people.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS

- Write a note on Ghurye's conception of caste in India. [2019, Paper II, Q1d, 10 marks]
- Write short notes with a sociological perspective on the following in about 150 words: Features of caste system. [2014, Paper II, Q1a, 10 marks]

M.N. Srinivas: Structural Functionalism and the Field View

Srinivas moved the discipline's centre of gravity from the library to the village. Trained under Ghurye at Bombay, then at Oxford where Radcliffe-Brown and later Evans-Pritchard supervised him, he brought British social anthropology's fieldwork method to Indian material and found a society the texts had not predicted.

- Structural functionalism here means: look for the parts, ask what each does for the whole, expect the whole to be integrated. Srinivas's units are the village, the caste group, the ritual cycle. His question is how the system holds together and reproduces itself.
- 'Religion and Society among the Coorgs of South India' (1952), the Oxford doctorate, is the founding text. It gives the local ritual complex, the distinction between Sanskritic Hinduism and local or 'spread' cults, and the first use of Sanskritization. The 2019 paper asked for exactly this book.
- 'The Remembered Village' (1976), on Rampura in Mysore, was written from memory after his field notes burned at Stanford in 1970. This is not trivia: it is why the book reads as literature and why its method was contested. It is also the honest limit case of the field view.
- Institution builder: departments at MS University Baroda, the Delhi School of Economics, and the Institute for Social and Economic Change, Bangalore. Edited 'India's Villages' (1955), the collection that launched the village studies decade.
- Field view against book view: the texts give a four-varna, closed, immobile India. The field gives thousands of jatis, disputed ranks, groups climbing, a dominant caste that is not Brahmin, and a varna model that villagers themselves use to translate their local jati position. Srinivas said the varna model has distorted the picture of caste even as it supplies the vocabulary of mobility.
- The two views are not simply rivals. Srinivas's own concepts (Sanskritization, the great and little traditions his work engages) presuppose a textual tradition the field is oriented towards. A good answer says the field view corrected the book view's picture of a static society while remaining parasitic on it for the content of the model being copied.
- Standard critique of the structural functional lens: it converts conflict into function. Exploitation of the landless reads as interdependence; untouchability reads as ritual complementarity; the observer's upper-caste access reads as the village's own view. Berreman's point applies: the hierarchy looks consensual from the top of it.
- Marxist critique (Desai, Kathleen Gough): the village studies produce a caste-and-ritual India with no class, no state, no colonial economy and no history. The village is treated as an isolate at the exact moment it is being restructured by markets and planning.

- Dumont and Pocock's critique from the other side (Contributions to Indian Sociology, from 1957): Srinivas gives behaviour without ideology; the sociological unit is caste, not the village.

KEY TERMS

Field view — Knowledge of Indian society built from direct fieldwork in living communities, made canonical by Srinivas and the 1950s village studies.

Sanskritic and spread Hinduism — Srinivas's distinction between the all-India textual Hinduism and the local or regional cults actually practised, with the two continuously feeding each other.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS

- Elaborate on M.N. Srinivas's structural-functionalist approach to the study of Indian society. [2022, Paper II, Q1a, 10 marks]
- Elaborate Srinivas's views on religion and society among the Coorgs. [2019, Paper II, Q1a, 10 marks]
- Write a critique of the structural and functional perspective used by M.N. Srinivas in the understanding of Indian society. [2017, Paper II, Q1a, 10 marks]
- Caste System studies in India have been dominated by the 'book-view' initially. How did the entry of 'field-view' bring about a balance in the study of Indian caste system? Discuss. [2021, Paper II, Q1a, 10 marks]

Srinivas's Toolkit: Sanskritization, Westernization, Dominant Caste, Secularization

Four concepts, each a fieldwork finding turned into a general term, and each with a well-rehearsed critique. Examiners ask for the critique, not the definition. Note that all four are concepts of change produced by a theory of order, which is exactly where they strain.

- Sanskritization: the process by which a low Hindu caste, or a tribal or other group, changes its customs, ritual, ideology and way of life in the direction of a high and frequently twice-born caste. First offered as 'Brahminization' in the Coorg work, then widened when Srinivas found groups modelling themselves on Kshatriya, Vaishya and locally dominant non-Brahmin castes instead.
- The load-bearing claim: Sanskritization brings positional change, not structural change. A group moves up; the ladder is untouched. It is group mobility, not individual mobility, and it works only after the group has already secured land, numbers or political leverage. Ritual claims ratify power that has been won elsewhere; they do not create it.
- Critiques of Sanskritization: it describes rather than explains (Yogendra Singh); it is really a protest against low rank, not admiration of the Brahmin (Harold Gould); 'Sanskritic' is too heterogeneous to define a single model (Staal); it cannot handle non-Hindu, tribal or de-Sanskritizing cases; it carries a Brahmanical bias by treating the upper-caste model as the natural direction of travel; and after Mandal, Dalit and OBC assertion has more often rejected the upper-caste model than copied it.
- Westernization: the changes in Indian society and culture produced by roughly a century and a half of British rule, at the level of technology, institutions, ideology and values, with humanitarianism and rationalism at the core. Srinivas deliberately preferred it to 'modernization', which he found evaluative and ethnocentric.
- The elegant part: Sanskritization and Westernization interlock. Brahmins Westernized first, vacating the traditional model; non-Brahmins then Sanskritized into the space left behind. Change in one register drives change in the other.

- Dominant caste: introduced in 'The Social System of a Mysore Village' (1955) and elaborated in 'The Dominant Caste in Rampura' (1959). Criteria: numerical strength, economic power especially landholding, political power, a ritual status that is high though not necessarily highest, and later Western education and jobs in administration.
- Why it matters theoretically: it prises local power loose from ritual rank. The Okkaligas, Jats, Yadavs, Marathas, Reddys, Kammas and Patidars run their localities without being Brahmin. This is the empirical fact Dumont's purity-based hierarchy struggles with, and it is the bridge from Srinivas to Beteille.
- Critiques of dominant caste: it is a description of a power situation dressed as a concept; dominance is now fragmented and contested rather than concentrated in one caste per region; Green Revolution and electoral politics have made dominance economic and numerical rather than ritual; and Dumont objects that mixing status and power in one term loses the distinction his whole system rests on.
- Secularization: for Srinivas, the process by which ritual and religious considerations progressively lose their hold on conduct, with rationalization and differentiation following. His sharpest observation is that it does not cancel Sanskritization; pollution rules collapse on a crowded bus while caste consolidates as a political bloc. Secularization of practice can coexist with intensification of caste identity.
- Also from Srinivas, and often forgotten: the term 'vote bank' is his, coined in the 1955 Mysore village essay.

KEY TERMS

Sanskritization — A low caste, tribal or other group's adoption of the customs, ritual and ideology of a higher, usually twice-born caste, in order to claim a higher position.

Positional change — Movement of a group within a hierarchy that leaves the hierarchy itself intact, as against structural change which alters the system.

Dominant caste — A caste that preponderates numerically, owns the land, wields local political power and has a reasonably high ritual position, and so runs the village regardless of who ranks highest ritually.

Westernization — Srinivas's term for the changes in technology, institutions, ideology and values produced by British rule, marked centrally by humanitarianism and rationalism.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS

- Critically examine the concept of Sanskritization with suitable illustrations. [2023, Paper II, Q3c, 10 marks]
- Write short note with a sociological perspective: M.N. Srinivas's concept of westernisation. [2013, Paper II, Q1b, 10 marks]
- Write short note with a sociological perspective: How far Srinivas's Sanskritization is modernizing force or traditionalizing force in understanding the changes in caste system? [2015, Paper II, Q5e, 10 marks]

A.R. Desai: Marxist Sociology and the Social Background of Indian Nationalism

A.R. Desai, also a Ghurye student, rejected both his teacher's texts and Srinivas's villages. His question is not what India believes but who owns what, and his method is historical dialectical materialism. He was a lifelong Marxist of the Trotskyist tradition and wrote against the Indian state from the left throughout his career.

- 'Social Background of Indian Nationalism' (1948), his doctoral thesis under Ghurye, is the anchor text and the single most asked item on this syllabus line.
- Central claim: Indian nationalism is a modern phenomenon, not the reawakening of an ancient nation. It was produced by the material conditions British rule itself created, that is, a unified market, a common

administration and law, railways and the press, English education, and above all a new class structure of bourgeoisie, working class, intelligentsia and modern landlords. Colonialism forged the nation it then had to face.

- Five phases of Indian nationalism: (1) up to 1885, a thin, pro-British intelligentsia, the Rammohan Roy generation; (2) 1885 to 1905, the educated upper and middle class, moderate constitutional demands; (3) 1905 to 1918, the lower middle class enters, Swadeshi and extremism; (4) 1918 to 1934, a mass base under Gandhi, workers and peasants drawn in; (5) from the mid-1930s, a coalition of class forces with socialists and class organizations pulling inside the Congress.
- The dialectical reading of the movement: Congress is not a neutral vessel but a coalition in which the bourgeoisie's leadership shapes what the mass base is allowed to demand. Every phase is defined by which class enters and whose leadership contains it. That is what 'A.R. Desai's dialectical perspective' means when the paper asks for it.
- 'India's Path of Development: A Marxist Approach' (1984): India after 1947 took a capitalist path assisted by the state. The mixed economy is a description of who gets subsidized, not a third way. The Indian state is a bourgeois state serving capitalists and landlords, and the claim that it is a welfare state does not survive contact with the record on land, labour and civil liberties.
- The dissent corpus is not optional detail: 'State and Society in India: Essays in Dissent', 'Peasant Struggles in India' (1979), 'Agrarian Struggles in India after Independence' (1986), 'Violation of Democratic Rights in India'. Desai is the sociologist who made repression and democratic rights a sociological object.
- Desai on the village studies: they mistake a unit of administration for a unit of society, and describe ritual interdependence where there is surplus extraction. Desai's 'Rural Sociology in India' is deliberately built around agrarian class relations rather than around caste ritual.
- Critiques of Desai: economic determinism, with caste, religion and language read off the base; caste has an autonomy and a logic of its own that class analysis keeps missing, which is precisely Ambedkar's charge against the Indian left; the phase scheme is neat to the point of teleology; and the treatment of Gandhi as bourgeois leadership underrates the mass movement's own dynamics, which is the ground Subaltern Studies later occupied.
- Ranajit Guha's subaltern critique lands on the nationalist and colonialist historiographies alike, and by extension on any account that reads the peasant as a follower. In 'Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India' (1983) Guha argues insurgency is a conscious political act with its own grammar (negation, ambiguity, modality, solidarity, transmission, territoriality), and that there is an autonomous domain of subaltern politics that elite leadership never mobilized into being.

KEY TERMS

Historical dialectical materialism — Explanation of social change through the contradiction between forces and relations of production, worked out in concrete historical sequence rather than as abstract theory.

Autonomous domain of subaltern politics — Guha's claim that the politics of peasants and other subaltern groups had its own structure and initiative, independent of elite nationalist mobilization.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS

- Highlight the significant features of A.R. Desai's 'Dialectical Perspective' to study Indian Society. [2023, Paper II, Q1a, 10 marks]
- Elaborate A.R. Desai's perspective to the study of Indian society. [2020, Paper II, Q1a, 10 marks]
- Analyze A.R. Desai's views on India's path of development. [2018, Paper II, Q2a, 20 marks]
- Discuss Marxist approach to the analysis of Indian nationalism. [2015, Paper II, Q4a, 20 marks]
- Write short notes with a sociological perspective: Salient Features of A.R. Desai's Marxist Sociology. [2016, Paper II, Q1a, 10 marks]
- Give an account of Ranajit Guha's approach in studying 'subaltern class'. [2019, Paper II, Q3c, 10 marks]

The Three Perspectives Compared

Almost every question on this syllabus line is a comparison in disguise. The three men shared a teacher and a country and produced three incompatible Indias, because each fixed a different object as the real one: civilization, structure, and mode of production. Reproduce this grid from memory and the answer writes itself.

- The deepest disagreement is about what changes and what does not. For Ghurye the civilization persists and absorbs; for Srinivas the structure persists while groups move within it; for Desai the structure itself is the thing being torn up by capitalism.
- They also disagree about where the sociologist should stand. Ghurye stands in the archive, Srinivas in the village, Desai in the history of the state and the market. Each vantage makes something invisible: Ghurye cannot see practice, Srinivas cannot see exploitation, Desai cannot see ritual as a force in its own right.
- Do not treat them as a progression from bad to good. The field view corrected the book view but inherited its Brahmanical informants; the Marxist view corrected both on class but reimported a determinism the field data does not support.
- The productive move in an answer: show where two of them are needed to explain one fact. Sanskritization is unintelligible without the textual model Ghurye reconstructed, and it is unintelligible without the prior economic gain Desai would insist on. The concept sits on all three legs.

Indology, structural functionalism and Marxist sociology on Indian society

Dimension	Indology (G.S. Ghurye)	Structural functionalism (M.N. Srinivas)	Marxist sociology (A.R. Desai)
Data	Sanskrit texts, epigraphy, iconography, plus anthropometric material	Participant observation in villages, the field view	Colonial records, economic and agrarian data, class formation, state policy
Unit of analysis	Civilization and the pan-Indian tradition	Village, caste group, local structure	Mode of production, classes, the state
Caste is	A Brahmanical Indo-Aryan institution with six features, endogamy at its core	A living, locally variable system with mobility, dominance and Sanskritization	A mechanism of surplus extraction, articulated with but not reducible to class
Tribes are	Imperfectly integrated classes of Hindu society; assimilate them	A category shading into caste through the same processes	A dispossessed class produced by colonial and capitalist penetration
Engine of change	Diffusion, contact and cultural absorption	Sanskritization, Westernization, secularization; positional not structural	Contradiction between forces and relations of production
Nationalism is	Not a central concern; civilizational unity precedes it	Not a central concern	A modern product of colonial capitalism, in five class-defined phases
Method	Textual, historical and comparative; book view	Inductive, empirical, ethnographic; field view	Historical dialectical materialism
Blind spot	Practice, dissent, region, the material base	Conflict, exploitation, history, the state	The autonomy of caste, religion and culture
Standard charge	Brahmanical bias; prescription read as description	Conservative; converts domination into interdependence	Economic determinism; caste dissolved into class

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS

- Differentiate between 'Western' and 'Indological' perspectives on the study of Indian society. Bring out the major aspects of G.S. Ghurye's contribution to 'Indological' approach. [2024, Paper II, Q2a, 20 marks]

Colonial Rule and the Making of 'Indian Tradition'

The examinable point is not that colonialism disrupted tradition. It is the harder one: colonial administration produced much of what we now call tradition, by writing it down, counting it, and giving it force of law. The 2020 paper put this almost verbatim, asking whether colonial administrators helped construct the very traditionalism that marked Indian society as backward.

- Economy:** the three revenue settlements restructured rural society (Permanent Settlement 1793, ryotwari from the 1820s, mahalwari from 1822). Commercialization of agriculture, the drain of wealth argued by Dadabhai Naoroji in 'Poverty and Un-British Rule in India' (1901), and the deindustrialization thesis of R.C. Dutt together produce a peasantry tied to the market and the moneylender.
- Law:** codification of Hindu and Muslim personal law turned contested, plural, local practice into a fixed body of rules. Brahmin pandits and maulvis advised the courts, so the scriptural version became the legal

version. A living custom became a text with a penalty attached.

- Knowledge and enumeration: censuses from 1871-72, with the first synchronous count in 1881, made caste a countable, comparable, all-India thing. Risley's 1901 census attempt to rank castes by social precedence triggered a wave of caste associations petitioning for higher classification. Counting created the constituency it claimed to measure.
- Bernard Cohn on the colonial sociology of knowledge: survey, census, museum and map were not neutral instruments but the apparatus by which India was made legible and thereby remade. Ronald Inden's 'Imagining India' (1990) on orientalist essentialism, and Nicholas Dirks's 'Castes of Mind' (2001), which argues caste in its modern form is a product of the colonial encounter, are the sharp end of this line.
- Handle Dirks carefully in an answer. The defensible version is that colonialism made caste the single organizing idiom of Indian society and hardened its boundaries. The indefensible version is that caste did not exist before the British, which the pre-colonial record does not support.
- New institutions and new classes: English education after Macaulay's Minute (1835) and Wood's Despatch (1854), the universities of 1857, railways from 1853, the press, the professions. These create the intelligentsia that Desai puts at the head of phase one of nationalism.
- The contradiction that matters: the same rule that produced railways, law and print also produced famine, deindustrialization and racial exclusion. Nationalism grows in that gap, which is Desai's whole point.
- The counter-move for balance: the 'invention of tradition' argument can flatten Indian agency. Reform movements, caste associations and vernacular publics used colonial categories for their own ends. Ambedkar used the census, the courts and separate representation as instruments. Construction is not the same as passivity.

KEY TERMS

Colonial sociology of knowledge — Cohn's argument that the census, survey, map and museum were instruments through which colonial rule constituted the India it claimed only to describe.

Drain of wealth — Naoroji's thesis that a chronic, unrequited transfer of India's surplus to Britain was structurally built into colonial rule.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS

- Colonial administrators helped to construct the very traditionalism which marked the Indian society as 'backward'. Comment critically. [2020, Paper II, Q8a, 20 marks]
- Examine the social background of growth of Indian nationalism. [2022, Paper II, Q4a, 20 marks]
- Discuss the social background of Indian nationalism. [2014, Paper II, Q2b, 20 marks]

Yogendra Singh: Modernization of Indian Tradition

Yogendra Singh's 'Modernization of Indian Tradition' (1973), subtitled a systemic study of social change, is the syllabus's designated framework for thinking about tradition and modernity together rather than as opposites. It has been asked directly at least three times, and the 2023 paper asked the underlying question: are tradition and modernity antithetical?

- The analytic grid: cross two axes. Structural versus cultural sources of change, and orthogenetic versus heterogenetic origins, the second pair taken from Redfield and Milton Singer. Orthogenetic change comes from within the tradition's own logic; heterogenetic change comes from outside contact.

- The four attributes of the Hindu traditional value system, for Singh: hierarchy, holism, continuity and transcendence. Hierarchy orders men, work and even gods; holism subordinates the individual to the group; continuity gives a cyclical view of time and karmic persistence; transcendence places the ultimate sanction beyond the empirical world.
- The historical application: pre-British contact, including Islamic contact, produced change that was largely cultural and worked through the tradition's own idiom, Sanskritization being the type case. British contact was heterogenetic and eventually structural, because it worked on law, administration, land and education rather than on ritual.
- The core finding: modernization in India began at the macro structural and elite levels without a corresponding transformation of the micro structures of caste, kinship and village. So tradition did not retreat before modernity. It took up modern functions. Caste associations, caste in electoral politics, kin networks in business and the professions are traditional forms doing modern work.
- This is why the title cuts both ways. Modernization of Indian tradition, or traditionalization of Indian modernity. Singh's answer is that the two are not antithetical: modernization for him presupposes a rational and universalistic attitude to issues, not the wholesale replacement of one culture by another, and it is analytically separable from Westernization.
- The parallel to cite: Rudolph and Rudolph's 'The Modernity of Tradition' (1967), which argues from Indian political material that tradition is adaptive and that the dichotomy is a Western analytic artefact. Srinivas's preference for 'Westernization' over 'modernization' rests on a related suspicion.
- Critiques of Singh: the framework is heavily borrowed, Parsons for the systemic apparatus and Redfield for the ortho/hetero pair, and it stays at a level of abstraction that never touches a class; it describes a sequence rather than explaining a cause; it is ambiguous about whether the outcome is modern tradition or traditional modernity; and it treats 'Indian tradition' as effectively Hindu tradition, which is the same narrowing Ghurye is charged with.
- The Marxist objection, from Desai's side: without asking who benefits from caste's survival into modernity, 'modernization of tradition' names the phenomenon and stops. The persistence of caste in Indian capitalism is not a cultural curiosity; it is functional to the labour market.

KEY TERMS

Orthogenetic change — Change generated from within a tradition's own cultural logic, as against heterogenetic change imported by outside contact.

Modernization of tradition — Yogendra Singh's finding that traditional Indian institutions did not dissolve under modernization but absorbed modern functions and survived by performing them.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS

- Critically examine Yogendra Singh's thesis on 'Modernisation of Indian Tradition'. [2022, Paper II, Q3a, 20 marks]
- Discuss in detail the major contribution of Prof. Yogendra Singh in theorizing India's modernization. [2021, Paper II, Q3a, 20 marks]
- Discuss Yogendra Singh's thesis on Modernisation of Indian Tradition, and evaluate its applicability in the present-day context. [2017, Paper II, Q2b, 20 marks]
- Discuss the paradigm of modernization of Indian tradition in analysing social change in India. [2015, Paper II, Q3a, 20 marks]
- Are Tradition and Modernity antithetical to each other? Comment. [2023, Paper II, Q1d, 10 marks]
- Write short notes with a sociological perspective on the following in about 150 words: Modernisation of Indian traditions. [2014, Paper II, Q1b, 10 marks]

Protests, Movements and Social Reform Under Colonial Rule

Two syllabus items sit together here and should be answered together, because the analytic payoff is in the contrast. Reform came mostly from above, worked through colonial law, and left the caste order standing. Revolt came from below, was frequently armed, and questioned the order's legitimacy. Do not merge them into a single story of awakening.

- Reform from within the tradition: Rammohan Roy's Brahmo Samaj (1828) and the Sati Regulation of 1829; Vidyasagar and the Hindu Widows' Remarriage Act (1856); Dayanand Saraswati's Arya Samaj (1875) with its back to the Vedas doctrine and shuddhi; the Prarthana Samaj (1867) with Ranade and Bhandarkar; Vivekananda's Ramakrishna Mission (1897); Sir Syed Ahmad Khan's Aligarh movement and MAO College (1875). The method is scriptural: find the golden age, declare the abuse a later corruption, petition the state.
- Legislative trail: Sati Regulation 1829, Widow Remarriage Act 1856, Age of Consent Act 1891 which raised the age from ten to twelve and provoked ferocious nationalist opposition, and the Sarda Act or Child Marriage Restraint Act 1929. The Age of Consent controversy is the clearest evidence that reform and nationalism could pull in opposite directions.
- Revolt from below, against the tradition itself: Jotirao and Savitribai Phule's school for girls (1848) and the Satyashodhak Samaj (1873), with 'Gulamgiri' (1873) reading caste as slavery; Sree Narayana Guru's Aruvippuram consecration (1888) and the SNDP Yogam (1903); the Justice Party (1916) and Periyar's Self-Respect Movement (1925); Ad-Dharm in Punjab (1926); Ambedkar's Bahishkrit Hitakarini Sabha (1924), the Mahad Satyagraha (1927) and 'Annihilation of Caste' (1936). These do not ask Hinduism to reform. They ask by what right it rules.
- The women's question, handled sociologically: reform on sati, widow remarriage and age of consent was overwhelmingly argued by upper-caste men, in colonial courts, using scripture. Lata Mani's 'Contentious Traditions' (1998) shows women in the sati debate were neither subjects nor objects but the ground on which tradition was contested between colonizer and colonized. Partha Chatterjee's nationalist resolution of the women's question adds the crucial move: nationalism split the world into an outer material domain conceded to the West and an inner spiritual domain where the woman was made the sign of an uncolonized essence, which is why reform stopped where it did.
- Peasant movements: the Indigo revolt (1859-60), Pabna agrarian leagues (1873), the Deccan riots (1875) against moneylenders under ryotwari, Champaran (1917), Kheda (1918), Bardoli (1928), the Mappila rebellion (1921), Tebhaga in Bengal (1946-47) for a two-thirds share, and Telangana (1946-51) against the Nizam and the deshmukhs.
- Tribal revolts: the Kol (1831-32), the Santhal Hul (1855-56) under Sidhu and Kanhu, Birsa Munda's Ulgulan (1899-1900) which produced the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act of 1908, and the Rampa rebellion (1922-24). Each is a response to land alienation, forest law and the moneylender, and each is fought in a religious idiom. That combination is the analytic point.
- Frameworks to name: A.R. Desai's 'Peasant Struggles in India' (1979); Kathleen Gough's five-fold typology of peasant revolts (restorative rebellions, religious movements, social banditry, terrorist vengeance, mass insurrections); D.N. Dhanagare's 'Peasant Movements in India 1920-1950'; M.S.A. Rao's 'Social Movements and Social Transformation' (1979) with its reformative and transformative types and its relative deprivation argument; Ghanshyam Shah's review of the literature; Ranajit Guha on insurgency as conscious politics.
- The line examiners reward: colonial social reform expanded the rights of upper-caste women while leaving caste intact, and anti-caste movements expanded the claims of the excluded while leaving the colonial state intact. Neither by itself is a social revolution. Ambedkar's judgment on the 1936 text is the honest summary:

political and legal reform without the annihilation of caste changes who administers the hierarchy, not that there is one.

KEY TERMS

Shuddhi — The Arya Samaj's rite of reconversion and purification, used to bring converts to Islam and Christianity back into the Hindu fold.

Relative deprivation — In M.S.A. Rao's use, the perceived gap between what a group believes it is entitled to and what it gets, which mobilizes movements more reliably than absolute poverty.

PREVIOUS YEAR QUESTIONS

- Highlight the major contributions of the reform movements in pre-independent India. [2024, Paper II, Q8a, 20 marks]
- The main objectives of socio-religious movements during the colonial rule in India were reforming and synthesizing Hinduism. Write on any two such important movements. [2017, Paper II, Q2a, 20 marks]
- Examine sociological dynamics of Champaran Peasant Movement in colonial India. [2018, Paper II, Q2b, 20 marks]
- Write short notes with a sociological perspective: Anti-Brahmanical movements during the colonial period. [2016, Paper II, Q1d, 10 marks]
- Banning Practice of 'Sati' is attributed to annihilation of a major social evil in colonial India. Comment. [2020, Paper II, Q1b, 10 marks]
- Illustrate the contribution of the Tebhaga Movement to the peasants struggle in India. [2019, Paper II, Q1b, 10 marks]
- Analyze Gandhi as a moralist, ascetic and man of action through his Hind Swaraj. [2015, Paper II, Q8a, 20 marks]

Last-mile revision

- Ghurye: Cambridge under Rivers, Indological method, six features of caste with endogamy as the essence, tribes as imperfectly integrated classes of Hindu society, assimilation against Elwin.
- Ghurye uses Risley's anthropometry but rejects Risley's pan-Indian racial theory of caste. Say this; it is the difference between a note and an answer.
- Srinivas: Oxford under Radcliffe-Brown and Evans-Pritchard, Coorgs 1952, Rampura, field view over book view, and four concepts: Sanskritization, Westernization, dominant caste, secularization.
- Sanskritization = positional change, group mobility, follows prior economic or political gain, and leaves the ladder standing.
- Dominant caste = numbers plus land plus political power plus a decently high ritual rank. It is the concept that separates local power from ritual purity.
- Desai: Social Background of Indian Nationalism (1948), nationalism as a modern product of colonial material conditions, five phases, and India's Path of Development (1984) on state-assisted capitalism.
- Yogendra Singh: structural versus cultural, orthogenetic versus heterogenetic; hierarchy, holism, continuity, transcendence; modernization arrived at the macro level and tradition absorbed modern functions.
- Colonial impact runs through three channels: the revenue settlements, codified personal law, and enumeration. Cohn, Inden and Dirks are the citations.
- Reform came from above through scripture and colonial law; anti-caste revolt came from below and denied the order's legitimacy. Keep them apart in the answer.
- One-line ranking of blind spots: Ghurye cannot see practice, Srinivas cannot see exploitation, Desai cannot see ritual as an independent force.

Common errors to avoid

- Calling Ghurye a racist follower of Risley. He used Risley's data and rejected Risley's theory, restricting the caste and physical type correlation to northern India.
- Writing that Ghurye's Indology means he only read texts. He worked on architecture, costume, sadhus, cities and kinship, and used anthropometric material. The charge to make is bias in the archive, not narrowness of it.
- Presenting Elwin as a permanent isolationist who wanted tribes kept in a zoo. That is Ghurye's caricature of an argument Elwin himself later revised. Say so.
- Treating Sanskritization as the same thing as Westernization or as a theory of change. It is a descriptive concept for positional mobility, and Yogendra Singh's charge that it explains nothing is the standard critique.
- Saying Sanskritization causes a group to rise. The sequence runs the other way: the group acquires land, numbers or power first, then makes the ritual claim, and the claim is conceded because the power is already there.
- Making dominant caste mean the ritually highest caste. Ritual rank only has to be reasonably high; the working criteria are numbers, land and political power.
- Dating Srinivas's structural functionalism to Ghurye. Ghurye was his MA teacher; the functionalism is Oxford, from Radcliffe-Brown and Evans-Pritchard.
- Blurring Desai's five phases into a Congress chronology. Each phase is defined by which class enters the movement, not by which session passed which resolution.
- Reading Yogendra Singh as saying modernity defeated tradition. His thesis is the reverse: tradition survived by taking on modern functions, and the two are not antithetical.
- Writing that caste was invented by the British. The defensible claim is that colonial enumeration and law hardened and universalized it. Dirks overstated, and examiners know it.
- Treating the nineteenth century reformers and the anti-caste radicals as one movement. Rammohan Roy petitioned the state to purify Hinduism; Phule, Periyar and Ambedkar denied that Hinduism could be purified.
- Answering a comparison question with three separate biographies. If the question names two thinkers, every paragraph must contain both.