Indira Gandhi National
Open University
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BGGCT-132
HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

Block

2

SPACE AND SOCIETY

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BLOCK 2: SPACE AND SOCIETY

Studying space and society under human geography is very essential as understanding society over space are primordial to understand human geography. Geography is the study of both physical and human phenomena. Therefore, the study of geography remains incomplete without studying human aspects. This block addresses the human society in terms of peopling and racial elements, religion and beliefs, languages and cultural regions with special reference to India.

Unit 5: Peopling and Racial Elements: This unit contains races and ethnicity, peopling of India, territory and region formation and Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Scheduled Castes (SC).

Unit 6: Religion and Beliefs: This unit deals with the origins of belief system, types of religions, spatial distribution of different belief systems, religious composition of people in India and religious fusions.

Unit 7: Languages: This unit discusses the origin and diffusion of language and dialects, linguistic classification, distribution pattern of languages, monolingualism, bilingualism, multilingualism and language shift, and linguistic regions.

Unit 8: Cultural Regions: This unit covers the meaning and types of culture, aspects of culture, culture and civilization, hierarchy of culture, meaning, origin, formation and persistence,cultural regions, problems of delimitation of cultural regions of the world, major cultural regions of the world and globalisation and culture.

We hope that after studying this block, you will have adequate understanding of space and human society with various essential components to know about the human-environment relationships over the space. Our best wishes are with you in this endeavour.

UNIT 5

PEOPLING AND RACIAL ELEMENTS

Structure

5.1 Introduction
Expected Learning Outcomes

5.2 Races and Ethnicity
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5.1 INTRODUCTION

The earth is inhabited by the people having variations in appearances of their physical features. Some may have dark, brown, white or yellow skin; some are taller than others. We see people who share curly or woolly hair with others in their neighbourhoods, while others far away may have straight hair and the colour of hair vary from dark black to blonde.

India's population is diverse in terms of its varied ethnic origins and as such the country has been a cultural and social melting pot. Once we start travelling from one part to the other we come across a wide range of population having different physical appearances, speaking different languages, wearing different dresses and displaying vivid customs and practices. You may have noticed all of these while travelling or in photographs. For example, people in the north-western parts of India, north eastern India, southern India, etc., look different from one another. Certain tribal groups like Andamanese or Onges or Chenchus have similar appearance whereas the tribes in the north eastern India and Himalayan region ranging from Laddakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttaranchal, Sikkim and entire north eastern India may appear to have similar features.

But are humans different from one another just because their physical features differ? What led the physical anthropologists in the past dwell upon human types, which they called race? Do the human groups whom we know as Negrito, Australoid, Mediterranean, Nordic,

Alpinoids, Mongolian, etc. have different origins? India itself is a land of vast diversity in terms of physical features of her population.

We come across various kinds of opinions, conjectures and hypotheses about the origin of population currently living in the Indian subcontinent. Did the population of India originate within the subcontinent or came from somewhere else? The claims in favour of 'out of India' and 'out of Africa' hypotheses have again resurfaced. One should be certain that only a scientific study based on evidences from a variety of sources can help us understand the dynamics of human populations and their characteristics.

In this Unit, we will make an attempt to understand this diversity by studying the origin of the current stock of populations of India and their movements within the subcontinent and outside, geographical distribution of various racial/ethnic groups in the country, territorialisation and region formation, and finally we will also devote some efforts towards the understanding of the Constitutional categories of the Scheduled Tribes and the Scheduled Castes.

Expected Learning Outcomes

After completing the study of this unit, you should be able to:

- describe the races and ethnicity with special reference to India;
- describe the possible routes through which different groups of people came to India or peopling of India;
- explain the territorialisation and region formation; and
- describe the social formation and spatial distribution of the Scheduled Tribes and the Scheduled Castes in India.

5.2 RACES AND ETHNICITY

The term "race" refers to distinct populations within a larger species largely based on physical characteristics such as skin, eye, and hair colour, facial structure and the body. One may notice minor differences in such morphology among people belonging to different races. A branch of biology dealing with the form and structure of humans, animals and plants called genetics, informs us that all humans belong to the same species (*Homo sapiens*) and sub-species (*Homo sapiens sapiens*), but small genetic variations trigger varying physical appearances. However, despite subdivided into different races, major differences are not indicated in DNA (Deoxyribonucleic Acid) by actual morphological variations among humans as generally there is minuscule variation of less than 0.1 per cent only between the DNA of two humans chosen at random. Some scientists attribute all humans belonging to a single race, i.e. human race due to not so strong racial genetic difference.

While the internal biological or genetic characteristics differ only marginally, the physical appearances in terms of stature of the body and colour of skin and hair, etc., have evolved as a consequence of human adaptation under

different environmental conditions. As geographers, we know this very well that the physiographical, climatic and vegetal characteristics on the planet earth vary significantly. It is challenging to define and classify race due to the absence of any biological foundation,which leads social scientists to take race as unstable and always shifting and intimately associated with other social forces and structures. Sociologically it is viewed that it is more than simply an illusion as race is not a concrete and fixed thing essential to human bodies. It is taken as a social force socially constructed through human interaction and relationships between people and institutions.

Ethnicity is a state of belongingness of a group of people as common descendants to a common culture at a particular territory or region, where culture includes the whole way of life with their levels of development and technology and other aspects like religion and beliefs, customs and practices, language, food, dresses, house structure, etc. Sometimes, ethnicity can be observable from outer appearance also, and therefore, a person from different ethnic region may show the ethnicity of other region by wearing the dress of that region. And based on the shared traits, the members of an ethnic group tend to identify with each other. It is not based on biological factors but learned behaviours. Many people share their identities in more than one ethnicity as they have mixed cultural backgrounds.

However, race and ethnicity can be overlapping. For example an Indian-American person associates himself or herself to Indian origin or Asian race but the same person might not identify with the Indian ethnicity because of not practicing the customs of his/her origin. Another way to look at the difference is to consider people who share the same ethnicity. In terms of ethnicity two people might identify their ethnicity as American or European despite one could be black colour of skin and the other white.

Some researchers are of the opinion that race and 'ethnicity' are socially constructed concepts because of their changing definitions over time. It is believed that genetic differences give way to race and racism coming out of biological morphologies where the issue of superiority or inferiority based race emerges. Persecution based on ethnicity, however, has also been common.

In India, we have variations in what is called 'race' and 'ethnicity'. Ethnic variations range from shared cultures, languages, geographical location/ region, to hierarchical castes within a single habitation or locality. Therefore, the idea of India is rooted in multiple associations of identities. So a Tamil Brahmin is a Tamil and Brahmin at the same time, and may also maintain segregated and segmented identity as a Brahmin when interacting with other Tamil persons in his locality. The Tamil Brahmin will also behave differently with yet another Brahmin person who may not be a Tamil. The socio-political and economic expression of ethnicity in India can have varied expressions and manifestations both in time and space as well as in different situations.

Races are the human groups similar to each other based on physical (appearances) and some biological traits (skin, colour, hair, etc.) whereas ethnicity is a socially constructed category linked to a presumed shared

history and cultural heritage. Based on these characteristics, human population has been classified by the classical anthropologists into different groups having various racial elements like Caucasoid, Negrito, Australoid, Mediterranean, Nordic, Alpine, Mongolian, etc. There are many classifications of ethnic groups in India among which B.S. Guha has classified the present population into the following groups:

1. Negritos
2. Proto-Astroloids
3. Mongoloids
    a. Palaeo-Mongoloids
        i. Long Headed Types
        ii. Broad Headed Types
    b. Tibeto-Mongoloids
4. Mediterraneans
    a. Palaeo-Mediterraneans
    b. Mediterraneans
    c. Oriental
5. Western Brachycephals
    a. Alpinoids
    b. Dinarics
    c. Armenoids
6. Nordics

5.2.1 Racial Elements of Population in India

In the present time, it is very difficult to trace the particular racial traits in Indian population due to significant movements and mingling. However, there are some traces of distribution pattern of these groups across the country. We will discuss about it briefly in the following section.

1. **Negritos -** These people are supposed to be the first in-migrants in India but are hardly left due to the incursions of the subsequent human groups. Remnants of Negritos are Kadars, Pulliyans, Irulas, Chenchus and primitive tribes of Wunad in the Southern India and the Andamnese, Onge and Shom Pens in the Andamans.

2. **Proto-Astroloids -** This is the most dominant element among the tribal population and these are supposed to be the second group of people coming into India. This population has dwelt in the hilly and forested regions of India primarily in the central and southern parts and some parts of north India. It also includes the semi-Hinduised tribes of Central India. The Scheduled Tribes of India are also mainly of this group. Examples are the Oraon, Munda, Santhal, Kol, Khond and Korku tribes of Central India and Malayans, Kurumbas and Yeruvas of southern India.

3. **Mongoloids -** The mongoloids have settled in the Himalayan region from Laddakh in the west to the North-Eastern Boarders of India spreading in the states of Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Tripura, Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur. There are two sub-groups of Mongoloids- Palaeo-Mongoloids and Tibeto-Mongoloids. Palaeo-Mongoloid also has two types-Long Headed type and Broad Headed type. Palaeo-Mongoloids are more primitive in nature and found in Sub-Himalayan regions of North East. The major communities are Khasis, Jaintias, Garos, Nagas, Mizos, Boro-Kacharis, Kacharis, Miris and Rabhas. The Tibeto-Mongoloids are settled in the parts of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

4. **Mediterraneans -** These people are supposed to be the builders of Indus Valley Civilisation alongwith Proto-Austroloids and are now found in entire North India. These people were supposed to be pushed by the Aryans and dispersed themselves in the Gangetic basin. These are the dominant/upper section of the population of northern India. They were also driven towards further south, who form the dominant type among the Dravidian speaking population of the country. Mediterraneans have three sub-groups- Palaeo-Mediterraneans, Mediterraneans and Orientals. Palaeo-Mediterraneans are supposed to be the first and oldest group of Mediterraneans to come to India having physical characteristics of medium statured, dark skinned, slight built and long headed. They are settled in bulk in southern India and in considerable number in northern India. Followed by this group, Mediterraneans entered into India and supposed to have built the Indus Valley Civilization. They are spread in large number as the lower castes of entire regions of northern India. The last group of Mediterranean stock termed as Orientals are found in Sind, Rajasthan and western Uttar Pradesh.

5. **Western Brachycephals -** The population belonging to Brachy-Cephalic are very few. Their entry routes gave the imprints of their movements and present settlement as they entered through the regions of present distribution. Alpinoids are in Gujarat and also in Bengal. Dinarics are spread in West Bengal, Orissa and Coorg region of Karnataka. The Armenoids are the Parsis mainly settled in Mumbai.

6. **Nordic -** The Nordics are the last wave of in-migrants and are found in the North and North-Western India -Punjab, Haryana and Rajasthan and also in Jammu and Kashmir. These are mostly the upper castes of northern and north western India, especially Punjab. Their physical appearance is that they are long headed, strong built, fair complexion with well developed noses.

You may see the distribution of Indian population having various racial traits/ lineage explained in the anthropological records in Fig. 5.1. There are some composite regions also as you may see in the map,where one region has people from more than one racial origins.

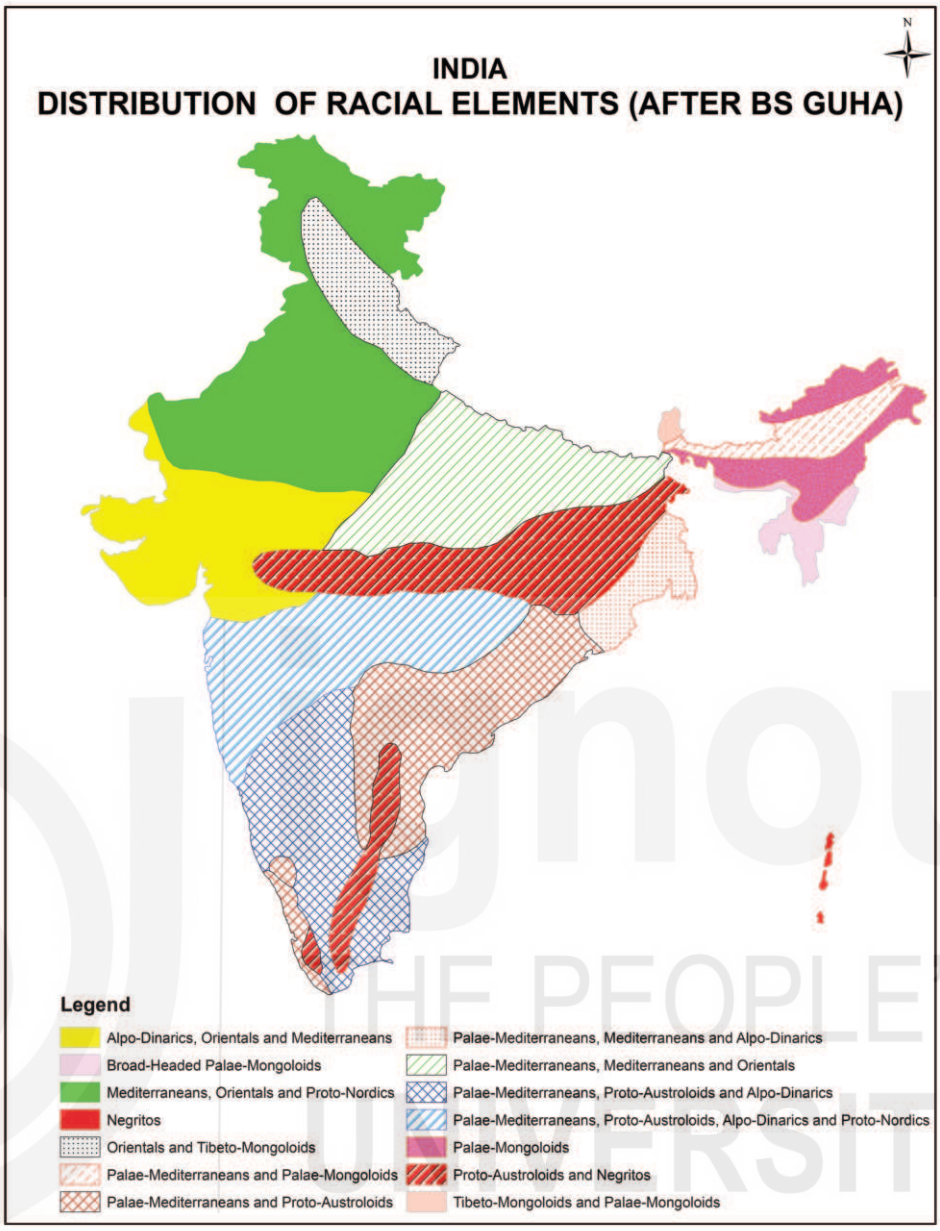


Fig. 5.1: Distribution of Racial Elements in India.

Source: Subbarao, B. (1958). *The Personality of India: Pre and Proto-Historic Foundation of India and Pakistan,* Baroda: Faculty of Arts, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, p. 32.

SAQ 1

What do you mean by race and ethnicity? What are various racial groups of people inhabited in India?

5.3 PEOPLING OF INDIA

As discussed in Introduction, India is a home to various ethnic groups and has vast diversity of her people. There are predominantly two strands of hypotheses, which one can call 'Out of India' and 'Out of Africa'. The 'Out of India' hypothesis proposes that the Indian subcontinent had its indigenous human population, which went on to contribute towards the making of

populations north of the Himalayas as well as further west into Iran and beyond in the regions around the Mediterranean and Europe. In the process, they got differentiated. The so called racial and linguistic variations were contributed by 'invasions' by different racial and ethnic groups from west as well as the Central Asia. This hypothesis also draws upon genetic evidences to suggest that the people who built the Indus Valley Civilization in the north and north west of the subcontinent were the indigenous people as the DNA map of the woman skeletal remains unearthed from Rakhigarhi in the present day Hissar district of Haryana bear no trace of any external group. But the narrative presented by the propagators of the 'Out of India' hyphothesis largely describes and could be relevant to the time around which the Indus Valley Civilization began to decline.

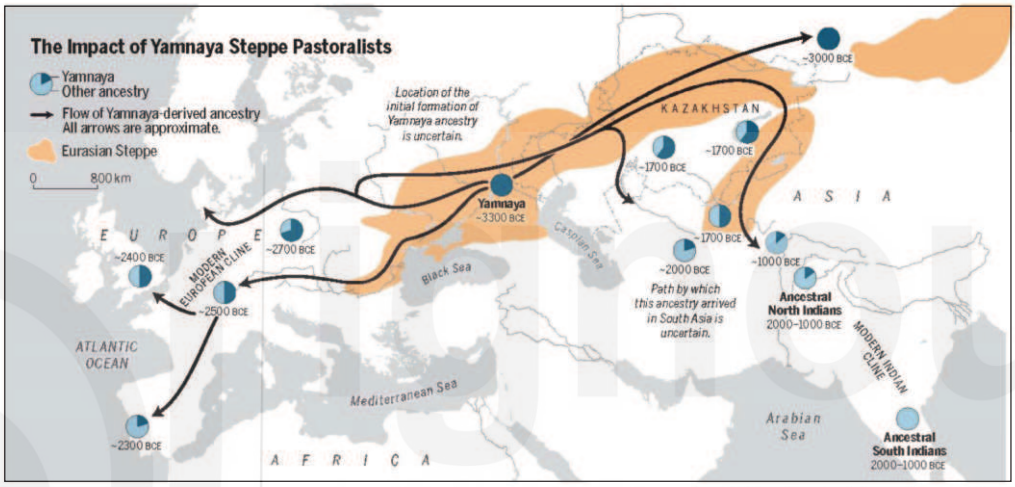
The alternative 'Out of Africa' hypothesis, which is in line with a variety of genetic, linguistic and archeological evidences says that the ancient human population emerged from the Ethiopian highlands and migrated from there to populate rest of the world. The evidence of human presence in the Indian subcontinent dates back to some 65,000 years. Subsequently, various groups and bands of human population from the west, central Asia and East Asia reached the Indian subcontinent through various routes in the Kirthar, Suleiman and the Himalayan passes in the north and the north-east, which led to intermixing of populations. The most recent was that of the people referred to as the Aryans who came from the steppes and were predominantly pastoralists. The agrarian culture of the Indus valley that dates back to about 8000 to 1500 BCE was contributed by people who had moved into the Indian subcontinent from Iran.

A well researched peer-reviewed study published in the journal *Science,* authored by 117 scientists as co-authors brings genetic evidences to support the later proposition. To quote "By sequencing 523 ancient humans, we show that the primary ancestry in modern South Asians is a prehistoric genetic gradient between people related to early hunter-gatherers of Iran and South east Asia. After the Indus Valley Civilization's decline, its people mixed with individuals in the southeast (i.e, southeast of northwestern India where the Indus Valley Civilization flourished) to form one of the two main ancestral populations of South Asia (called Ancestral South Indian or ASI), whose direct descendants live in southern India. Simultaneously, they mixed with descendants of Steppe pastoralists who, starting around 4000 years ago, spread via Central Asia to form the main ancestral population (or Ancestral North Indians). The Steppe ancestry in South Asia has the same profile as that in Bronze Age Eastern Europe, tracking a movement of people that affected both regions and that likely spread the distinctive features shared between Indo-Iranian and Balto-Slavic languages." (Science, 2019 and The Hindu, September 13, 2019). It has been illustrated in Fig. 5.2.

The former hypothesis that there were no major gene flows from outside the subcontinent in the last 12,000 years is based on mtDNA data. This argument doesn't hold its grounds when evidences from Y-DNA is pieced together, which shows major gene flows from outside India within the last 4000 to 4500 year

ago. The main reason why mtDNA data behaved differently was that Bronze age migrations were severely sex-biased in favour of the males, that constituted the pastoralists from the Steppes.

As you can observe from the above and also near definite evidences from the recent genetic studies suggest that the vast majority of Indians owe their ancestry mostly to people from other migrations, starting with the original Out of Africa migrations, or the farming-related migrations from West Asia that probably occurred in multiple waves after 10,000 BC, or the migrations of Astro-Asiatic speakers such as the Munda from east Asia and the migrations of TIbeto-Burman speakers such as the Garo again from east Asia. While we are yet not sure about the dates of the later two migrations.



The Bronze Age spread of Yamnaya Steppe pastoralist ancestry into two subcontinents—Europe and South Asia. Pie charts reflect the proportion of Yamnaya ancestry, and dates reflect the earliest available ancient DNA with Yamnaya ancestry in each region. Ancient DNA has not yet been found for the ANI and ASI, so for these the range is inferred statistically.

Fig. 5.2: Map of Steppe pastoralist migration in the Genetic Study published in Science.

Source: i) Narsimhan, V.M. et al. (2019). ''The formation of human populations in South and Central Asia,'' *Science 365 999*, 6 September, p. 1.

ii) https://www.thehindu.com/society/history-and-culture/theres-no-confusion-the-new-reports-clearly-confirm-arya-migration-into-india/article2940961…/

As per one hypothesis discussed above, the country has received her people from several waves of in-migration from various places outside India. The archaeological and anthropological evidences suggest that the present population have come to India in different waves at different times.

It is also believed that the in-migration of Early Man or Palaeolithic tool making people started during 4-5 lakhs years ago along the river valleys as suggested by the archaeology. It was followed by the subsequent stream of population with various tool making techniques suggesting various stages and groups. The whole population is classified into various racial or ethnic groups based on their characteristics, which has been explained in the sub-unit 5.2.

The entry routes have been the mountain passes of Himalayas in the north, north west and north-east. The sea routes are also supposed to be the other entry points. Within the country, the river valleys have been the suitable routes to spread out to the entire homeland.

Within the country the early settlers followed the various river valleys along roughly distorted 'Z' pattern route (Richards, 1933: 236) entering from the river valleys of Yamuna and Ganges from west to east and progressing southward through the Son and Narmada rivers and further down south along the Godavari river valley towards eastern regions and to the western ghats and Malabar through Kaveri river basin. You may see this pattern in the Fig. 5.3. Through this process of in-migration, the older group of in-migrants were pushed further towards the difficult and inaccessible areas. And the latest wave of incoming population with relatively developed culture and sedentarised agricultural system remained in the plains. The older group of people who were averse of interaction with others settled in the inaccessible and isolated areas to remain undisturbed. They still lead the primitive form of human life. These areas had till recently been remained pristine or undisturbed until encroachment took place for exploitation of various kinds of resources.

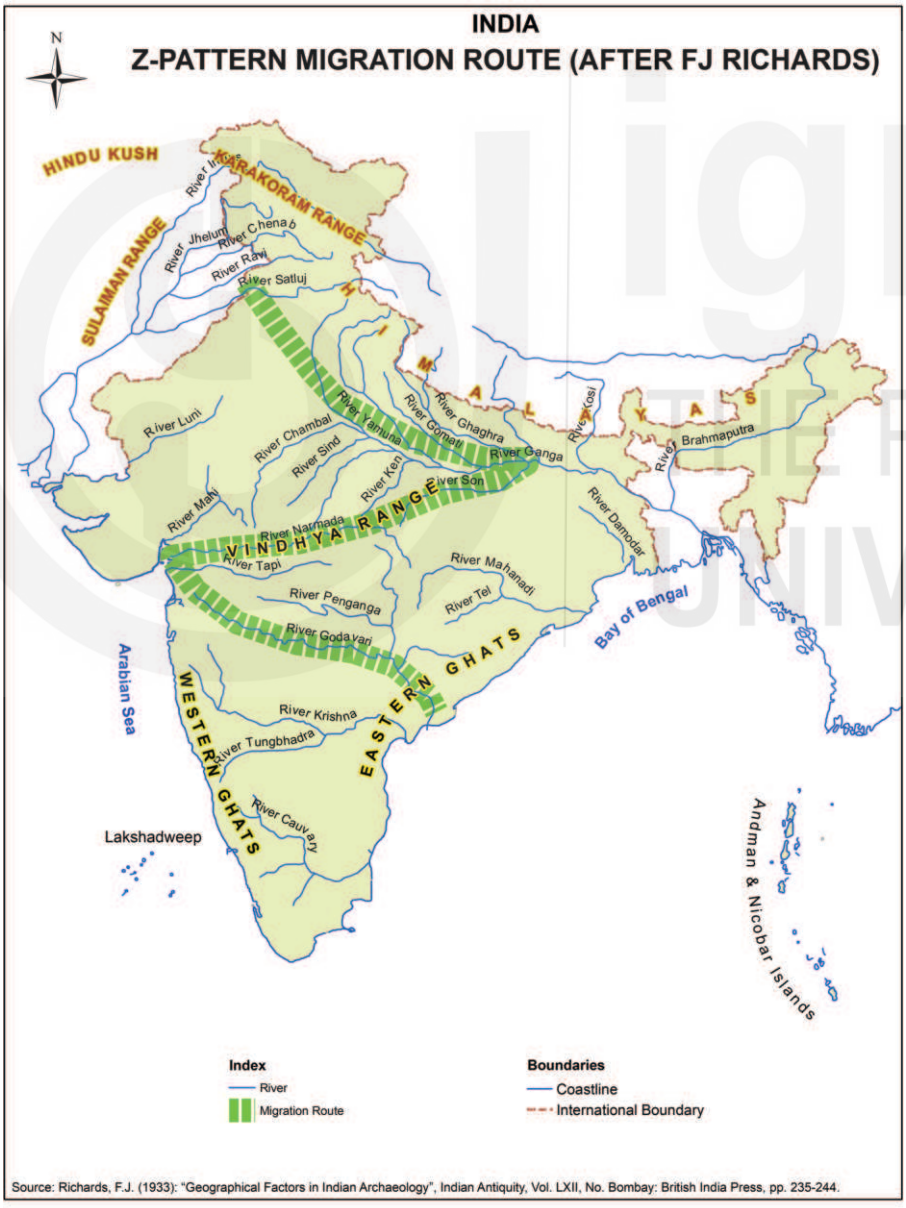


Fig. 5.3: Z Pattern of Early Migration Route (After FJ Richards).

Source: Richards, F.J. (1933): "Geographical Factors in Indian Archaeology", *Indian Antiquity, Vol. LXII,* Bombay: British India Press, pp. 235-244.

The assumptions are that the Negritos migrated from Africa along coastal regions. The people of Negrito origin were supposed to follow the route along southern cost and crossed to the South East Asia and Oceania. Some of them settled in the southern part of India like Kadars, Pulliyans, Irulas, Chenchus and primitive tribes of Wunad and in Andman and Nicobar Islands (Great Andmanese, Onges and Shom Pens). There are two suggestions about the migration routes of Proto-Austroloids or Austrics. One believes that the Austrics came from Iran and entered India from China through north eastern corridor. The second and more recent view suggests that the Austrics or Austro-Asiatic speakers were another wave of people migrating from Africa mainland to India. Indo-Aryan migrated from Central Asian Steppes and Tibeto Burman migrated from Himalayan and North-Eastern Boarders of the subcontinent. The last wave was of the people from Nordic origin, who spoke Aryan languages. The map shown in Fig. 5.4 derived from the maps and data given by J.H. Hutton, Raza and Ahmed and, Census of India depicts the routes of early post Austroloid migration of present Indian population from outside. The map also illustrates the distribution of various linguistic regions to show broad relationship between the ethnic groups and languages spoken by them.

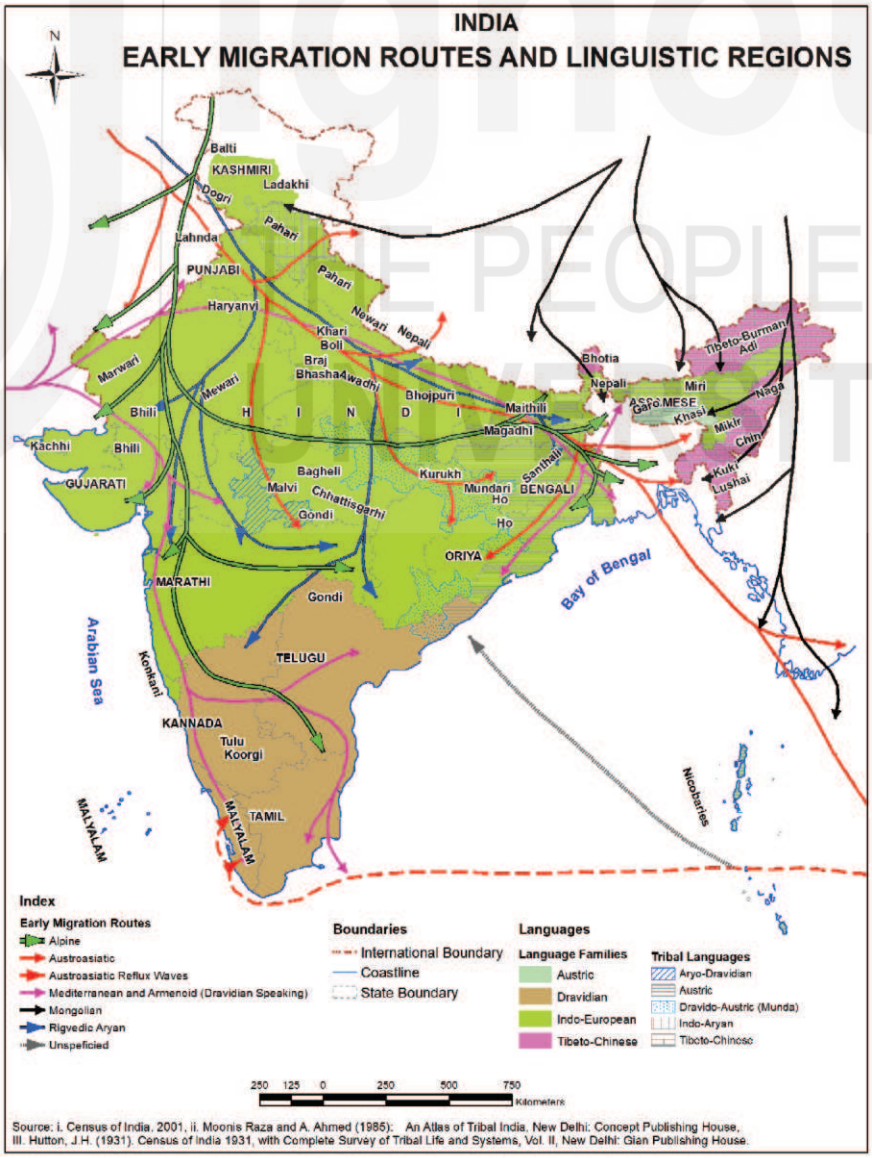


Fig. 5.4: Early Migration Routes and Linguistic Regions in India.

SAQ 2

What do you mean by peopling?

5.4 TERRITORY AND REGION FORMATION

Territory generally means an area of land under the jurisdiction of a ruler or state. By definition it is an administrative category and a country or a state has its own territorial area. It may also mean development of association of people with their place of stay, however, temporary, which provides the people means of survival, security and sustainability. On the other hand, a region is homogenous area defined in terms of one or combination of many parameters/indicators belonging to physical, social, cultural, economic or political spheres. For example, there are a number of physical regions in our country based on the physical characteristics like climate, rainfall, temperature, physiography, soil, geology, etc. Similarly, there are linguistic regions based on a language spoken in a particular region, cultural region based on certain culture, etc., economic region (agricultural/industrial/mining, etc.).

India's physiography having northern formidable mountain ranges of Himalayas and vast sea enclosures in the south, south-east and west and also the flat river valleys and difficult terrain inside the mainland has played important roles in territory and region formation of different population groups. In other words, the physical factors and region formation have close linkages. It evolved since the early migration period when various waves of people from outside started coming into India. The region formation took place in three forms – areas of attractions termed as **'Perennial Nuclear Regions'** primarily the river valleys; **'Areas of Isolation'** termed as **'Cul-de-Sac'** primarily the mountainous and forested regions; and **'Areas of Relative Isolation'** also known as **'Semi-Perennial Nuclear Regions'** primarily falling between the former two groups. You may see the distribution of these regions in the Fig. 5.5.

The perennial nuclear regions were centred in the river valleys from Indus to far east upto Ganga-Brahmaputra Delta and down south to Kavery Delta having varying sizes as these river valleys have been accessible and hospitable providing food and water to the early migrants. These regions have been the recipients and transit places of successive incursive waves moving through this passage. In these perennial nuclear regions only, the regions of Gandhara, Sapta Sindhu, Kurukshetra, Panchala, Braj, Kosala, Awadh, Magadha, Bengal, Orissa (Kalinga), and Assam in Northern and Eastern India; Malwa, parts of Maharashtra (Konkan), Karnataka (Kannara), Tamilnad (Pandya and Chola/Koromandal), Andhara (Telugu), Kerala (Malabar), in the South, and Gujarat (Saurashtra/Kathiawad), Raichur, Khandesh, etc. in the west got into existence. The cul-de-sac or refuge areas or negative areas have been on the outskirts of these perennial nuclear regions characterised as hilly, forested and arid in nature. These are Gondawana including Chotanagpur Plateau, Bastar and Rajmahal Hills. The perennial nuclear regions have been occupied by the agrarians and the

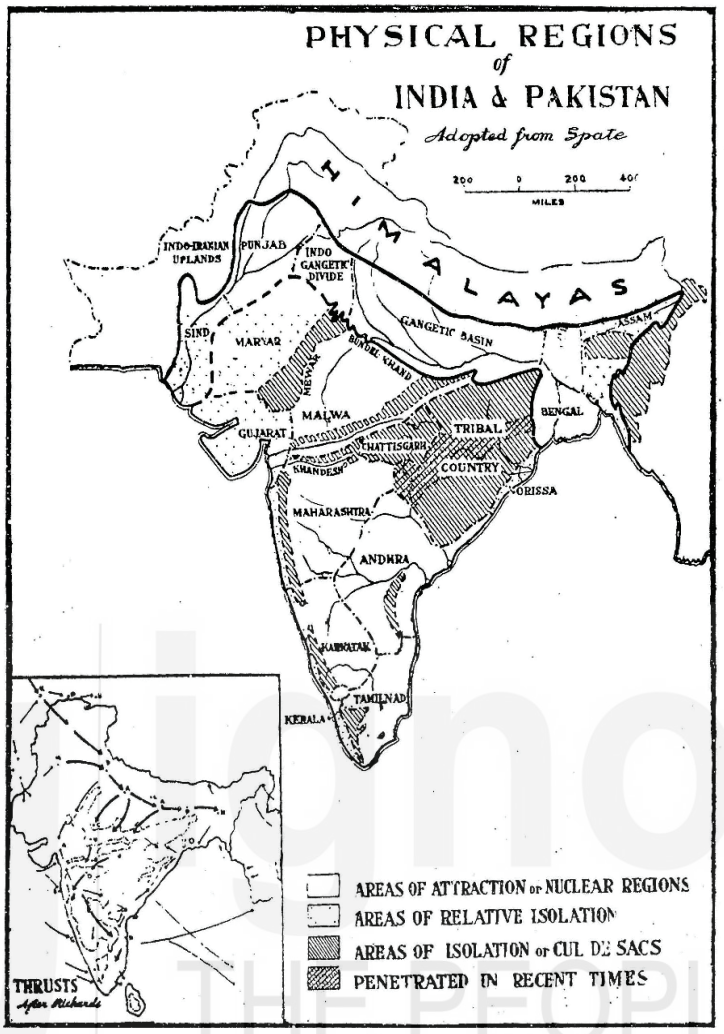


Fig. 5.5: Territorialisation and Region Formation in India.

Source: Subbarao, B. (1958). *The Personality of India: Pre and Proto-Historic Foundation of India and Pakistan,* Baroda: Faculty of Arts, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, p. 19.

refuge areas were inhabited mainly by the tribals and some peasant groups. These areas are Chenab, Sutluj and Beas river valleys in sub-Himalayas in old Punjab, Kumaon and Garhwal hills, remote hills from Dhauladhar to the Kathmandu valley, Kashmir and Laddakh, entire north eastern hills. These are the prime homelands of tribal people and also the homelands of those peasant groups and displaced ruling class who were ousted from the plains or perennial nuclear regions. This is a transition between perennial nuclear regions and cul-de-sac called semi-perennial nuclear regions which maybe characterised with peasant and pastoral communities. The core areas of the cul-de-sac are the better choice of people from older waves/groups. These regions have offered them the ideal conditions for their survival with their own traits and freedom from external world as they are very protective to their own cultures and practices of livelihood like pastoralism, food gathering and hunting. The repeated colonisation of river valleys by successive groups primarily agriculturalists drove the older waves towards the forests and mountains with very primitive economy and survival and may still be witnessed in various forms.

Later on some of these regions came into existence as *Mahajanapadas* which gradually turned into *Subah* and *Circar* moving to British Provinces/Princely States and finally to contemporary linguistic states.

India is known for regional diversities of various types such as physical, social, cultural and economic. The river valleys from Indus to Kaveri have always been areas of attraction particularly for the agriculturally oriented communities. On the outskirts of these valleys lie the areas of rugged terrain consisting of hills and dissected plateaux not much suited to the agricultural mode of production. These regions have been less suitable for settled agriculturalists but favourable for the groups engaged in hunting, food-gathering or pastoral practices. These diversities in the ecological setting and the corresponding differences in human adaptation created diverse regional patterns in culture which are a distinctive trait of India. Significant diversities in the different regions of the country suggest a more fundamental relationship between the physical and cultural elements which defined India's regions. The geographical factors have helped to a certain extent in developing the understanding of the underlying cultural processes. However, in relating culture with environment one cannot overemphasize physical factors as human relationship with nature is a complex process as humans are also active in modifying environment.

SAQ 3

What do you mean by a territory and a region?

5.5 SCHEDULED TRIBES (ST) AND SCHEDULED CASTES (SC)

Moving around different parts of the country, we observe a very high degree of social and ethnic diversity. Indian society is largely divided between two major groups- varna and hierarchy based caste system and egalitarian tribal groups. The differences within each of these groups are also marked by social organisation and occupation. Caste is a social hierarchy of various communities based on occupation and *varna* system. The first record of caste system is found in Rig Veda written between 1700-1100 BC, though the exact time of the origin of caste system is not known. And Tribes are the people who have distinct territoriality, cultural practices, languages, religions, foods, social order and customary law, etc. In the following sections, you will be introduced to the concepts of Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes as an integral part of the Indian society. You will also be knowing their numerical strength and spatial distribution pattern in the country.

Scheduled Tribe

Generally, the word tribe refers to a state of tribalism,which is defined based on ethnic characteristics as well as administrative considerations. According to D.N. Majumdar, the renowned anthropologist, a tribe is a collection of families or group of families bearing a common name, members of which occupy the same territory, speak the same language and observe certain taboos regarding marriage, profession or occupation and have developed a well assigned system of reciprocity and mutuality of obligation. A certain

number of ethnically differentiated tribal groups have been brought under the purview of a particular schedule of the Indian Constitution and these groups are referred to as 'Scheduled Tribes'. The Scheduled Tribes have been given constitutional protection as these communities have remained in isolation for centuries both on account of geographical inaccessibility of their settlements as well as due to socio-economic isolation from the settled agrarian communities.

The tribes comprise of a number of tribal groups that are heterogeneous in cultural traits, social organisation and modes of living. For example, Santhals and Birhors are the tribal groups living in Jharkhand. In terms of population, Santhals are one of the major tribal groups while Birhor is a small tribal group. The differences between these two tribal groups with reference to social organisation, occupation and level of development are well marked. The educational attainments, standards of living and health status of each of the tribal groups also vary. Due to the forces of every next wave of newer racial groups of population coming to India, these are the people who have subsequently moved to inaccessible and remote areas known as cul-de-sac regions or areas of refuge to enjoy freedom of life with their own mode of living and practices. The bases for Identification for scheduling as Scheduled Tribe are the indications of primitive traits (hunting, food gathering, etc.), distinctive culture (animism, ancestral worship, own language/dialect, marriage institution, dress, food habit, living style, etc.), geographical isolation (settled in remote and inaccessible areas,especially forests and hills), shyness of contact with the community at large (mostly confined to own group only), and backwardness (primitive mode of economy and agriculture, poverty, low literacy and education, etc.). Many of them have their own language/dialects of communications.

The major communities in this group are Santhals, Gonds, Bhils, Mundas, Hos, Oraons, Kharias, Nagas, Khasis, etc.

Spatial Distribution of Scheduled Tribes

In the first schedule, the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes) Order, 1950 listed as many as 744 tribes in the country as Scheduled Tribes. According to Census 2011, the Scheduled Tribes (ST) with a population of 104545716 constitute about 8.6 percent of total population of India. The ST as a category includes a large number of tribal groups inhabiting different parts of India. One of the distinctive features about the distribution of ST population in India is that they are unevenly distributed across different states in terms of the numerical strength. The percentage of ST population out of the total population of state also varies significantly from one state to the other. Among the states, Madhya Pradesh has the largest ST population (15316784). The states where the ST population is more than 50 lakhs are Maharashtra, Odisha, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, and West Bengal. The states and Union Territories with less than 25000 ST population are Sikkim, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Goa, Lakshadweep, Andman and Nicobar Islands and Daman and Diu. There is no recognised ST population in Punjab, Chandigarh, Haryana, NCT of Delhi and Puducherry.

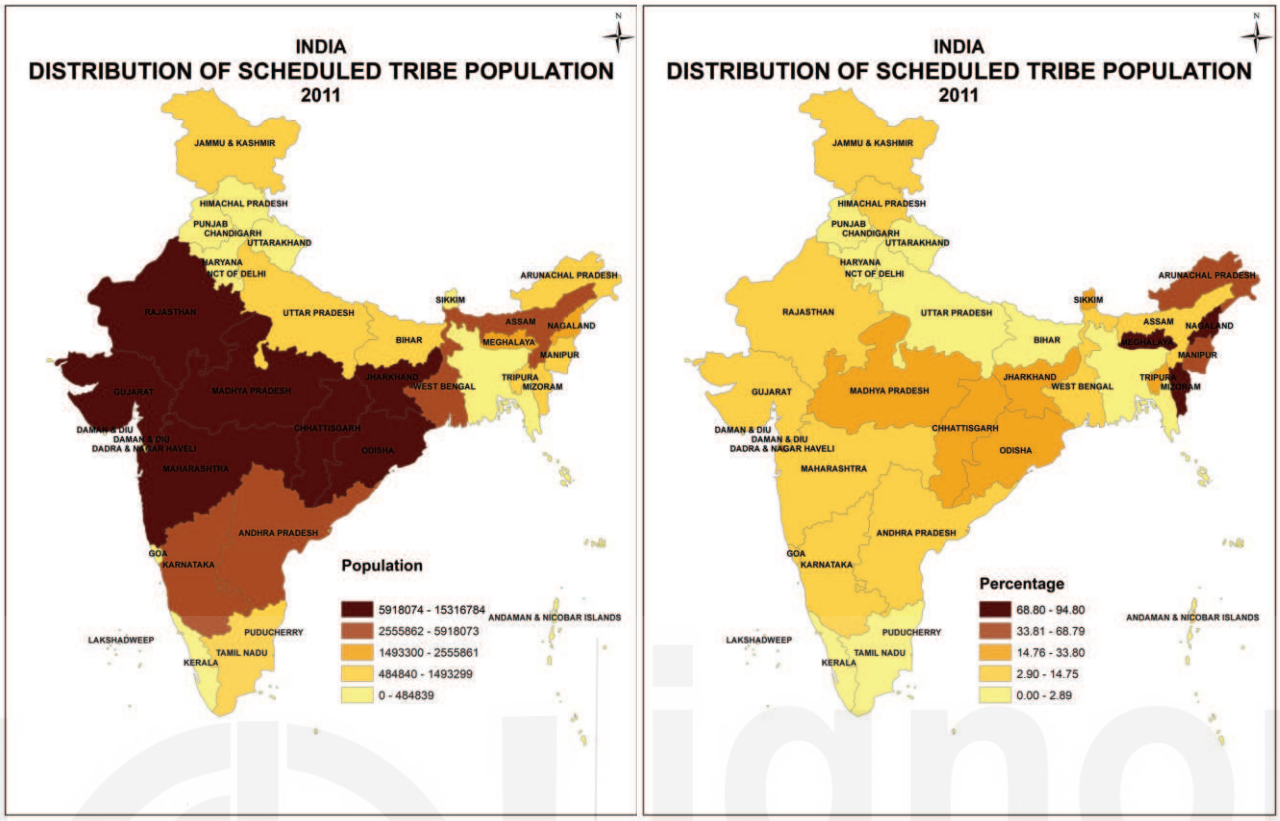


Fig. 5.6: Distribution of Scheduled Tribe Population in India.

There are some typical patterns of the ST population in the country. The numerical strength of the ST population in the states located in the North-East India is lower as compared to the states such as Chhatisgarh and Jharkhand located in Mid-India, but their concentration in the states are very high as the percentage of ST population out of the total state population is very high in majority of the North-Eastern states. It has been illustrated in Fig. 5.6. For example, Mizoram has a ST population of 1036115 but the share of the ST population in this state is very high (94.4 percent). The states and the Union Territories of Nagaland, Meghalaya, Arunachal Pradesh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Manipur have the relatively smaller ST population but their percentages in the states are 86.48, 86.15, 68.79, 51.95 and 48.88 respectively. Lakshadweep has the tribal population of 61120 persons only but their percentage is 94.80. The states of Maharashtra, Andman and Nicobar Islands, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Daman and Diu, West Bengal and Himachal Pradesh have the percentage of tribal population between 5-10 per cent, despite very large population in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Karnataka.

Similarly, the concentration of each of the individual ST groups varies considerably from one state to the other. For example, Santhals with a population of 27,54,723, is a major tribal group in Jharkhand but not so in Chattisgarh. On the other hand, Bhil is a major tribal group in Rajasthan. Nyishi with a population of 2,49,824 is the largest tribal group in Arunachal Pradesh. Among all tribes, the Bhil group is the largest one with more than one crore population followed by Gonds, Santhals, Mina, Naikda, Oraons, Sugalis, Munda, Naga, Khonds, etc. Every tribal community has its definite territorial spread. Delhi, Chandigarh, Punjab, Haryana and Puducherry do not register any ST population.

Scheduled Castes

Caste is a basic characteristic of Indian Society. For centuries it has served as a major reference point in social interactions and continue to do so in some form or the other even today. Social hierarchy is based on caste and it is this philosophical vision that determines the behaviour of millions of Indian people. Caste is ascribed to an individual at birth. The position of an individual in society and his/her sphere of social interaction and code of conduct are determined by his/her caste. Caste, therefore, operates as an instrument of social ordering. There are three major view points on caste. Firstly, caste is viewed as a product of division of labour. Secondly, it is viewed as a cultural phenomenon and operates as an institution. Thirdly, caste is viewed as social stratification leading to the institutionalisation of social inequality.

The origin of caste dates back to the Vedic Age where Palaeo-Mediterannean and Proto-Austroloids – societies primarily pastorals, hunters and gatherers were assimilated into the agricultural mode of social organisation by the later wave of population called Nordics or Indo-Aryans creating the division of labour. It created four kinds of stratified categories based on the skin colour. The top two categories – *Brahmans* and *Kshatriyas* were occupied by the Nordics themselves and the other two were designated to the other groups, where *Shudras* got the lowest berth after *Vaishyas* in the social hierarchy. These were the communities given the jobs related to purity and pollution (unclean jobs). The reflections of this system may be seen in many forms from social practices to the morphology of villages, neighbourhoods in urban areas and caste and clan territorialisation geographically.

Caste acquired a new meaning in India after independence. A large number of caste groups primarily falling in the *Shudra* group of caste fold were assigned the status of Scheduled Castes (SC). This was done on the basis of a scheduling policy guided by the Constitution of India for protective measures to these age-old deprived castes,which has been evolving since 1950. The scheduling policy is primarily invoked to address the issues arising out of centuries of discrimination, particularly through the practice of untouchability. The list of the SCs varies from state to state. There have been additions to the list of the Scheduled Castes time and again. The major groups among the Scheduled Castes category display a peculiar geographic pattern of distribution. Many of them are ubiquitous, some of them are distributed across the states. But, the majority of these castes are specific to a given state, or even to a cluster of districts in a state.

Spatial Distribution of Scheduled Castes

There are roughly 3000 castes estimated to exist in India, out of which as many as 779 have been designated as Scheduled Castes (SC).The Scheduled Castes with a population of 201378372 account for 16.6 percent of total population of India (Census 2011). However, the SC population is unevenly distributed in the different regions/states of the country. One of the important characteristics about the distribution pattern of SC population is that about one-half of the total SC population lives in four states only, namely, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar and Tamil Nadu. In terms of their population, the

largest number is in Uttar Pradesh with 4.14 Crore followed by West Bengal with 2.15 Crore. The states of Bihar, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Karnataka have the population between 1-2 Crore. Punjab, Odisha and Haryana contain the SC population between 0.5-1 Crore. Very small numbers are found in Mizoram (1218), Daman and Diu (6124), Dadra and Nagar Haveli (6186), Meghalaya (17355), Goa (25449) and Sikkim (28275). Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Lakshadweep and Anadaman and Nicobar Islands do not have Scheduled Caste population.

In terms of percentage of SC to the state population, Punjab with 31.9 per cent Scheduled Castes population occupies the first position followed by Himachal Pradesh (25.2 per cent) and West Bengal (23.5 per cent). Uttar Pradesh comes to the third position where Scheduled Castes constitute 20.7 per cent of the entire population, while it has the largest SC population in the country in terms of number. The share of Scheduled Castes among major states in southern India is close to the all-India average except in Kerala (9.1 percent). The SC population in all the North-Eastern states except Assam is very low, where no community has been scheduled as Scheduled Caste in Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland. 0-5 per cent SC population is found in the states of Sikkim, Manipur, Daman and Diu, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Goa, Meghalaya and Mizoram.

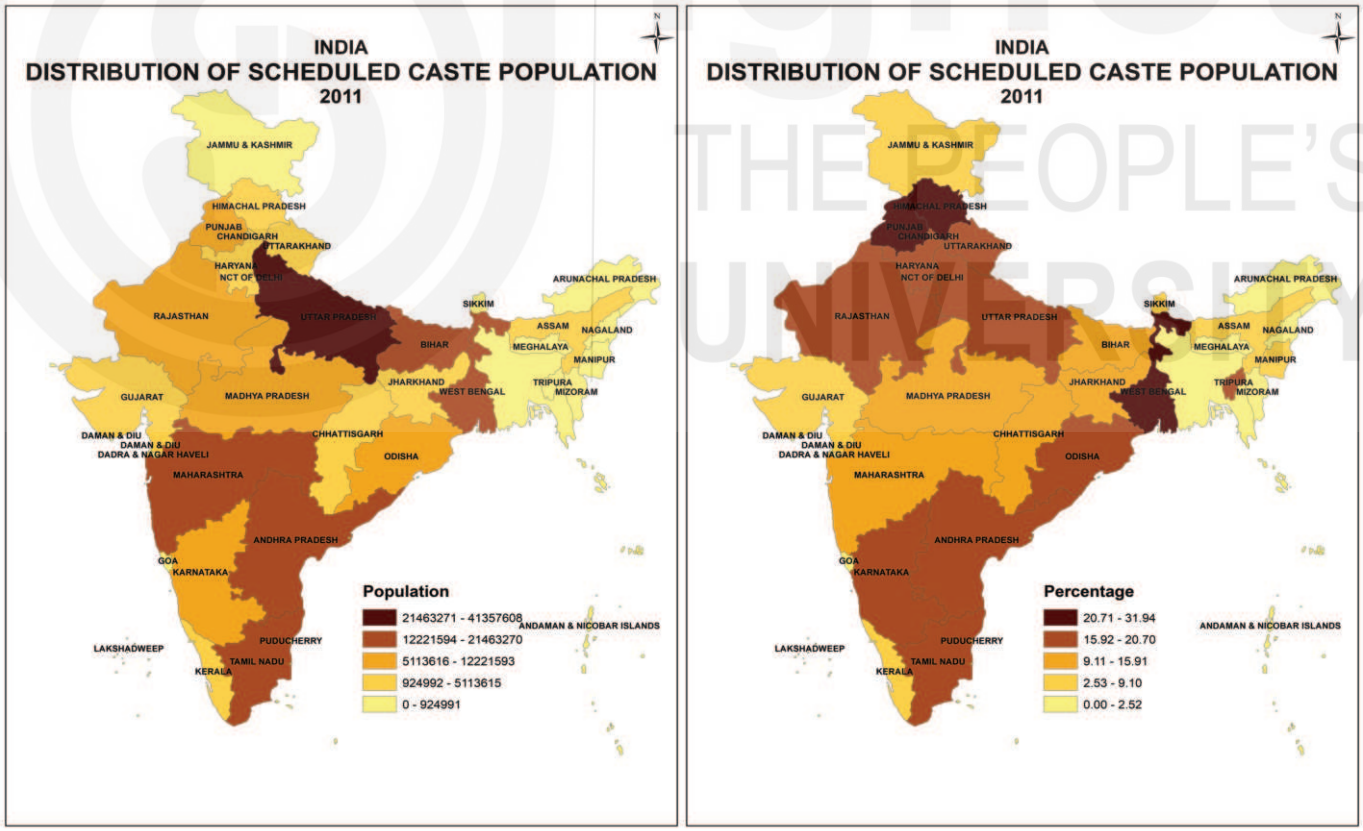


Fig. 5.7: Distribution of Scheduled Caste Population in India.

SAQ 4

Who are the Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes?

5.6 SUMMARY

In this unit you have studied:

- Races and ethnicity in India.
- The meaning, process and routes of peopling in India.
- Process of territorialisation and formation of regions in the country.
- Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes and their distribution.

5.7 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Describe the various racial elements and their distribution of Indian population.
2. What do you mean by peopling? Explain the process and probable routes of peopling of India.
3. Explain the process of territorialisation and region formation in India.
4. What do you mean by Scheduled Tribes and Scheduled Castes? Explain their spatial distribution.

5.8 ANSWERS

Self-Assessment Questions

1. The term race refers to groups of people who have differences and similarities in biological traits deemed by society to be socially significant, meaning that people treat other people differently because of them. Ethnicity refers to shared cultural practices, perspectives, and distinctions that set apart one group of people from another. That is, ethnicity is a shared cultural heritage. Various racial groups of people inhabiting India are Negrito, Proto-Australoid, Mongoloid, Mediterranean, Western Brachycephals and Nordic.
2. Peopling is the process of early in-migration and settling down of people of various racial/ethnic origins into a region or landmass from outside over a long period of time.
3. Territory means an area of land under the jurisdiction of a ruler or state. By definition it is an administrative category and a country or a state has it's own territorial area. On the other hand, a region is a homogenous area defined in terms of certain criteria.
4. The Scheduled Tribes refer to those tribal groups listed in the particular schedule of Indian constitution. The Scheduled Castes are those castes listed in the particular schedule of the Indian Constitution.

Terminal Questions

1. List the composition of Indian population with their racial elements and discuss their distribution. Refer to section 5.2

2. Define peopling as movements and inhabiting process by people in any region or territory. Refer to section 5.3
3. Explain how territorialisation took place by settling people in terms of inhabiting and colonisation of various regions as perennial nuclear region or areas of attraction, areas of relative isolation and areas of isolation or cul-de-sac. You may also link this with evolution of regions and the existence of present linguistic states of India starting from Janapadas and Mahajanapadas. Refer to section 5.4.
4. Define the Scheduled Tribes and the Scheduled Castes with their characteristics and explain their geographical distribution in India. Refer to section 5.5.

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UNIT 6

RELIGION AND BELIEFS

Structure

6.1 Introduction
Expected Learning Outcomes
6.2 Origins of Belief System
6.3 Types of Religions
6.4 Spatial Distribution of Different Belief Systems
6.5 Religious Composition of People in India
6.6 Religious Fusions
6.7 Summary
6.8 Terminal Questions
6.9 Answers
6.10 References and Further Reading

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Humans have always shown the curiosity towards understanding of the forces and the mysteries of the universe. This urge to know the unknown eventually developed into some kind of belief or faith and later into an organised system of social institution. In very simple terms, we can define religion as the belief in and worship of a superhuman controlling power – the God. Certain kind of values, ethos, traditions, practices and way of life may also be designated as religion. For example – Confucianism is usually considered among religions, although its founder actually taught the ethics of daily life; and the governmental-bureaucracies practiced it as a politico-ethical state cult (Chandna, 1986). Buddha, who went on in search of truth behind human sufferings and propagated his thoughts by establishing Sangha, later after his death grew into a formidable religion, which extended from South Asia to the Central, East and South East Asia.

Religion is considered to be any form of faith, from monotheism (established by the Hebrews in the middle- east) to ancestor worship (as in China) and even magic as long as it contains some elements of reverence for the supernatural.

Religion is considered as the oldest human pursuit. Still formulating a definition of religion that can command wider acceptability has proven to be an extremely difficult task. According to Max Muller, the roots of the English word 'religion', the Latin 'religio', was

originally used to mean only "reverence for god or the gods, careful pondering of divine things, piety."

The sacred was identified by Emile Durkheim as the most fundamental religious idea or phenomenon. He wrote: 'A religion is a unified set of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things'. By sacred he meant 'things set apart and forbidden - beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a church, all those who adhere to them. 'Sacred things are not, however limited to Gods or spirits. On the contrary, a sacred thing can be "a rock, a tree, a spring, a pebble, a piece of wood, a house, in a word, anything can be sacred". The important thing in this definition is, first, the notion of 'things set apart' and, then the idea of a 'moral community' (whether identified as a church or not), which in Durkheim's own words, is an 'eminently collective thing'. Certain places (temples, mosques, places of pilgrimage) and certain performance or events (births, deaths, marriages, eclipses) may be regarded as being apart.

In the previous unit of this Block, you have studied the diversity of racial elements and ethnicity. In this unit, you will study the religious diversity. The themes you will cover in the unit are the origin of belief systems, definition, and types of religion, spatial distribution of different belief systems and religious composition of people in India. You will also get to know about the religious fusions, which have been taking place in the realm of belief systems since long.

Expected Learning Outcomes

After completing the study of this unit, you should be able to:

- develop an understanding of the origin and distribution of major belief systems in the world;
- describe the spatial distribution of different religions in the world and India; and
- explain the newer forms of religion as an outcome of mixing of religions.

6.2 ORIGINS OF BELIEF SYSTEMS

Definition of Belief Systems and Religion

A belief system is defined as a set of mutually supportive beliefs. The beliefs of any such system can be classified as religious, philosophical, ideological, or a combination of these.

Religion can be explained as a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a super human agency or agencies, usually involving devotional and ritual observances, and often containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs.

Origins of Belief Systems

The question of the origin of religion in the human race still remains one of the unresolved mysteries confronting the human mind. The earliest evidence of religious ideas dates back to several hundred thousand years to the middle and lower-Palaeolithic periods. At first, humans developed belief system that were localised to the area in which they lived but as civilization developed, polytheism or worshipping many Gods became quite common, often cities, such as Athens, Greece, would worship patron Gods who were seen as their protector. In the middle-east the Hebrews first established the concept of monotheism or belief in single God. This laid foundation for later religions such as Christianity and Islam.

According to anthropologist John Monaghan and Peter Just, "Many of the great world religions appear to have begun as revitalisation movements of some sort, as the vision of a charismatic prophet fires the imaginations of people seeking a more comprehensive answer to their problems than they feel is provided by everyday beliefs. Charismatic individuals have emerged at many times and places in the world. It seems that the key to long-term success and many movements come and go with little long terms effect has relatively, but more to do with the development of a group of supporters who are able to institutionalise the movement". There are four schools of thought regarding the origin of the belief systems in the world. They are:

Intellectual Origin Theories

These theories assume that the primary source and value of religion is seeking answer to some questions. Adherents of this school believed that all the great symbols of the world's religions were personifications of natural phenomena; the sun, moon, stars, storms, the seasons of the year, etc. They also believed in the non-physical, trans-empirical substance existing independent of body. Herbert Spencer traced the origin of religion in the respect given to ancestors combined with beliefs in ghosts and fairies caused by dream experiences. According to James Frazer, religion developed out of an original magical stage of human culture, where a religionist seeks to understand the mechanism of nature and control it and believes in the existence of spirits that must be pleased and cajoled by prayers.

Emotive Theories

These theories consider emotional factors of fear, fetishism and unspecified emotions. Psychologist Wilhelm Wundt analyzed religion as a projection of fear into the environment. According to William James, there is a specific emotion in (hu)man which may be considered either a cause of religion or religious experience per se and admits that religion has profound emotional basis. Fetishism, on the other hand, refers to the undue emotional attachment to some object. Stones, trees and such objects are given extreme reverence and worshipped during ancient times. Hence, according to some scholars, religion is nothing but a form of fetishism.

Psychological Theories

These theories are highly speculative, conjectural and there are no adequate methods of verifying them. According to Emile Durkheim, religion is one of the ways of accomplishing socialisation, that is, integration, accommodation and adjustment of social and personal needs. The symbols of religion appear to their users to be about a realm of supernatural powers and forces. According to Sigmund Freud, the origin of religion can be traced back to the problem of child seeking to work out adequate relationships with his parents, particularly his father. The child regards his father a figure of absolute power, but as he grows the supremacy of father becomes untenable. Religion comes in as a substitute to fill up the vacuum created by displacement of the father. Religion, therefore, has its origin in man's attempt to project into the universe a belief in a cosmic father or God to give him support he once had from his human father.

Sociological Theories

According to Auguste Comte, the evolution of human thinking passes through three stages- Theological or Fictitious stage, Metaphysical or Abstract stage and Scientific or Positive stage. Of these, each succeeding stage is superior to and more evolved than the preceding stage. The Theological or Fictitious Stage is characterised by an unscientific outlook marked by lack of logical thinking. The primitive man attributes the various happenings to the imaginary or divine forces due to inability to discover the natural causes of those happenings. This kind of explanation of natural events in non-natural, divine, or imaginary way is known as theological or fictitious thinking. Comte has classified the theological stage further into- Fetishism, Polytheism and Monotheism. The second stage in the evolution of human thinking is the metaphysical or abstract thinking, under which belief in an abstract transcendental entity or absolute replaces the belief in personal concrete God. Under this, it is believed that an abstract power or force guides and determines the events in the world discarding the belief in concrete God. The positive or scientific knowledge is based upon facts, and these facts are gathered by observation and experience. Conclusions are drawn from the generalisation of the facts. The scientific thinking is thoroughly rational and there is no place for any belief on superstition in it.

SAQ 1

What is the difference between belief system and religion?

6.3 TYPES OF RELIGIONS

There are very few well organised systems of religion, which are highly systematised, tightly structured and have duly codified theological beliefs. There are 12 classical world religions – Baha'i, Buddhism, Christianity,

Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam, Jainism, Judaism, Shinto, Sikhism, Taoism, and Zoroastrianism. Religion alongwith the belief systems of indigenous/tribal people can also be broadly classified into the following groups:

- Universal*:* This is a religion that is easy to gain admission to and which actively works to convert members through missionary efforts. Examples include Christianity, Islam, and Buddhism.
- Ethnic: An ethnic or cultural religion is typically found in one specific region of the world. Admission is by birth, these religions do not actively invite new members. Examples include Hinduism, Confucianism, Taoism, Shintoism, and Judaism.
- Tribal: A tribal religion is specific to one particular group of people or tribe and is usually practiced in a highly localised region. They practice animism. Examples include the religions of each individual Native American group of people, Africa, South America, Asia (including Indian tribes), and Australia (aboriginal religions).
- Secular: About one-sixth of the world's population is indifferent towards religion. That is termed as "secular."

Baha'i

The Baha'i faith emerged as one of the youngest religions in the world in the recent past. It was founded by Baha'u'llah in 19th century in Persia. It is a monotheistic religion emphasizing the spiritual unity of all humankind. Three core principles establish a basis for Baha'is teachings and doctrine: i) the Unity of God, that there is only one God who is the source of all creation; ii) the Unity of Religion, that all major religions have the same spiritual source and come from the same God; and iii) the Unity of Humanity, that all the humans have been created equal, and that diversity of race and culture are seen as worthy appreciation and acceptance. According to Baha'i Faith's teachings, the human purpose is to learn to know and love God through such methods as prayer, reflection and being of service to humanity. Humanity is understood to be a process of collective evolution, and the need of the present time is for the gradual establishment of peace, justice, and unity on a global scale. The sacred texts include the collective writings of Baha'u'llah, especially his Kitab-i-Aqdas.

Buddhism

Buddhism has its origins about 2,500 years ago when Siddhartha Gautama, known as the Buddha, was enlightened at the age of 35. Buddhism is more of a philosophy or 'way of life' where Buddha tried to prescribe a 'do it yourself' psychotherapy for the welfare of mankind. Four noble truths of Buddhism include: There is suffering in life, the suffering in life has its cause in human desires, the suffering can be eliminated through control over human desires and there is a way to overcome the cause of suffering in the middle-path. This path adheres to eight virtues for complete elimination for sufferings from human life. These eight virtues of Buddhism include: Right knowledge, Right resolve, Right speech,

Right action, and Right means of livelihood, Right effort, Right memory, and Right concentration. The two main schools of thought in Buddhism are – The Hinayana and The Mahayana. The basic difference in the philosophies of Hinayana and Mahayana was that while the former believed in self effort or 'do it yourself', the latter believed in attaining salvation through knowledgeable and enlightened people like Gautama Buddha. Buddhism repeatedly emphasizes on the ethical virtues of non-violence (ahimsa), truth (satya), kindness to all beings, self-restraint, nobleness, chastity, etc. The holy book of Buddhism is the Tripitka.

Christianity

Christianity is a monotheistic religion believing in only one God. Although god is one, he is an internal Trinity, the Trinity being – God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Jesus of Nazareth is regarded as the son or sometimes Messiah of God, is the founder of the religion. He represents the true image of God on the earth. God is the creator, sustainer, and destroyer of the world. Christianity believes in a simple prayer to God without any rituals and that redemption or liberation is ultimately the fruit of God's grace. It also believes in the immortality of soul and, therefore, it believes in a life after death. Christianity also believes in heavenly angels, both good and bad. The Christian scriptures are called the Holy Bible – comprises of two books, the Old Testament (based on the Septuagint) and the New Testament. Christianity is generally broken into three branches: Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and Protestantism. Christians are expected to attend church services regularly, usually on Sundays and holy days such as Christmas and Easter. On these occasions Christians take part in sacraments, which are religious practices such as baptism, and receiving the Eucharist.

Confucianism

Confucianism is a Chinese set of philosophical and ethical beliefs that were taught by the sage Confucius. The core of Confucianism is humanism. It is a religion without positive revelation, with a minimum of dogmatic teaching, whose popular worship is centred in offerings to the dead, in which the notion of duty is extended beyond the sphere of morals proper so as to embrace almost every detail of daily life. It focuses on the practical, especially the importance of the family, and not on a belief in gods or the afterlife. Confucian thought focuses on the cultivation of virtue and maintenance of ethics. Some of the basic Confucian ethical concepts and practices include *rén*, *yì*, *Li* and *zhì*. *Ren* is an obligation of Altruism and humaneness for other individuals. *Yi* is the upholding of righteousness and the moral disposition to do Good. *Li* is a system of norms and propriety that determines how a person should properly act in everyday life. *Zhi* is the ability to see what is right and fair, or the converse, in the behaviours exhibited by others. The significant writing includes the Analects. Today, few people identify themselves as Confucians.

Hinduism

Hinduism, also known as Sanatana Dharma is the world's oldest religion and is a culmination of 3000 years of knowledge. The term Hindu originally had a geographical origin and hence territorial significance rather than creedal significance as Dr. S. Radhakrishnan, the President of India, said in 1974. Hinduism has a well-defined doctrine but does not have any single temple as the central authority. It has a well-defined value system in the form of four basic ideals of life, namely Kama, Artha, Dharma and Moksha. Hindu scriptures prescribe the four stages or ashrams of life - Brahmacharya (student), Grihastha (householder) Vanaprashtha (retired and Sanyasa (renunciate), which allow a human being to preserve the social order and also pursue the quest for moksha. The Bhagavad Gita advocates the path of devotion to God as a means to perform action within society without personal motive, which can also lead one to salvation. A Hindu does indeed have various paths to choose from in affirming his/her beliefs, which are comprised of yogis (ascetics) that meditate in the caves of the Himalayas; Brahmins (priests) who perform elaborate yajnas (ceremonial fires); and normal working class citizens who express their devotions through a countless number of bhajans (chants), pujas (prayers) and other rituals that tend to reflect the culture and local customs of a region. The other important scriptures of Hinduism include the Vedas (Rig Veda, Sam Veda, Yajur Veda and Atharva Veda), the Ramayana, the Mahabharata and the Upanishads.

Islam

Prophet Muhammad founded Islam which means 'to surrender', and 'to make peace'. Under his banner the scattered tribes of Arabia became a nation and the followers came to be known as Muslims. The teachings of Muhammad are contained in the 'Holy Quran'. Some of his teachings are as follows:

There is only one God- 'Allah' and Muhammad is his prophet.

Idol worship is a curse and should be abandoned.

All men are equal and there should be no distinction of any sort among the prophet's followers. There should be no question of inferiority and superiority.

There will be a day of judgment when each one will be rewarded or punished according to one's deeds.

A Muslim should pray on Friday at the mosque and observe the five appointed times of prayer or Namaz.

He should give charity to the poor.

He should fast during the month of Ramzan.

Muslim should go to Mecca, once in a lifetime.

Muhammad was against the practice of drinking and gambling and condemned the taking of the flesh of pig. He tried to improve the position

of women and put an end to the practice of female infanticide. The Islamic calendar is called Hijri.

Jainism

Mahavira founded the religion Jainism. He had eleven ardent disciples called Ganadharas. The Jain religion flourished by leaps and bounds. Jainism lays great stress upon non-violence. Not even the minutest creature is to be harmed. Jainism makes it obligatory on everyone to speak the truth as non-violence cannot be followed without the practice of truth. According to Jainism, a true follower of Jainism must live a very simple life, have minimum wants and must learn to control his desires. The main religious text of Jainism is called Agamas. Agamas are written in the Prakrit language and are read and studied by Jain monks only. The sacred literature was not written down until 500 AD. The Jainism was then divided into two parts - Digambara and Shvetambara. The former are followers of Bhadrabahu and remain nude, while the latter has adopted white garments. There are very few followers of Jainism and are found only in certain parts of India. Its high and sound principles are impediment in its way.

Hence, it is not very easy for the common people to practice it.

Judaism

Judaism is the oldest known monotheistic religion still practiced in the world today. Abraham is the founder of Judaism. However, Moses is also considered a founder due to his role in the liberation of Hebrews from Egypt and his delivery of the Ten Commandments. *Torah* and *Talmud* are the significant writings of Judaism. It is conceptualised as a triad of three points of reference- God, Torah and the People of Israel or Jewish people, where God symbolises the vertical relationship of followers with God, Israel symbolises the horizontal relationship among each other (Jews) and Torah symbolises the both vertical and horizontal relationships in defining the way of life. Judaism believes in a single, omniscient, omnipotent, benevolent and transcendent God, who created the universe and continues to govern it. Originally Judaism had priests and a temple in which sacrifices were made to God. Modern Judaism is generally split into three groups: Orthodox, Conservative, and Liberal.

Shinto

Shinto, which means “Way of the Gods,” is the traditional religion of Japan that focuses on nature. Founded around the year 500 BCE, it evolved from a mixture of tribal religions with similar beliefs and is based on Japanese mythology. The Shinto believes that Japanese are originally given birth by the couple of deities named Izanagi and Izanami and that they had Kami nature in them. Shinto recognises no all-powerful deity and is a diverse set of traditional rituals and ceremonies, rather than a system of dogmatic beliefs or ethics. Shinto recognises a variety of gods (kami), which are the powers of nature primarily associated with such

things as animals, trees, mountains, springs, boulders, the sun, and sometimes ancestors. Offerings are made to these gods. Reverence is paid to the ancestors through the practice of ancestor worship. Shinto rituals involve dance and Shinto priests bless the offerings to the gods with branches from the sacred sakaki tree dipped in holy water. Japanese religion underwent radical changes after the country was opened to Western technology and ideas and began to industrialise rapidly in the mid-19th century.

Sikhism

Sikhism was founded by Guru Nanak in Punjab (India) in the fifteenth century. Guru Nanak combined his preaching with devotional music. The followers of Guru Nanak came to be known as Sikhs. A Sikh believes in one God and prays only to Him, has faith in Ten Gurus, and follows the dictates of Guru Granth Sahib (the holy book). It condemns caste system and preaches universal brotherhood. Sikhs believe that liberation from the karmic cycle of rebirths occurs in the merging of the human spirit with the all-embracing spirit of God. The deity is known by several names: Sat (truth), Sat Guru (true Guru), Akal Purakh (timeless being), Kartar (creator), and Wahi-Guru (praise to the Guru). Sikh males are recognisable by their long beards and turbans – worn to cover the hair that tradition says they should not cut. The Golden Temple in Amritsar is a holy place for the entire Sikh community.

Taoism

Taoism is a religious tradition that originated in China at around the sixth century B.C. in the latter part of the Chou Dynasty. The Chinese philosopher Lao Tze is considered to be the founder of Taoism. Significant writings include the Tao-te-Ching. The goal in Taoism is to achieve Tao, to find the way. The Chinese character for Tao is a combination of two characters that represent the words head and foot. The character for foot represents a person's direction or path. The character for head represents a conscious choice. Tao is the ultimate reality, a presence that existed before the universe was formed and which continues to guide the world and everything in it. Tao is sometimes identified as the Mother, or the source of all things. The focus is not to worship one god, but instead on coming into harmony with Tao. The path to Tao is individual, it comes from within. Tao means the way, but this way is never taught. Taoism also believes in the concept of reincarnation.

Zoroastrianism

Zoroastrianism was practiced in Ancient Iran as early as 6th century B.C.E. The worship was to maintain the natural order, truth, and righteousness of the universe. Although it's early history is obscure, following its establishment by the Iranian prophet Zarathustra (known in the West as Zoroaster), Zoroastrianism was the most important religion in three successive Iranian empires. The distinctiveness of Zoroastrianism lies in its insight that all of creation, including humanity, is involved in the

cosmic struggle between the good God, Ahura Mazda, and the evil of Angra Mainyu. At both the individual and cosmic levels, the good or evil nature of life is the result of free will. Zoroastrians also believe in the concepts of heaven and hell, the resurrection of the dead, and a final judgment when evil will be overthrown. The history of Zoroastrianism in the twentieth century has been concerned with issues surrounding community identity, especially in response to western religious thought and scholarly criticism.

SAQ 2

What are the major types of religions of the world?

6.4 SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF DIFFERENT BELIEF SYSTEMS

The spatial pattern of distribution of the major belief systems in the world today is the result of centuries of diffusion, conversion and change. Each belief system has its own sphere of dominance. As of 2010, 84 per cent of the world's population identify themselves with one or the other religious group. The geographic distribution of religious groups varies considerably.

At the same time, it has also been reported that roughly one-in-six people around the globe (1.1 billion, or 16%) have no religious affiliation. This makes the unaffiliated third-largest religious group worldwide, behind Christians and Muslims, and about equal in size to the world's Catholic population. Surveys indicate that many of the unaffiliated hold some religious or spiritual beliefs (such as belief in God or a universal spirit) even though they do not identify with a particular faith.

The major religions in the world are Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. Christians with a population of about 2.2 billion people is the largest religious group in the world, constituting about 32 percent of the world's population. Their territorial expanse extends from the North and South America in the west through Europe, Eurasia, Southern Africa, onto Oceania with small pockets in South and South-East Asia. Within the Christian belt, the Roman Catholics are most widespread. It spreads over the countries of Ireland, France, Belgium, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece, Monaco, Vatican City, San Marino, Austria, Slovakia, Poland, Hungary, Croatia, Czech Republic, Lithuania, and most of the Latin America, which are not influenced by the British and the Dutch rule. The Protestant areas include Northern Ireland and UK, northern parts of Netherlands, Scandinavia, northern and southern parts of Germany, Denmark, Estonia, South Africa and Oceania. The Russian Orthodox Church predominates in the Russian speaking regions of Eastern Europe, Eurasia, and the Caucasus. USA has the largest Christian population in the world, accounting for 11.2 percentage of the world Christian population. It is followed by Brazil (8%), Mexico (5%), Russia (4.6%), and Philippines (4%).

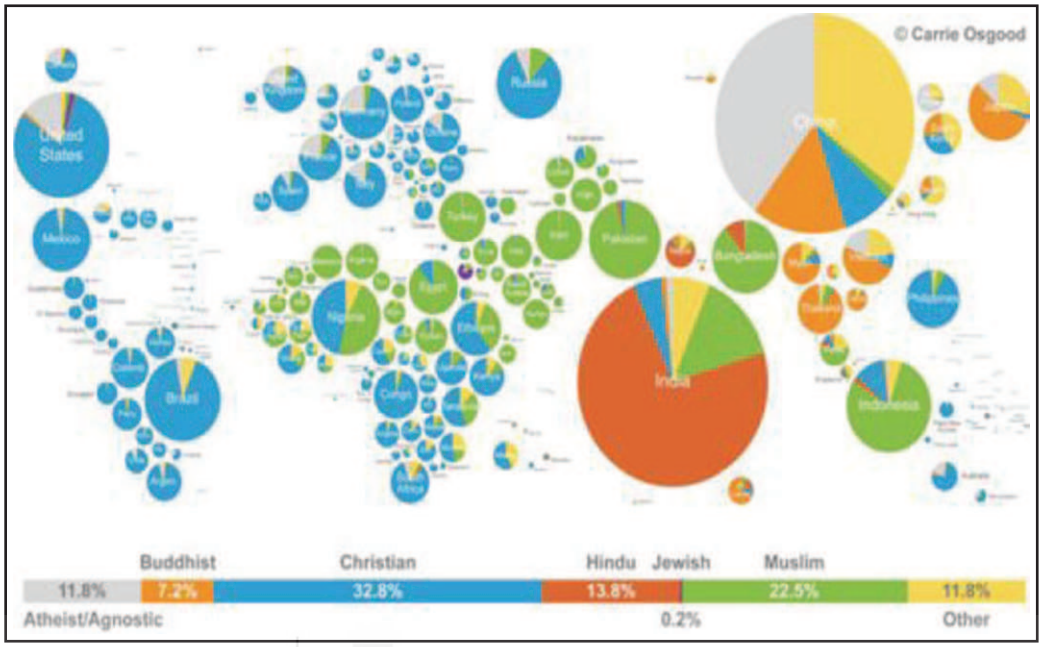


Fig 6.1: Major Religions in the World.

Source: http://www.openculture.com/2019/03/a-visual-map-of-the-worlds-major-religions-and-non-religions.html, accessed on 16.04.2019

Christianity is followed by Islam in terms of areal spread. 23 per cent of the world's populations (1.6 billion people) are Muslims by faith. The Islamic belt stretches from Mediterranean Africa, through Middle East to Pakistan and Bangladesh and further to the countries of Malaysia and Indonesia in the South East Asia. In Europe, Islam prevails in the countries of Albania, Bosnia, Serbia. In Africa, Algeria, Egypt, Libya, Morocco, Tunisia, Chad, Mali, Niger, Sudan, Somalia, Djibouti, Gambia, Guinea, Nigeria, etc.; In Asia, Tazakistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan; Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, Syria, Turkey, Yemen, Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, etc. Indonesia has the largest Muslim population in the world accounting for 13.1% of the world's total Muslim population. It is followed by India (11%), Pakistan (10.5%), Bangladesh (8.4%) and Nigeria (4.8%).

Hinduism accounts for 15 percent of the world's total population (1 billion people), most of which is concentrated in the Indian Sub-Continent. Countries having a sizeable Hindu population include India accounting for 94.3 per cent of the world's Hindu population, followed by Nepal (2.3%), Bangladesh (1.3%), Indonesia (0.4%), Pakistan (0.3%), Sri Lanka (0.3%), US (0.2%), Malaysia (0.2%), Myanmar (0.1%), etc. It is also spread in United Kingdom, Mauritius, Fiji, Trinidad and Tobago, UAE, etc.

Buddhism accounts for 7 per cent of the world's total population (500 million people) and is spread in small pockets all over South and South East Asia. While the followers of the Hinayana school of thought are found in Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Cambodia, etc., the adherents of the Mahayana school of thought are found in Tibet, Sin Kiang, Mongolia, Taiwan, Japan, North and South Korea, Bhutan, Vietnam, India, Malaysia, Brunei, etc.

Judaism comprises of 0.2 per cent of the world's population (14 million people) and are found in many countries of Europe, and North America but the core concentration lies in Israel. Numerous smaller Jewish groups are found in Ethiopia, Yemen, India, China and other parts of the world.

An estimated 56 million people, little less than 1 per cent of the global population, belong to other religions, which includes Baha'i faith, Jainism, Sikhism, Shintoism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, etc. Baha'i is found all over the world but its main concentration remains in Iran, Panama, Bolivia, Papua New Guinea, Chad, and Kenya. Sikhs make up 0.39 per cent of the world's population and are mainly concentrated in Punjab (India). They are also found in Canada, East and West Africa, Middle East, South East Asia, UK, USA and Australia. Shintoism is mostly concentrated in Japan, as Taoism in China. Jainism is found in India, Belgium, Canada, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore and US. Followers of Zoroastrianism are found in the Mumbai region of India, Karachi in Pakistan, Sydney in Australia, Iran and parts of North America.

A large majority of Jews (44%) live in North America, while about two-fifth of them lives in Israel.

About 6 per cent of the world's population (400 million people) are involved in Animistic practices, which include African traditional religions, Native American religions, Australian aboriginal religions, Chinese folk religions and tribal faiths and practices all over the world including India.

Overwhelmingly, Hindus and Christians tend to live in countries where they are in the majority; 97 per cent of all Hindus live in the world's three Hindu-majority countries (India, Mauritius and Nepal), and nearly nine-in-ten Christians (87%) are found in the world's 157 Christian-majority countries.

Though by smaller margins, most Muslims (73%) and religiously unaffiliated people (71%) also live in countries in which they are the predominant group. Muslims are a majority in 49 countries, including 19 of the 20 countries in the Middle East and North Africa. The religiously unaffiliated make up a majority of the population in six countries, of which China is by far the largest. The others are the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hong Kong, Japan and North Korea.

Most members of the other major religious groups live in countries in which they are in the minority. Seven-in-ten Buddhists (72%), for example, live as religious minorities. Just three-in-ten (28%) live in the seven countries where Buddhists are in the majority: Bhutan, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, Laos, Mongolia, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

SAQ 3

What are the proportions of major religions of the world in the total population?

6.5 RELIGIOUS COMPOSITION OF PEOPLE OF INDIA

Multiplicity of religious faith is an important aspect of India's population- a hallmark of India's religious pluralism. Although the traditional religion of India is Hinduism, many other faiths and belief systems, from tribal forms of religion to Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism, Christianity and Islam have co-existed for centuries. India is the birth place of four major religions— Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism and Sikhism. Hinduism is the oldest religion originating during the pre-Vedic era. Buddhism and Jainism evolved during the sixth century BC. Christianity was introduced in the first century of the Christian era while Islam was brought by the Arab traders and popularised by the Turkish conquerors. Sikhism was the last to appear on the scene. The spatial pattern of distribution of different religious groups was greatly modified by large scale migration following partition of India in 1947. Partition brought about a major change in distribution and relative strength of different religious faiths in Northern, North-Western and North-Eastern India.

The different religious groups of India mainly consist of Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains, although other religious faiths such as Judaism and Zoroastrianism are also represented. Moreover, several tribal communities continue to retain faith in tribal religions based on totemism and animism classified as 'Other religions and persuasions' (Fig. 6.2). According to 2011 census, Hindus with a population of 966.25 million population account for 79.8 per cent of the total population of India and are the largest religious group in the country.

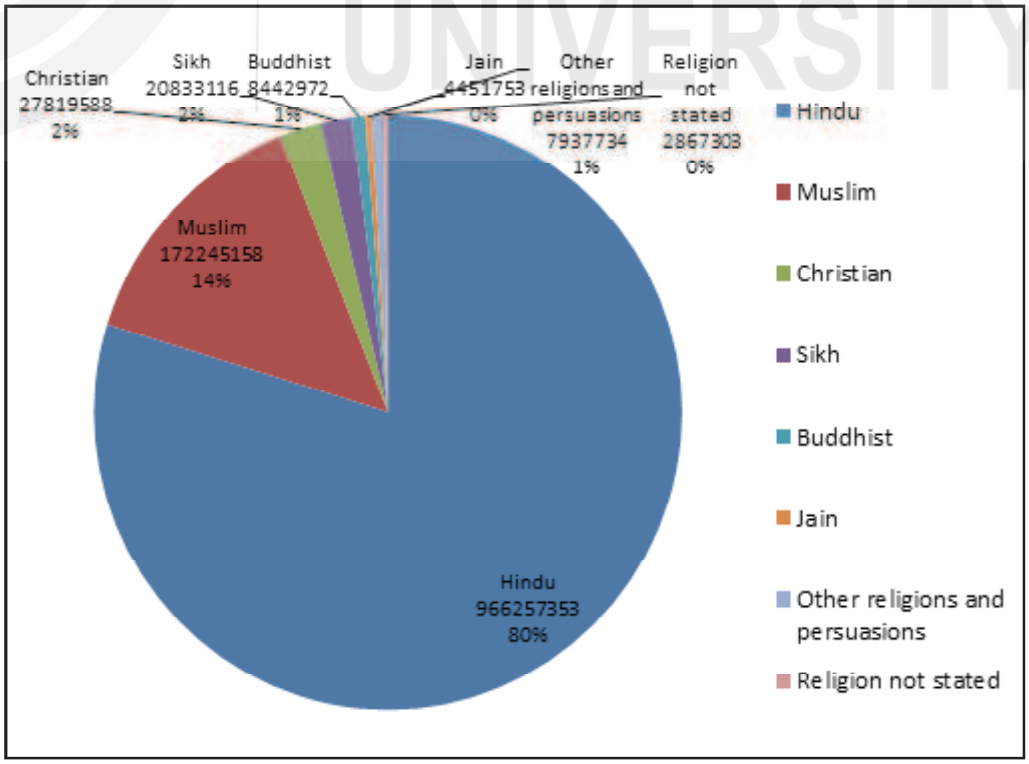


Fig. 6.2: Population by Religious Groups in India, 2011.

The population distribution of Hindus across various States and Union Territories reveal significant spatial variations, ranging from 159.31 million in Uttar Pradesh to a very small number of 1788 in Lakshadweep. Maharashtra with a Hindu population of 89.70 million occupies the second position after Uttar Pradesh, while Bihar with 86.08 million Hindus comes to the third position. The percentage of Hindu population remains well above 90 percent in Chhattisgarh, Eastern Gujarat, Southern Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Odisha, Madhya Pradesh and the Union Territory of Dadra and Nagar Haveli. It constitutes an absolute majority in the total population of all states except in Jammu and Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Lakshadweep.

Muslims with a population of 172.25 million constitute the second largest religious group in India, comprising of 14.23 per cent of the country's population. In another words, every seventh person in our country is a Muslim. As in the case of Hindus, the distribution of Muslims across different states and Union Territories also reveal wider spatial variations. In fact, a little below of one-half of the entire Muslim population of the country is concentrated just in three states of Uttar Pradesh (38.48 million), West Bengal (24.65 million) and Bihar (17.56 million). The shares of these three states out of total Muslim population are 22.34 per cent, 14.31 per cent and 10.19 per cent respectively. On the other hand, there are states like Sikkim where the presence of Muslim population is insignificant, below 10,000. At district level, their percentage is as high as 56 per cent in Murshidabad (West Bengal), and more than 20 per cent in Bijnor, Moradabad, Bareilly, and Pilibhit (Uttar Pradesh). Pockets of large concentration are also found in Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat.

Christians constitute the third largest religious community of the country. According to 2011 census, there are 27.82 million Christian followers accounting for 2.29 per cent of the total population. Kerala has the largest Christian population of 6.14 million, accounting for more than one-fifth of total Christian population in the country. In Kottayam and Ernakulum districts of Kerala Christians account for 47.5 and 40.2 percent of the total population respectively. A very overwhelming majority of population in the North Eastern states like Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya are Christians accounting for more than 75 percent of the total population of the respective states. Manipur comes to the fourth position with 41 per cent of the population being Christians. Though Kerala has the largest Christian population, the share out of the total population is 18 per cent.

Sikhs with 20.83 million population is the fourth largest religious group in India, accounting for 1.72 per cent of total population of the country. Sikhs constituted just 1.4 per cent of the total population of India in 1941. This rose to 1.7 per cent in 1951 as a result of migration of large number of Sikhs from Pakistan. While there is no part in India where the Sikhs are not represented, their major concentration is in Punjab followed by Chandigarh, Haryana and Delhi. Minor pockets of Sikh concentration are

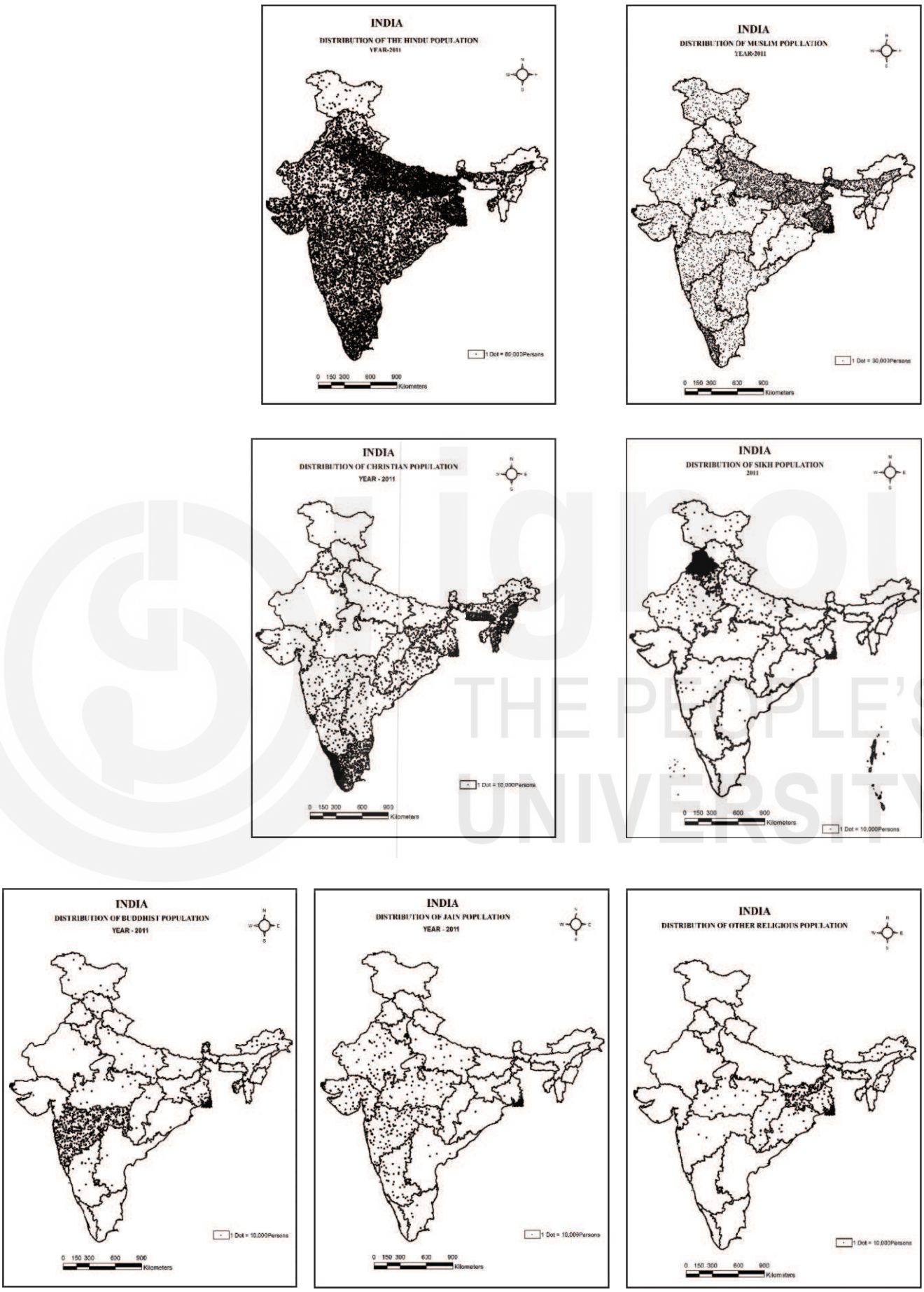


Fig. 6.3: Spatial Distribution of Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Budhist, Jain and Other Religion and Persuasions in India, 2011.

found in the Tarai region, Ganganagar, Alwar and Bharatpur districts of Rajasthan and some districts of western Uttar Pradesh.

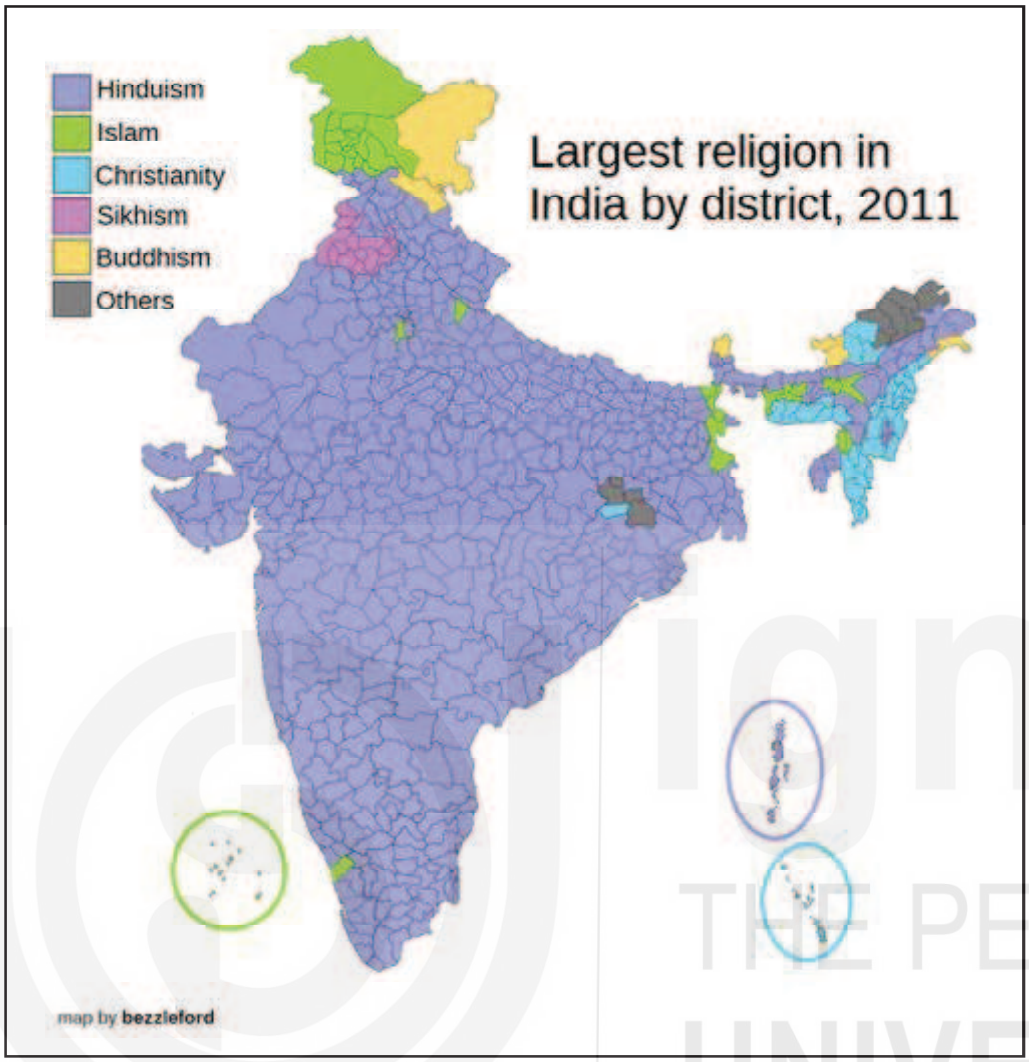


Fig. 6.4: Spatial Distribution of Major Religions in India.

Source: https://i.pinimg.com/originals/ac/9a/06/ac9a067f30eb9e2cfc8aeb9473d37ab1.png, accessed on 16.04.2019.

Buddhists with a population of 8.44 million account for 0.69 per cent of the total population of the country. Out of that about 77.35 per cent live in Maharashtra alone. The main pockets of traditional Buddhism, however, lie in Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh and Tripura.

The population of Jains in our country is 4.45 million and constitutes about 0.36 per cent of the total population of the country. Out of that about 31.45 per cent live in Maharashtra, about 14 per cent in Rajasthan and about 13 per cent in Gujarat. These three States account for 58 per cent of the Jain population of the country. The Zoroastrians (Parsees) are the smallest religious group in India and constitute just 0.4 per cent of the population of India. More than 90 percent of this community is concentrated in Mumbai and in Surat.

While discussing about religious groups in India, we should also pay attention to a fact that there are 7.94 million population in our country whom Census of India, 2011 enumerated as a category 'Other Religions and Persuasion'. It means that this sizeable population practices religions and persuasions other than the major religions in India and a large majority of such population may belong to tribal groups who are nature worshippers and/or animists. Some of the examples of such religious communities are Sarna, Addi Bassi, Adi, Baiga, etc. One may be surprised to know that the population of Sarna religious community in our country is 4.95 million that is higher than that of the Jains.

Interestingly, there are 1.22 million population in India who did not state their religion during the census of 2011.

SAQ 4

Mention the major religions of India.

6.6 RELIGIOUS FUSIONS

Religious fusion is a process of amalgamation or fusion of beliefs and practices of various religions into one system of faith/practices. We will discuss some of such fusions in this section.

Animism

Animism is the oldest known type of belief system in the world. It includes African traditional religions, Native American religions, Australian aboriginal religions, Chinese folk religions, and tribal faiths and practices in India under different names and all over the world. Animists practice nature worship and believe that everything in the universe has a spirit. They also believe that ancestors watch over the living from the spirit world and hence, practice. Several forms of animism can be found in the worldviews of countless indigenous peoples from every geographical area and period of time, from Paleolithic Africa to modern North America. Ancient Europeans believed that every river, every stone, every tree has its local animating force. Humans called many of these forces "land spirits", "elves", and other such names that denoted presences of that, while strange and inhuman, were nevertheless recognised as being personal in their own right. Animists also believe in life after death.

Cao Dai

Cao Dai is a fusion religion that was founded in South Vietnam in the year 1926 by Ngo Minh Chieum, which unites Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Islam and Taoism into one monotheistic religion. It means "kingdom of heaven". The ultimate goal of Cao Dai is to escape the cycle of birth and rebirth. The main symbol of the religion is a large all-knowing left eye. The main practices of the religion are prayer, veneration of ancestors, non-violence, and vegetarianism. Its three main saints are Sun Yat-sen, Victor Hugo and Nguyen Binh Khiêm. Other personalities in the pantheon of saints include Jeanne d'Arc, Thomas Jefferson, Shakespeare, Churchill, Napoleon and Lenin. Cao Dai is the third largest religion in Vietnam. Cao Dai is also practiced outside of Vietnam, primarily the United States, Australia, France and Germany. Its largest temple is being constructed in Riverside, Southern California.

Sufism

Sufism was a reform movement within Islam, which started in Persia. It came to India on the eve of the establishment of Delhi Sultanate and was influenced by religious views prevalent among Indians. The term 'Sufi' was derived from word 'Safa' (pure) because of the purity of their hearts, thoughts and the nobility of their actions. The philosophy of Sufism consists in belief in one God and regards every individual as part of Him. The Sufis preached the doctrine of universal brotherhood. They believed in the Guru or Master, whom they called Pir. The Sufis travelled in different parts of India and preached their doctrine in local dialects. Hazrat Khwaja Muinnu-Din Chisti and Hazrat Khwaja Nizam-ul-Din Auliya were among the early preachers of Sufism in India. Their Dargahs (burial place) have become important places of pilgrimage for devout Muslims from all over India and even from abroad.

Bhakti Movement

The doctrines of the Bhakti movement had their origin in the Bhagvad Gita and the Upanishads. The world 'Bhakti' means devotion to God. The Bhakti movement was not new; its doctrines had their origin in the Bhagavad-Gita and the Upanishads. The followers advocated love and devotion to God and discarded all sorts of rituals and ceremonies. They did not believe in any sort of caste distinctions and preached oneness of God and "that all religions were but roads leading to the same goal". The Bhakti movement helped in removing the existing bitterness between the Hindus and the Muslims. The Bhaktas exposed the hollowness of empty rituals and ceremonies and taught the people to give up evils like belief in superstitions, etc. Some important Bhakti Reformers includes Ramanuja, Ramananda, Kabir, Namdeva, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, and Mirabai who was a Rajput princess and a passionate devotee of Krishna. She preached in Brijbhasha, the common language of the people. Her songs and verses are very popular even today.

Din-i-Illahi

Din-i-Illahi was formulated by the Mughal Emperor Akbar as a religious movement in the late 16th C. It was primarily an ethical system, which prohibited sins like lust, sensuality, slander, and pride and enjoining the virtues of piety, prudence, abstinence, and kindness. There was an encouragement of purifying soul through yearning of God. Slaughter of animals was discouraged and forbidden. Celibacy was also discouraged and disregarded. No sacred scripture was in place but an object of divine worship was light in the form of Sun and fire. However, Din-i-Illahi was very limited and could not survive. Still it had impacts in Indian Islam.

Brahmo Samaj

Brahmo Samaj was a Quasi-Protestant, theistic movement within Hinduism, founded in Calcutta in 1828 by Raja Ram Mohan Roy. It denied the authority of the Vedas, has no faith in incarnations, and karma (causal

effects of past deeds) or rebirth. Influenced by Islam and Christianity, it denounced polytheism, idol worship and the caste system. The society has had considerable success with its programs of social reform but has never had a significant popular following. The movement discouraged social evils like untouchability, sati system, etc. and encouraged widow remarriages and education. Although the movement lost force in the 20th century, its fundamental social tenets were accepted, at least in theory, by the Hindu society.

Arya Samaj

The Arya Samaj, founded in 1875 by Swami Dayanand Saraswati, undertook the task of reforming Hindu religion in north India. Swami Dayanand believed that Hindu religion had been perverted due to false teachings. For his own inspiration, Swami Dayanand went to the Vedas, which he regarded as the fountain of all knowledge. He believed that every person had the right of direct access to God. He stood up against Hindu orthodoxy and opposed to idolatry, ritual and priesthood, and particularly to the prevalent caste practices. He also favored the study of western sciences. The Arya Samajists were advocates of social equality and promoted social solidarity and consolidation. At the same time, one of the Arya Samaj's objectives was to prevent the conversion of Hindus to other religions.

Prarthana Samaj

Prarthana Samaj was a social reform movement founded by Dr. Atmaram Pandurang in 1867 with an aim to make people believe and worship only one God. Prarthana Samaj critically examined the relations between contemporary social and cultural systems and religious beliefs and gave priority to social reform as compared with the political changes already initiated by the British Government. Their comprehensive reform movement led many impressive projects of cultural change and social reform in west India, such as the improvement of women and depressed classes, an end to the caste system, abolition of child marriages and infanticide, educational opportunities for women, and remarriage of widows.

Theosophical Society

The Theosophical society was founded by Madame H.P. Blavatsky, Colonel H.S. Olcott, W.Q. Judge and others in 1875 in New York. In 1893 Mrs. Annie Besant being influenced by Blavatsky became a member of Theosophical society and acted as its nucleus in India. The prime objective of Theosophical Society was to propound an organisation of the people on the basis of brotherhood, to study ancient religion, science and philosophy available to any part of the world and to develop divine powers of men. They believed in the transmigration of the soul, theory of Karma, rebirth and liberation and also preached the universal brotherhood of men. The Theosophical Society immensely contributed to the socio-cultural, socio-political and socio-religious life of the nation. It provided scientific basis to all those principles, which were so far accepted by the Hindus on the basis of conservatism and superstition.

SAQ 5

What do you mean by religious fusions?

6.7 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have studied:

- Origin of the belief systems and religions.
- Types of religions in the world.
- Spatial distribution of different belief systems of the world.
- Religious compositions in India.
- Religious fusions.

6.8 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Explain the origin of belief systems and religions and major theories of origin.
2. Describe in detail the major types of belief systems and religions and also their spatial distribution pattern with maps.
3. Explain the religious composition in India with suitable maps and diagrams.
4. What is religious fusion? Write in details with suitable examples.

6.9 ANSWERS

Self-Assessment Questions

1. A belief system is defined as a set of mutually supportive beliefs. The beliefs of any such system can be classified as religious, philosophical, ideological, or a combination of these. Religion can be explained as a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a super human agency or agencies, usually involving devotional and ritual observances, and often containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs.
2. The major types of religions of the world are Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Baha'i, Confucianism, Jainism, Judaism, Shinto, Sikhism, Taoism, and Zoroastrianism. Religion alongwith the belief systems of indigenous/tribal people.
3. Proportion of major religions of the world- Christianity-32%, Islam-23%, Hinduism-15%, Budhism-7% Baha'i faith, Jainism, Sikhism, Shintoism, Taoism, Zoroastrianism, Jainism, etc.- less than 1% each, Animism (tribal religion)- 6%, No religious affiliation- 6%.
4. The major religions of India are Hindu, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist, Jain, and Other Religions and Persuasions (including Animism/Tribal religions). In India also, there are people who do not state their religion.
5. It refers to the fusion of diverse religious beliefs and practices into one system of faith/practices.

Terminal Questions

1. Explain how belief systems and religion originated through the major theories of origin like Intellectual Origin Theory, Emotive Theories, Psychological Theories and Sociological Theories. Refer to Section 6.2.
2. Discuss the types of major belief systems and religions and show their distribution on map with description. Refer to Section 6.3 and 6.4.
3. Discuss the religious composition in India and illustrate with suitable maps and diagrammes. Refer to Section 6.5.
4. Define and explain the religious fusion as how it emerges from the amalgamation of many religions. Cite suitable examples while explaining. Refer to Section 6.6.

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UNIT 7

LANGUAGES

Structure

7.1 Introduction
Expected Learning Outcomes
7.2 Language and Dialects - Origin and Diffusion
7.3 Linguistic Classification
7.4 Spatial Pattern and Distribution of Languages
7.5 Monolingualism, Bilingualism, Multilingualism and Language Shift
7.6 Linguistic Regions
7.7 Summary
7.8 Terminal Questions
7.9 Answers
7.10 References and Further Reading

7.1 INTRODUCTION

In Unit 5 of this Block, you studied how human populations settled in different parts of India and ethnic composition of the Indian population took place. You also studied the in-migration of various ethnic groups, their probable migration routes and areas of their inhabitation in the Indian subcontinent. In-migration has a linkage with the diffusion of languages and emergence of various linguistic regions in India also.

You may be aware that language is an area of study in other disciplines like linguistics, anthropology, sociology among others. In human Geography the study of languages is an important area of study as a part of Social or Cultural Geography focusing on the patterns and interactions of languages in relation to the physical environment and space. In this unit language is studied with a view to understand the origin and spread; classification, distribution pattern and linguistic regions of India. In section 7.2, you will study definitions of language and dialect, and the difference between language and dialect followed by their origin and diffusion in the country. In the next section, you will learn the classification of languages starting from Grierson's Linguistic Survey of India 1927 upto the Census of India 2001. In section 7.4, you will study about the numerical strength and geographical distribution of various languages in the country. Some of you may be speaking only one language at home, school and other places and some of you may be

speaking two or more than two languages. These situations are called monolingualism, bilingualism and multilingualism. You will also learn about the concept of language shift. All these aspects of language are covered in section 7.5. Finally, in section 7.6, you will study the different linguistic regions of our country in relation to the geographical factors.

In the next unit, you will study the cultural characteristics of these regions.

Expected Learning Outcomes

After completing the study of this unit, you should be able to:

- define language and dialect;
- trace the origin and spread of languages;
- identify the major language families;
- identify the linguistic classifications in India;
- explain the terms monolingualism, bilingualism, multilingualism and language shift;
- explain the numeric and spatial distribution pattern of languages in India; and
- identify the linguistic regions in the backdrop of geographical factors and region formation.

7.2 LANGUAGE AND DIALECTS–ORIGIN AND DIFFUSION

The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary defines language as the system of communication in speech and writing that is used by people of a particular country or area. Fellmann and other human geographers have defined language as "an organised system of spoken words by which people communicate with each other with mutual comprehension" (Fellmann, Getis and Getis, p. 141). Dialect is defined as distinct linguistic form within a language that is spoken in a particular region or by a specific community.

In the most general terms, language is defined as a systematic method of communicating ideas, attitudes, intent or knowledge through the use of mutually understandable written or spoken signs, sounds or gestures. Languages are the means of exploration, expression and exchange of knowledge. Dialects are the regional or social variants of a language, where the words and pronunciation of a language is differently used in various dialects of that language. Dialects are geographic (spoken by same area or locality) and social (spoken by same social group). Many languages/dialects are for oral communications only. You can understand the difference between language and dialect by taking the example of Hindi or any other language. Hindi spoken in Allahabad is different from the ones spoken in Delhi or Bhopal much the same way as English spoken in the United States of America is different from that spoken in the United Kingdom or Australia.

There are various theories on the origin of languages. It is assumed that there is a direct relationship between material culture and language throughout the history of human social evolution. By this assumption, languages evolved with the emergence of material culture or tool making where interpersonal interaction was inevitable. Finally, language got refined with complex expressions with the advent of new tools and technologies. Different language families evolved in different regions due to geographical separation and lack of continuous interactions and in the same way the different dialects developed within language families due to spatial compartmentalisation within the same language region.

You may be aware that India is inhabited by people coming from different parts of the world according to one hypothesis mentioned in unit 5. The early in-migrants brought various languages with them, which evolved over time into different forms. The diffusion of languages also may be understood with their migration routes and colonisation of various parts of the country. The Gazetteer of India (1965), Volume One reveals that the Negroid family was the first language family. However, there is no language of this family in the country either due to the non-survival of speakers or assimilation of the language with others. The older languages in India are Austric and Tibeto-Chinese followed by Dravidian and Aryan. Indo-Aryan is the newest language to come to India.

As The Gazetteer of India (1965, Volume One) accounts, the Austric or Austro-Asiatic is supposed to be the oldest language having probable origin in Indo-China or South China that spread into India. The other possible origin recorded is that the speakers of Austric are very old off-shoot of the Mediterranean people coming to India from the west before Dravidians arrived in India. This group has survived today in the central Indian tribal tract (Munda Group) and Meghalaya in north-east (Mon-Khmer Group spoken by Khasis).

The origin of Tibeto-Chinese speakers is said to have taken place in the west of China 4000 years before Christ. The Siamese-Tibetan got spread along the Himalayan range and in the foothills from Laddakh to Indo-Burmese border including the north-eastern states of India maintaining the continuum from its place of origin, i.e. northern China.

The Dravidian's origin is assumed to have taken place in Asia Minor and the Eastern Mediterranean. Currently the Dravidian languages are primarily located in the southern states of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala and Pondicherry leaving trails in the form of patches in Pakistan (Brahui) and central and eastern India (Kurukh, Malto, Kora, Kui, etc).

The Gazetteer records that the Indo-European languages have originated from a common Primitive Indo-European speech that flourished about 5000 years ago in south of the Ural mountains and Asia Minor region. The spread of Indo-Aryan language is in the entire North India including Assam and Tripura in the north-east and extending up to Goa in south.

You may understand the language diffusion from the transmigration routes and region formation of various racial groups of people who came into the country, which you have studied in the first unit of this Block. If you match

The Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary defines language as the system of communication in speech and writing that is used by people of a particular country or area. Fellmann and other human geographers have defined language as "an organized system of spoken words by which people communicate with each other with mutual comprehension" (Fellmann, Getis and Getis, p. 141). Dialect is defined as distinct linguistic form within a language that is spoken in a particular region or by a specific community.

the distribution of languages with the migration routes and region formation by early in-migrants and settlers as illustrated in Fig. 7.1, all these distribution and patterns reflect the ways of diffusion also.

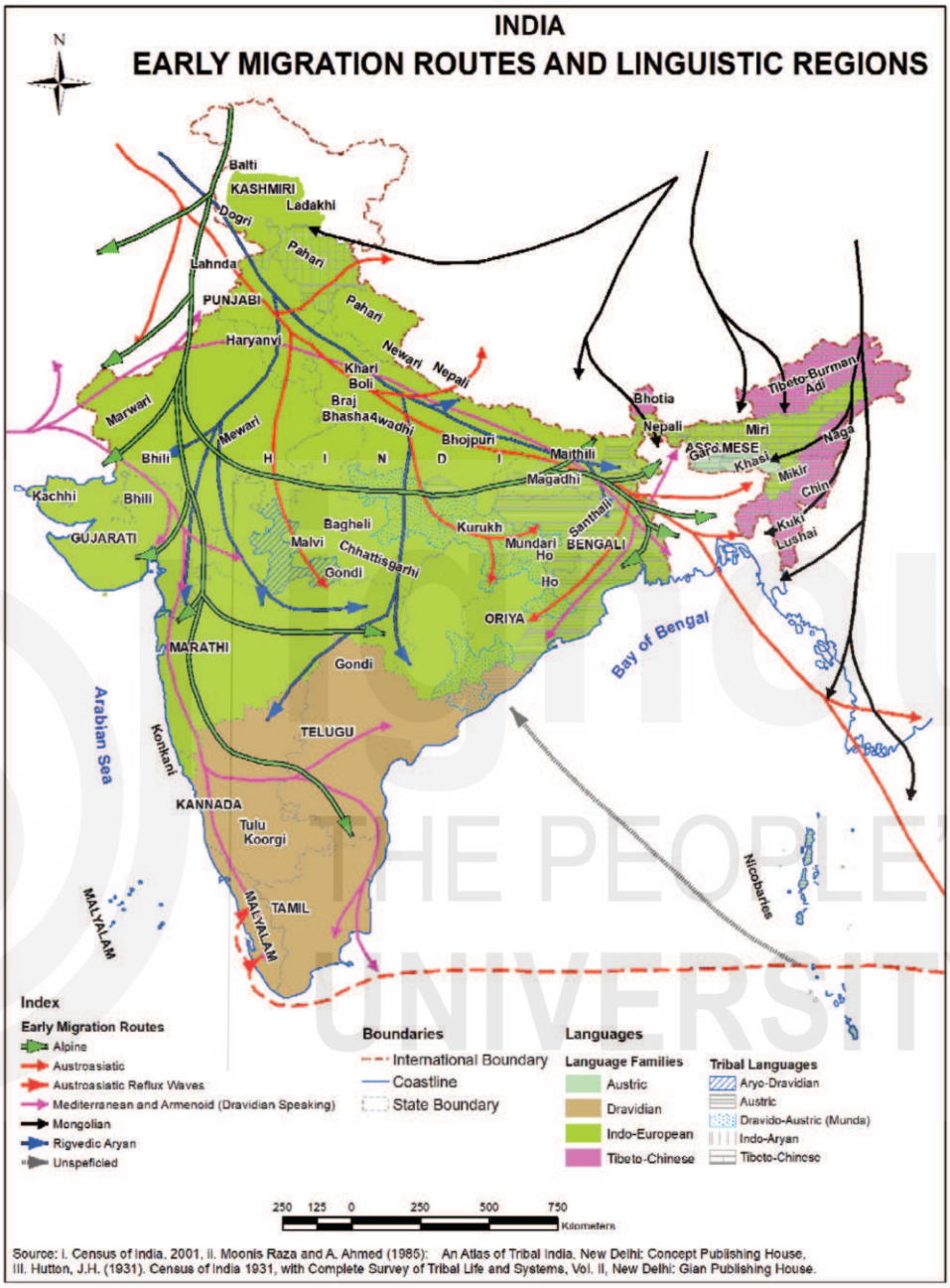


Fig. 7.1: Early Migration Routes and Linguistic Regions in India.

The pace of diffusion has been very closely linked with the passage of time, where the quantum of spread gradually increased with time. As you are witnessing it today, language diffusion is taking place at a very faster pace due to the advent of new information and communication technology (ICT). Now the languages have reached every nook and corner of the world overcoming all physical barriers due to the widespread use of ICT.

We would like to inform you that geographical factors also play an important role in the development of language. Groups of people living in compartmentalised and closed manner due to physical barriers develop their distinct language because of physical isolation. Gradually, zones

between two linguistic regions develop when two groups begin to interact with each other and learn to communicate with one another providing opportunity for the birth of a new language or dialect.

SAQ 1

Define and differentiate language and dialect?

Mention the probable places of origin of major language families of India.

7.3 LINGUISTIC CLASSIFICATION

Are you aware how diverse the world is in terms of language and dialects? You may note that there are approximately 6000 languages in the world. Can you imagine what would be the number of dialects in the world as it changes after every small distance? These languages or dialects are huge in number and are grouped under certain umbrella terms based on vocabulary, phonetics and grammar called language groups, language branch and language families, where language family is at the top. Within a language family, there are sub-families, branches, sub-branches and groups of languages having common origins.

The major language families of the world are as follows:

I. Indo-European
II. Caucasian
III. Basque
IV. Sino-Tibetan/Tibeto-Chinese
V. Afro-Asiatic
VI. Congo Kordoanfan
VII. Nilo-Sharan
VIII. Khosian
IX. Dravidian
X. Japanese
XI. Uralic-Altic
XII. Austro-Asiatic
XIII. Korean
XIV. Paleo-Siberian
XV. Ainu
XVI. Malayo Polynesian
XVII. Papuan
XVIII. Australian
XIX. Amerindian (North)
XX. Amerindian (South)

You may see the distribution of the above language families which is given under Section 7.6 of this unit.

Linguistic Classification in India

In India, Sir George Abraham Grierson conducted the first Linguistic Survey during 1894-1927 and recorded 179 languages and 544 dialects. These have been grouped under four language families in India- 1. Austro-Asiatic known as *Nishada*, 2. Tibeto-Chinese known as *Kirata*, 3. Dravidian known as *Dravida* and 4. Indo-European known as *Arya*. These language families are further sub-divided into sub-families, branches, sub-branches, groups and languages, which we will discuss in Section 7.4

The language families became five in 2001, with an additional family-Semito-Hamitic that includes a language Arabic or Arbi, as per the classification of Census of India 2001. You may refer to Tables 7.1 and 7.2 for details. You may note that in Table 7.1, Indo-European Family has got two new branches, namely: Iranian and Germanic in addition to the earlier single branch, i.e. Indo-Aryan branch. The Iranian branch includes Afghani/ Kabuli/Pashto and Persian and Germanic branch includes the language of English. In the past English was placed as 'Mother tongue with unspecified family affiliation.

Census of India 2001 classifies 122 languages given below in Table 7.1. The languages having less than 10000 speakers at all India level or were not identifiable and the languages of 127,108 persons of 3 sub-divisions of Senapati district of Manipur were not included in language data since the Census results for these sub-divisions were cancelled in 2001. The proportion of this category of languages was only 0.17 per cent of the total population of India. The information from the 2011 Census could not be used as it was not available when this unit was being prepared.

The languages listed in 8th Schedule of the Constitution of India are known as the Scheduled Languages. There are 22 such languages in India. You may identify the scheduled languages in in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1: Languages Spoken by more than 10000 Speakers in India, 2001

Family	Branch	Language/Dialect
1. Indo-European	*(i) Indo-Aryan*	Assamese (S), Bengali (S), Bhili Bhilodi, Bishnupuriya, Dogri (S) Gujarati (S), Halabi, Hindi (S), Kashmiri (S), Khandeshi, Konkani (S), Lahnda Maithili (S), Marathi (S), Nepali (S), Oriya (S), Punjabi (S), Sanskrit (S), Shina, Sindhi (S), Urdu (S)
	(ii) Iranian	Afghani/Kabuli/Pashto, Persian
	(iii) Germanic	English
2. Dravidian		Coorgi/Kodagu, Gondi, Jatapu, Kannada (S), Khond/Kondh, Kisan, Kolami, Konda, Koya, Kui, Kurukh/Oraon, Malayalam (S), Malto, Parji, Tamil (S), Telugu (S), Tulu
3. Austro-Asiatic		Bhumij, Gadaba, Ho, Juang, Kharia, Khasi, Koda/Kora, Korku, Korwa, Munda, Mundari, Nicobarese, Santali (S), Savara
4. Tibeto-Chinese		Adi, Anal, Angami, Ao, Balti, Bhotia, Bodo (S), Chakesang, Chakru/Chokri, Chang, Deori, Dimasa, Gangte, Garo, Halam, Hmar, Kabui, Karbi/Mikir, Khezha, Khiemnungan, Kinnauri, Koch, Kom, Konyak, Kuki, Ladakhi, Lahauli, Lakher, Lalung, Lepcha, Liangmei,

		Limbu, Lotha, Lushai/Mizo, Manipuri (S), Maram, Maring, Miri/Mishing, Mishmi, Mogh, Monpa, Nissi/Dafla, Nocte, Paite, Pawi, Phom, Pochury, Rabha, Rai Rengma, Sangtam, Sema, Sherpa, Simte, Tamang, Tangkhul, Tangsa, Thado, Tibetan, Tripuri, Vaiphei, Wancho, Yimchungre, Zeliang, Zemi, Zou
5. Semito-Hamitic		Arabic/Arbi

(S) = Scheduled

Source: *Census of India, 2001*, www.censusindia.gov.in

SAQ 2

Mention the major language families of India.

7.4 SPATIAL PATTERN AND DISTRIBUTION OF LANGUAGES

Numerical Strength

You will agree that there exists a vast linguistic diversity in the world in general and India in particular. In India alone, 6661 mother tongues were recorded by the Census of India 2001, and Hindi was the predominant mother tongue with 41 per cent of the total speakers. The other major languages in India are Bengali (8.1 per cent speakers), Telugu (7.2 per cent speakers), Marathi (7 per cent speakers) and Tamil (5.9 per cent speakers). According to the Census of India 2001, only 30 languages were spoken by at least ten lakh people and 234 mother tongues in 122 languages were spoken by more than 10000 speakers. The Census does not provide information about languages having speakers less than 10000 persons. Therefore, the identity of such minor languages and groups remains a challenge in the plural linguistic profile of India.

As you have seen in the map above (Fig. 7.1), Indo-European family occupies the largest coverage in terms of area in the country and is also numerically the largest language family in India with 76.86 per cent speakers (Table 7.2). The next language family is Dravidian with 20.82 per cent speakers. Austro-Asiatic, Tibeto-Chinese and Semito-Hamitic families constitute 1.11, 1.00 and 0.01 per cent speakers respectively.

Austro-Asiatic and Tibeto-Chinese languages are spoken mainly by the tribal population in the country. Though tribal groups also speak the languages of Dravidian and Indo-European families. For example Kurukh, Malto, Gondi, Kui, Koya, Kisan, Kolami, Khond, etc. are the tribal languages of Dravidian family and Bhili, Sadri, etc. of Indo-European family.

Table 7.2: Family-wise Grouping of the 122 Scheduled and Non-Scheduled Languages -2001

Language families	Number of Languages	Persons who returned the languages as their mother tongue	Percentage to total population
1. Indo-European (a) Indo-Aryan	21	790,627,060	76.86
(b) Iranian	2	22,774	0
(c) Germanic	1	226,449	0.02
2. Dravidian	17	214,172,874	20.82
3. Austro-Asiatic	14	11,442,029	1.11
4. Tibeto-Burmese of Tibeto-Chinese Family	66	10,305,026	1.00
5. Semito-Hamitic	1	51,728	0.01
Total	12	1,026,847,940*	99.82*

* The balance of 1,762,388 (0.17%) population out of total Indian population 1,028,610,328 comprises of 1,635,280 speakers of those languages and mother tongues, which were not identifiable or returned by less than 10000 speakers at all India level and the population (127,108 persons) of Manipur was not included in language data since the Census results were cancelled in 3 sub-divisions of Senapati district of Manipur in 2001.

Source: *Census of India, 2001*

Hindi and its variants (dialects) constitute more than half of the Indo-European family (53.38 per cent). The other languages of this family are Bengali, Marathi, Urdu, Gujarati, Oriya, Punjabi, Assamese, Maithili, Kashmiri, Nepali, Sindhi, Konkani, Dogri, Khandeshi, Halabi and Sanskrit, where only Bengali constitutes more than 10 per cent speakers.

Telugu is the largest spoken language of Dravidian family followed by Tamil, Kannada and Malyalam. The other languages are Gondi, Kurukh, Tulu, Kui, Koya, Malto, Kisan, Kolami and Khond and are unscheduled. Telugu, Tamil, Kannada and Malyalam constitute for 96.08 per cent of the languages of Dravidian family.

In Austro-Asiatic family, Santhali is the single major language with 56.54 per cent speakers. Second largest language is Khasi, which is the only language of Austro-Asiatic family spoken in the north-eastern part of the country. In the east-central India Mundari/Munda, Ho, Savara and Kharia are other languages of Austro-Asiatic family. Nicobaries is another important language of this family.

Tibeto-Burmese sub-family of the Tibeto-Chinese family has many small languages especially in the North-East. The largest language is Manipuri with 14.23 per cent speakers in the family closely followed by Bodo with 13.11 per cent speakers. There are 66 other languages. The major languages having

more than one lakh population are Garo, Tripuri, Lusai/Mizo, Miri/Mishing, Karbi, Konyak, Nissi/Dafla, Thado, Rabha, Tangkhul, Ladakhi and Sema.

You will notice that 15 out of 22 scheduled languages belong to the Indo-European family, four to Dravidian family, one to Austric family and two under Tibeto-Chinese family. Out of the all Scheduled Languages, three are primarily spoken by the tribal population- Santhali, Bodo and Manipuri.

Spatial Pattern and Distribution

Let us now discuss the broad geographical pattern of the spatial distribution of language families in India namely, Indo-European, Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic, Indo-Chinese and Semito-Hamitic.We have presented this in Table 7.4 and also in Fig. 7.2.

I. Indo-European Family (*Arya*)

Indo-European family is the largest language family in India occupying largest area as well spread in the states and Union Territories of Goa, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Chhattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar, West Bengal, Assam, Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Punjab, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir, Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu. However, there are some areas with overlapping language families known as composite linguistic regions illustrated in Fig. 7.2.

It has three sub-families-Aryan, Iranian and Germanic. The Aryan sub-family has two branches-Indo-Aryan and Dardic *(Pisacha)*. You may see the Chart 7.1 for classification. Indo-Aryan branch has two sub-branches-Outer and Middle/Inner. Former has again three groups- North Western, Southern and Eastern. North-western group includes the languages of Lahnda (Punjab) and Sindhi (Maharashtra, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh). Southern Group of languages are Marathi and Konkani spoken mainly in Maharashtra, Goa, Daman and Diu and partly in the boarders of Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. Oriya, Bihari (Bhojpuri, Magahi/Magadhi, Maithili), Bengali and Assamese are the languages of Eastern Group spoken in Odisha, Bihar, West Bengal, Assam and Tripura. Bhojpuri is spoken in Eastern Uttar Pradesh also and Bengali is spoken in West Bengal and Tripura.

Dardic branch consists of Kafir, Khawar and Dard groups. The language under Kafir group is Wali Ala spoken in Uttar Pradesh and the Khowar language comes under Khawar group spoken in Assam. Dardi, Shina, Kashmiri and Kohistani languages fall under the Dard group and spoken in Jammu and Kashmir. This sub-family is isolated in the north.

The Mediate sub-branch has two major groups - Mediate/Central and Pahari and three other unspecified groups. The Mediate/Central Group of languages are Hindi, Urdu, Punjabi, Gujarati, Bhili, Khandeshi and Rajasthani, which are spoken in the States of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttarakhand, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab. Some patches are also found in Maharashtra and Karnataka.

The Pahari group has three sub-groups- Eastern, Central and Western. Eastern Pahari includes Nepali language spoken in Sikkim, Assam, northern parts of West Bengal, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The Central Pahari includes the languages of Kumauni and Garhwali spoken in Kumaun and Garhwal regions of Uttarakhand. The Western Pahari languages are Western Pahari, Jaunsari, Sirmauri, Baghati, Kiunthali, Handuri, Siraji, Soracholi, Bashahri, Siraji-Inner Siraji, Sodochi, Kului, Mandi, Mandeali, Suketi, Charneali, Bharmauri/Gaddi, Churahi, Pangwali, Bhadrawahi, Bhalesi, Padari and Pahari-Unspecified. These are spoken in Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir states and also in some patches of Uttarakhand and Punjab. The other Indo-Aryan tongues are Mahasu Pahari, Tharu and Kewati spoken in Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra respectively. Old Middle Indo-Aryan Languages are Ardhmagadhi (Mahrashtra), Pali (Bihar, Maharashta, Karnataka), Prakrit (Tamil Nadu) and Sanskrit (Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh).

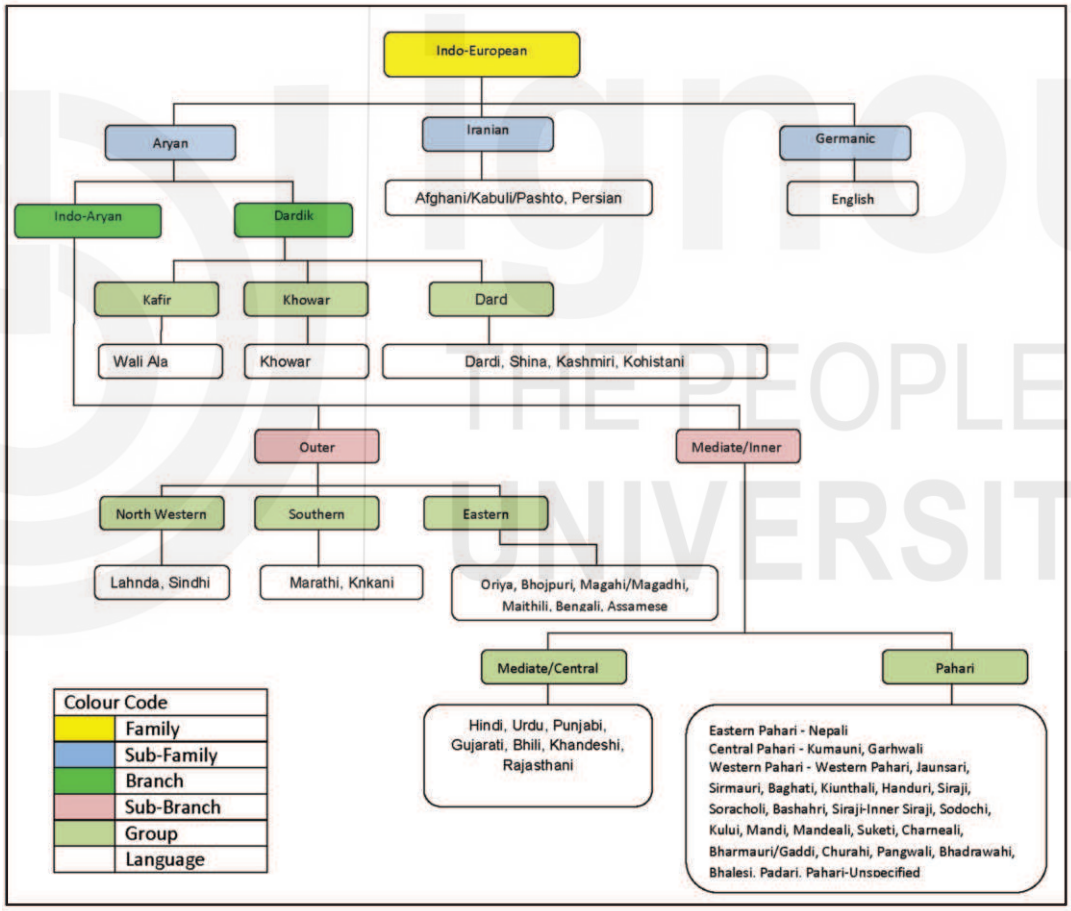


Chart 7.1: Classification of Indo-European Languages in India.

The Iranian sub-family of languages (Afghani/Kabuli/Pashto and Persian are spoken in Jammu and Kashmir, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh.

English, the language under Germanic sub-family, is the state language in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Meghalaya, southern India and substantially found in cities.

II. The Dravidian Language Family (*Dravida*)

Dravidian family of languages are mainly spoken in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Union Territory of Puduchery and

Lakshadweep. It is also spoken in few patches of Central Indian tribal belt in the north. It has three major groups-South, Central and North.

The South Group of languages are Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, Malyalam, Coorgi/Kodagu, Tulu, Toda and Kota. They have distinct regional boundaries. The languages are spoken in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Puduchery and Lakshadweep.

The languages of Central Group are spoken mainly by tribal groups. Kui, Parji, Khond/Kondh, and Konda languages are spoken in Odisha. Gondi is found in Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradhes, Chhatisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Gujarat and Maharashtra. Kolami is spoken in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha. Parji/Khond/Kondh and Konda are spoken in Odisha. Jatapu is found in Andhra Pradesh.

North group of Dravidian languages are Kurukh or Oraon and Malto which are spoken in Jharkhand, Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh.

The other Dravidian tongues are Dravidian, Madrasi, Ladhadi and Bharia. The traces of these languages are in the central and eastern part of the Central Indian tribal belt.

III. Austro-Asiatic Language Family (*Nishada*)

Austro-Asiatic or Austric family has no sub-family and has two branches- Mon-Khmer and Munda. Mon-Khmer branch has Mon-Khmer group of languages- Khasi spoken in Meghalalya and Nicobaries spoken in Nicobar Islands. The Munda branch consists of Munda group of languages. These languages are Santali, Mundari, Ho, Kherwari, Bhumij, Birhor, Koda/Kora, Turi, Asuri, Agaria, Birjia/Brijia/Binjhia, Korwa, Korku , Kharia, Juang, Savara, Gadaba and Munda- Unspecified. These languages are spoken in the States of Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bangal, Chhattisgarh and Bihar.

The Austro-Asiatic Languages are spread in the mid-Indian tribal region from Maharasthtra to West Bengal with two outliers. These outliers are Khasi in Meghalaya and Nicobaries in Andman and Nicobar Island. Now the Santhali is also found in the north-eastern part of the country, especially in Assam due to the workers' migration for tea plantation from their original homeland.

IV. Tibeto-Chinese Language Family (*Kirata*)

Tibeto-Chinese family *(Kirata)* has two sub-families-Siamese-Chinese and Tibeto-Burman (Chart 7.2). Siamese-Chinese sub-family includes Tai group of language-Khampti or Khamti. The speakers of Khampti language are spread over the North-Eastern boarders of Arunachal Pradesh (Lohit, Changlang, Lower Subansiri, Dibang and Tirup districts) and Assam (Lakhimpur, Dibrugarh and Cachar districts).

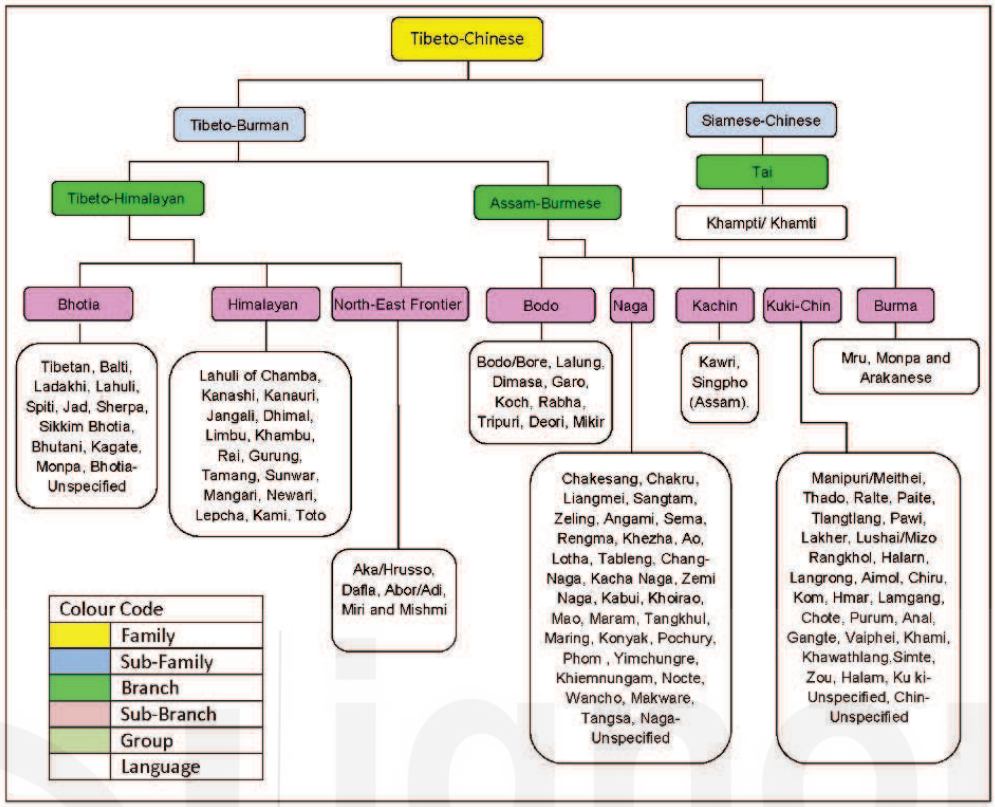


Chart 7.2: Classification of Tibeto-Chinese Languages in India.

Tibeto-Burman sub-family has two Branches- Tibeto-Himalayan and Assam-Burmese. Tibeto-Himalayan branch has three groups- Bhotia (Tibetan), Himalayan (Pronominalized/Non-Pronominalized Himalayan) and North-East Frontier (North-Assam). Bhotia group includes Tibetan, Balti, Ladakhi, Lahuli, Spiti, Jad, Sherpa, Sikkim Bhotia, Bhutani, Kagate, Monpa and Bhotia-Unspecified, which are spoken in the stretch of Himalayas from Sikkim in the east to Kashmir in the west.

The Himalayan group includes the languages of Lahuli of Chamba, Kanashi, Kanauri, Jangali, Dhimal, Limbu, Khambu, Rai, Gurung, Tamang, Sunwar, Mangari, Newari, Lepcha, Kami and Toto spoken from West Bengal to Himachal Pradesh with little offshoots in Punjab and Assam (Mangari). The majority of these languages are spoken in West Bengal and Sikkim.

North-East Frontier group consists of Aka/Hrusso, Dafla, Abor/Adi, Miri and Mishmi languages spoken mainly in Arunachal Pradesh and extended upto Assam.

Assam-Burmese Branch has five groups-Bodo, Naga, Kachin, Kuki-Chin and Burma. Bodo group of languages are Bodo/Bore, Lalung, Dimasa, Garo, Koch, Rabha, Tripuri, Deori and Mikir and are mainly found in Assam and Tripura. Naga group of languages are Chakesang, Chakru, Liangmei, Sangtam, Zeling, Angami, Sema, Rengma, Khezha, Ao, Lotha, Tableng, Chang-Naga, Kacha Naga, Zemi Naga, Kabui, Khoirao, Mao, Maram, Tanghul, Maring, Konyak, Pochury, Phom, Yimchungre, Khiemllungam, Nocte, Wancho, Makware, Tangsa and Naga- Unspecified and are found in Nagaland, Manipur and Assam. Zemi Naga is found also in Assam, and Nocte and Tangsa are in the boarders of Arunachal Pradesh. Kachin group includes the languages of Kawri (West Bengal) and Singpho (Assam).

Kuki-Chin Group includes the languages of Manipuri/Meithei, Thado, Ralte, Paite, Tlangtlang, Pawi, Lakher, Lushai/Mizo, Rangkhol, Halarn, Langrong, Aimol, Chiru, Kom, Hmar, Lamgang, Chote, Purum, Anal, Gangte, Vaiphei, Khami, Khawathlang, Simte, Zou, Halam, Ku ki-Unspecified and Chin-Unspecified. These languages are spoken in the states of Manipur, Assam and Nagaland. Burma group of languages- Mru, Monpa and Arakanese- are spoken in north-eastern part of West Bengal.

Tibeto-Chinese languages are spread in a ribbon like region from Baltistan and Ladakh in Jammu and Kashmir in the west to Arunachal Pradesh in the east. The Bhotia and the Himalayan groups are spread over Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Hilly Uttarakhand-Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Sikkim. The other languages of this family are found primarily in the north-eastern states.

V. Semito-Hamitic

This family of language- Arabic/Arbi is found in Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra.

There are small linguistic/dialect enclaves such as that of Bengali, which is also spoken in the State of Tripura, the Urdu in Tamil Nadu and Telangana surrounded by Dravidian languages, Kurukh is spoken in Indo Aryan and Austro Asiatic regions, Sadri is spoken in north Bengal, Assam, Andman and Nicobar Island and Delhi brought along with the migrants.

SAQ 3

Place the language families in India based on their numerical strength in descending order.

Draw a rough sketch showing the regions of major language families in India.

7.5 MONOLINGUALISM, BILINGUALISM, MULTILINGUALISM AND LANGUAGE SHIFT

Monolingualism is the ability of a speaker to communicate in one language/dialect only while bilingualism is the ability to communicate in two languages in terms of speaking and understanding. When it is more than two languages, it is multilingualism or poly-lingualism. Language shift is a situation where traditionally spoken language is replaced or displaced by another language. Language shift is also called language displacement where one is abandoned in favour of another.

Bilingualism among the speakers of regional or dominant languages are less than the speakers of tribal languages. Because tribals get exposed to and need to learn the language other than their mother tongue while interacting with the outside world in schools, work place, market and places of travel. It is considered that more than half of the world's

population is bilingual. Census of India 2001 records 24.79 per cent as bilingual and 8.51 per cent as multilingual speakers in India.

Language shift has continuously been taking place as the Linguistic Survey of India (1927) recorded 179 languages and 544 dialects in 1927, which got decreased to 122 languages 234 mother tongues in 2001 Census (excluding languages having less than 10000 speakers). It may be due to natural process of mingling and merging into other language, compulsion and also linguistic politics. The natural process includes the condition like urbanisation, where some communities gradually shift to the common language spoken in the place/region, especially in case of small linguistic groups and tribal communities.

Table 7.3: Changing Share of Speakers of Selected Mother Tongues in India,1961-2001

Communities and Mothertongue	1961		2001	
	Speakers	Percentage	Speakers	Percentage
Santhal (Santhali)	3247058	0.74	6469600	0.63
Munda (Mundari)	737037	0.17	1530709	0.15
Oraon (Kurukh)	1141804	0.26	1751489	0.17
Ho (Ho)	648359	0.15	1042724	0.10
Kharia (Kharia)	177159	0.04	239608	0.02
Gond (Gondi)	1501431	0.34	2713790	0.26
Maithili	4984811	1.14	12179122	1.18
Sadri/Nagpuria	532735	0.12	3287362	0.32
Total Speakers	438936918		1026847940	

Source: (i) http://www.languageinindia.com/aug2002/indianmothertongues1961aug2002.html, (ii) Census of India, 1961 and 2001

The Table 7.3 shows the changing share of speakers of various languages. The speakers of traditional language and population do not match reflecting the shift. Examples of language shift in this table may be seen with Munda, Oraon, Kharia and Gond communities. Most of the tribal languages have been declining in terms of its speakers. Hindi was spoken by 39.94 per cent population as per 1981 Census, which increased to 41.03 per cent. Hindi has been gaining possibly due to the assimilation and shift of small tribal language speakers to Hindi along with natural growth of speakers. The proportion of Indo-European laguages increased from 73.3 to 76.86 percent speakers during 1961-2001 and the decline from 24.5 percent to 20.82 percent speakers of Dravidian languages can also be attributed to languge shift.

The decline of tribal languages has been recorded between 1911 and 1961 (Brass 1974). Similarly, the number of Maithili recorded a sudden increase

in 1961 for the want of separate state based on linguistic identity (Khubchandani, 1971). It must be noted that the Census conducts no verification or test as to who speaks which language, it simply records the response of the people.

Language shift has also taken place from a tribal language to another tribal language at micro level due to the dominance of the regional language over the small group speakers. The growth in the share of Sadri speakers is also an example of language shift.

The region of Indo-European languages has been identified as most fluid one except West Bengal, Odisha and Assam. The region of southern Dravidian and Indo-Tibetan (North-Eastern States) are the most stable regions in terms of language fluidity.

SAQ 4

What do you mean by monolingualism, bilingualism and multilingualism? What do you mean by language shift? Mention some examples of language shift.

7.6 LINGUISTIC REGIONS

The assumptions are that different languages developed in particular areas, which were bounded by some geographical barriers and had sustained relative isolation from other languages. These languages have transition zones at the outer areas where two or more languages interact and get intermixed with varying degrees. Yet there are identifiable linguistic regions. Before studying the linguistic regions of India, you should know the broad linguistic regions of the world.

The spread of Indo-European family extends into the countries of Indian Subcontinents, parts of western Russia, Central Asia, Middle-Eastern Countries, Europe, major part of North and South America and Australia. Caucasoid is spoken in Russia and Georgia. Languages of Basque family are spoken in Spain and France. Sino-Tibetan or Sino-Thai languages are found in China, Tibet, Nepal, Bhutan, Burma, Thailand, Laos and India. Afro-Asiatic is spread in Middle-East, Israel and Africa. Congo Kordofanian, Nilo-Saharan and Khosian are spoken in the countries of Africa. Dravidian languages are found mainly in India, Sri Lanka and Pakistan. Ainu-Japanese and Korean languages are spoken in Japan and Korea respectively. Uralic-Altaic languages are found in Central Asia, Russia, Finland, Estonia, Norway, Sweden, Hungary and Siberia. Austro-Asiatic languages are spoken in India, Cambodia, Vietnam, Burma and Thailand. Paleo-Siberian languages are spoken in Siberian region.

Malayo-Polynesian languages are spoken in East Asian countries - Philippines, Indonesia, Vietnam, China, Cambodia, Madagascar and Malaysia. Papuan languages are spoken in Papua New Guinea. Australian languages are spoken in Australia. Amerindian languages are spoken in North and South America.

Broad Linguistic Regions in India

Since languages got developed among different human groups, these are very closely linked with specific physical and cultural milieu with many human activities leading to different types of cultural landscapes. Geographical factors have guided the successive movements and settlements of various ethnic groups in India as you have studied in the unit on peopling of India. The successive groups drove the previous ones into deep inside the country where the oldest groups, mainly tribals, secluded themselves by settling in remote hilly areas. This way the language also got its spread and present distribution manifesting the strong correlation with geographical factors.

India is a vibrant country known for unity in vast diversity in the form of ethnicity, religion, cultural practices and also in the form of numerous languages and dialects spoken by the people of India residing in various parts of the country. Populations residing in various regions or pockets developed their own languages or dialects giving distinct regional linguistic



Fig. 7.2: Linguistic Regions of India.

identities. Despite weak language boundaries and transitional zones there are linguistic regions in India which can be geographically distinguished. Linguistic regionalisation may be done based on linguistic family, state language and languages/dialects, which characterise various regions as monolingual regions or composite regions discussed in the following sub-sections.

I. Language Family Based Linguistic Region

The regionalisation may be done based on the spatial distribution of the language families. The Indo-Aryan is the largest region. It covers all the northern and eastern states, Maharashtra and Goa in west and south west; and Assam and Tripura in north east (Fig. 7.2). The Dravidian region is also very clearly demarcated in southern India covering Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Puduchery. The Tibeto-Chinese region is in a ribbon shape starting from Ladakh in Kashmir to all the north eastern states.

The Austric region is not a mono region but is overlapped by Indo-Aryan and Dravidian languages in the central and eastern India and is a composite region with Tibeto-Chinese and Indo-Aryan in north-eastern India (Meghalaya).

II. Official Language Based Regions

A kind of regionalisation may also be done based on the official languages of the Indian states. Most of these states have been created based on the present day official languages. The largest region is of Hindi encompassing the states of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Delhi, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Bihar and Jharkhand, which is also found in a patch in Andman and Nicobar Islands (Fig. 7.3). The other regions are Kashmiri in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjabi in Punjab and Chandigarh, Gujarati in Gujarat and Daman and Diu, Marathi in Maharashtra, Konkani in Goa, Tamil in Tamil Nadu and Puduchery, Telugu in Andhra Pradesh, and Yenam district of Puduchery, Malayalam in Kerala, Lakshadweep and Mahe district of Puduchery, Oriya in Odisha, Bengali in West Bengal and Tripura, Assamese in Assam, Nepali in Sikkim, Manipuri in Manipur and English in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland and Meghalaya. Some of the small isolated regions are also found like Hindi in Andman and Nicobar Islands, Gujarati in Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Malayalam in Lakshadweep.

III. Language/Dialect Regions

It is important to recall that dialects form a variation of language. Therefore, we may find that as we move from one place to another, language in spoken and/or written form may change. If you travel from Kolkata towards north you will find that spoken Bengali changes just like in Hindi there are variations from east-to-west or from north- to-south. A language may also have variations by class of people. Hence, the language of an educated person may be different. For example Hindi spoken by an educated person will be



Fig. 7.3: Linguistic Regions of India.

very different than an uneducated person or Urdu spoken by the erstwhile aristocratic classes could be significantly different from that of the common masses. Dialects, therefore, are not inferior or superior due to absence of script. Development of script facilitates communication over larger areas and spread of a standard form of language and it also helps in keeping written records as opposed to oral narratives.

There are micro level pockets of various languages/dialects around the locations shown in the Fig. 7.2. For example within Kashmiri region, there are naively demarcated small regions of Balti in the north, Dogri in the south-west and Ladakhi in the east. In the Indo-Aryan region, there are Pahari in the states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand, Newari in the eastern part of Uttarakhand, Haryanvi in Haryana, Marwari and Mewari in Rajasthan, Khari Boli, Braj Bhakha and Awadhi in Uttar

Pradesh, Bhojpuri in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, Magadhi and Maithili in Bihar, Kacchhi and Bhilli in Gujarat; Nepali in Northern West Bengal and Sikkim, etc.

In the region of Indo-Aryan family, there are languages of other families also. Examples are: Santhali in Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal, Bihar and now in Assam; Ho in Jharkhand and Odisha; Kurukh in Jharkhand, Odisha, Chhattisgarh; Gondi in Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, Maharasthra, Jharkhand, Bihar and Gujarat; Mundari in Jharkhand and Odisha; and Nicobaries in Andman and Nicobar Islands, etc.

In the Kannada region, the Tulu and Koorgi are the sub-regions. The enclaves of languages or dialects in Tibeto-Chinese region of languages are Bhotia in Sikkim, Garo and Khasi in Meghalaya, Miri in Assam, Adi in Arunachal Pradesh, Naga in Nagaland, Mikir in Assam, Kuki-Chin in Manipur, Manipuri/Meithei in Manipur, Assam and Tripura, Lusai/Mizo in Mizoram, etc.

IV. Composite Linguistic Regions

The overlapping languages of various families form the composite regions in the country, especially the territoriality of tribal languages in the form of clusters or enclaves with the numerically larger languages. From Jammu and Kashmir to Uttarakhand, a strip of Tibeto-Chinese languages exist overlapping or coexisting with the region of Indo-European languages.

In the mid-India, the patches of Dravidian languages like Gondi, Kurukn and Malto, and Austric languages like Santhali, Mundari, Kharia, Ho, Savara, Kui, etc., exist in the Indo-Aryan region simultaneously. Three outliers of Austric languages also exist in north eastern part of India (Khasi in Meghalaya, Santhali in Assam, and Nicobarese in Andman and Nicobar Islands). Indo-European languages also exist with the languages of Tibeto-Chinese family like -English in Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya and Nagaland, and Bengali in Tripura.

There are also patches of composite areas in the junctions of different languages. For example the area covering Bidar and Bangalore districts contains Telugu, Tamil and Kannada together; Nilgiri region contains Tamil, Kannada and Malayalam; Coorg and South Kannada has the languages of Tulu, Malayalam, Kannada, Konkani and Coorgi; North Kannada contains Konkani, Maratha and Kannada; Bidar region contains Marathi, Kannada and Telugu together; and so on. In some cases the cities also contain more than one language. For example, Delhi has the languages of Hindi, Punjabi, Urdu and many other languages as the settlers in Delhi have retained their own traditional languages like Bengali, Tamil, Malayalam, etc. There are language enclaves in the form of towns like Deoghar of Jharkhand with Hindi and Bengali amidst the surrounding Santhali language, Jamshedpur City in the midst of Ho land, Belgaum with Marathi amidst Kannada in the surrounding countryside.

SAQ 5

What are the bases of linguistic regionalisation in India?

7.7 SUMMARY

In this unit you have defined and differentiated the languages and dialects where dialects are the local forms of languages. You have also familiarised yourself with the origins and spread of languages in India.

You have also classified the languages and dialects into families, sub-families, branches, sub-branches, groups and sub-groups. There are twenty families of languages in the world. In India these were classified into four families in the Linguistic Survey of India of 1927 and Census of India 1961 and 1971. Later on the language families became five in the Census of India 2001.

As you have studied, the largest language family in terms of number and areal spread is of Indo-European family followed by the Dravidian, Tibeto-Burmese, Austro-Asiatic and Semito-Hamitic. You may recall the geographic distribution in India by table 7.4 given below:

Table 7.4: Broad Geographical Distribution of Major Languages in India

Family	Sub-family	Branch/ Group	Speech Area
Indo-European	Indo-Aryan	Dardic	Jammu and Kashmir, Assam
		Indo-Aryan	Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal, Assam, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Goa, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttarakhand
	Iranian		North Western Frontiers of India
	Germanic		North Eastern India, Southern India, Cities
Dravidian		South Dravidian	Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Puduchery, Lakshadweep
		Central Dravidan	Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Jharkhand
		North Dravidan	Bihar, Orissa, West Bengal, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Assam (Outlier)
Austric	Austro-Asiatic	Mon-Khmer	Meghalaya, Nicobar Islands
		Munda	West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra

Sino-Tibetan or Tibeto-Chinese	Tibeto-Myanmari	Tibeto-Himalayan	Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim, West Bengal
		North Assam	Arunachal Pradesh
		Assam-Myanmari	Assam, Nagaland, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Meghalaya
Semito-Hamitic			Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra

Source: i): Ahmad, A. (1999): *Social Geography,* Jaipur: Rawat Publications, ii): Census of India 2001, www.censusindia.gov.in

You have learnt the concepts of monolingualism, bilingualism, multilingualism and language shift by taking examples from you and people around you.

You have also done linguistic regionalisation based on language families, official language, languages/dialects and composite or overlapping languages.

7.8 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Define and differentiate language and dialects.
2. Explain the origin and spread of languages and dialects.
3. What are the major language families of the world? Please describe the geographic distribution in the world.
4. Describe the major language families and groups of India with their languages and dialects.
5. Explain the numerical strength and geographical distribution of Indian languages by family.
6. What are monolingualism, bilingualism, multilingualism and language shifts? Explain the processes of language shift with suitable examples.
7. What are the bases of linguistic regionalisation? Write in brief about each type of linguistic regions of India showing them on the map.

7.9 ANSWERS

Self-Assessment Questions

1. Language is a systematic method of communicating ideas, attitudes, intent or knowledge through the use of mutually understandable signs, sounds or gestures using similar vocabulary, phonetic and grammar and Dialect is a variant of language spoken in a region or by a social group.

   The origins of languages are as follows:

   Indo-European: South Ural Mountains and Asia Minor

Dravidian: Asia Minor and Eastern Mediterranean.

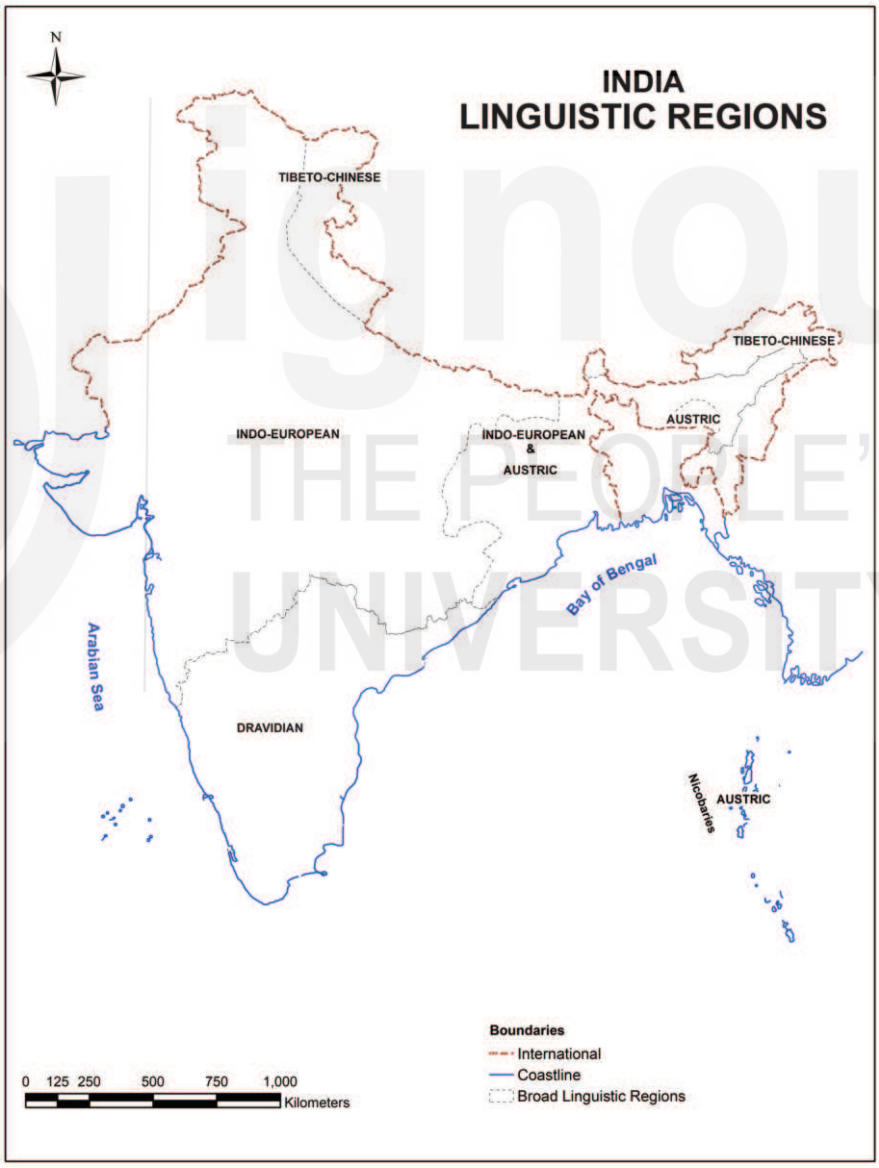
Tibeto-Burmese: Northern China and West of China

Autro-Asiatic: Indo-China or South China and Mediterranean

2. The major language families of India are Austro-Asiatic, Tibeto-Chinese, Dravidian, Indo-European and Semito-Hamitic.

3. The order of the language families based on numerical strength in India is Indo-European, Dravidian, Austro-Asiatic, Tibeto-Chinese and Semito-Hamitic.

Draw a rough sketch of linguistic region of India as given below following Fig. 7.2 of the Unit.



4. Monolingualism is the ability of a speaker to communicate in one language/dialect only while bilingualism is the ability to communicate in two languages and multilingualism includes the communication in more than two languages. Language shift is a situation where one community speaks a language other than its traditional language.

Examples are that a Tamil speaks only Hindi replacing his mother tongue-Tamil and tribals speak non-tribal languages.

5. The bases of linguistic regionalisation in India are language families, official languages, language and dialects and composite languages.

Terminal Questions

For the answers of terminal questions, you should refer to the sections of this unit as indicated below:

1. Define language and dialects and explain what way these two are different. Refer to Section 7.2.
2. Explain the probable place of origin and spread or languages and dialects through various assumptions made. Refer to Section 7.2.
3. List the major language families of the world and discuss the geographical distribution of these across the world. Refer to Section 7.3 and 7.6.
4. Discuss the language families and groups of India alongwith their languages and dialects. You may use the chart to explain this. Refer to Section 7.3.
5. Start your answer with the numerical strength in terms of percentages of various Indian languages by their families and discuss their geographical distribution. You may supplement it with table and map for better understanding. Refer to Section 7.4.
6. Define and explain the terms monolingualism, bilingualism, multilingualism and language shifts and explain the process of language shift with suitable examples given in the Unit. Refer to Section 7.5.
7. Discuss the bases of linguistic regionalisation like regionalisation based on language family, official language, language or dialects and composite languages and dialects. Refer to Section 7.6.

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UNIT 8

CULTURAL REGIONS

Structure

8.1 Introduction
Expected Learning Outcomes

8.2 Culture: Meanings and Types

8.3 Aspects of Culture

8.4 Culture and Civilization

8.5 Hierarchy of Culture

8.6 Cultural Regions: Meaning, Types, Origin, Formation and Persistence

8.7 Problems of Delimitation of Cultural Regions of the World

8.8 Major Cultural Regions of the World

8.9 Globalisation and Culture

8.10 Summary

8.11 Terminal Questions

8.12 Answersr

8.13 References and Further Reading

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8.1 INTRODUCTION

Culturally, the world is incredibly diverse. Different cultural groups, small and large, inhabit different parts of the earth's surface. These groups have produced distinctively observable imprints in their respective areas. Human geography is concerned to provide description of these diverse cultures as they are manifested on the earth's surface as well as to trace their origins, formation, persistence and spread. You have already studied peopling and racial elements, religion and beliefs and languages in the previous units of this Block. In this unit you will study the meaning and types of culture, culture and civilization, cultural regions and major cultural regions of the world, and globalisation and culture. You will also study the meaning, origin, formation and persistence of cultural regions and also discuss about the problems of delimitation of major cultural regions of the world.

Expected Learning Outcomes

After completing the study of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain meanings, types and aspects/elements of culture;
- be familiarised with meaning, types, origin, formation and persistence of cultural region;
- identify and describe major cultural regions of the world;
- get acquainted with the problems of delimitation of cultural regions of the world; and
- be familiarised with globslisation and culture.

8.2 CULTURE: MEANINGS AND TYPES

It is not easy to precisely define the term culture. Anthropologists and sociologists have defined the term in various ways – 'the total way of life of people'; 'a learnt and shared behaviour' or 'the people's design for living'.

They divide culture into two groups – non-material and material, that are not mutually exclusive. **Non-material** culture refers to learnt human behaviour. Human behaviour includes humans' thoughts and emotions as well as their external actions. However, behaviour of a particular individual cannot be considered as culture. It becomes a part of culture when majority members of the society share it. Thus, the process of learning and developing culture goes on simultaneously with social interaction. Non-material culture comprises **mentifacts** and **sociofacts**. **Mentifacts** include attitudinal elements or values, such as language and religion. **Sociofacts,** on the other hand, refer to norms involved in group formation such as rules about family structure.

Material culture comprises all the elements related to people's livelihood, known as **artifacts**. Artifact literally means human creations. Whatever objects humans have created since their origin on this earth are cultural objects. These include tools, technology, instruments, the method of hunting, agriculture, house building, cloth making, etc. Cultural objects are material, objective and concrete.

Human geography deals with elements of both material and non-material cultures from a geographical perspective. As a student of human geography you will study the characteristics of material as well as non-material culture in relation to geographical environment. You will also study how culture of a society has gradually evolved from pre-historic times to the present time in relation to geographical environment. As you know, culture is intimately related to geographical environment. For example, in terms of traditional food habit of people, ethnic dresses and houses, desert regions are different from mountainous or coastal regions. In the process of adapting themselves to the geographical environment or establishing harmony with it or establishing hegemony over it, various human groups and communities develop their own cultures.

Human geography is also concerned with the diffusion of both material and non-material culture across space and time.The specific elements of culture develop in a particular place and from there expand toward other places. For example, the belief system of Buddhism, Christianity and Islam originated in specific places and then diffused to other places. Similarly, Bhojpuri dialect and culture originated in Bihar are now spoken and practiced in far off countries such as Mauritius, Fiji, Surinam and Trinidad and Tobago. The study of the diffusions of innovations in the fields of agriculture, fashion, industry, etc. are important themes of cultural geography.

SAQ 1

What is culture?

8.3 ASPECTS OF CULTURE

A well known anthropologist Edward B. Taylor proposed a definition of culture while considering primitive culture. According to him culture is 'that complex whole, which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of the society.' Till date, this definition is widely accepted. From this definition, the following three aspects of culture can be identified:

1. *Material or physical aspects:* These include all the humans' concrete creations – tools/instruments, methods of house building, clothes and shoes making, etc. These are called 'cultural objects'. They include whatever human beings have created since the primitive times.

2. *Hidden aspects*: These include the means of communication and symbols that man has learnt as a member of the society. Language, dialects, alphabets, myths, religious signs such as *swastika,* the cross, or crescent or the moon and sun, tree or rock are symbols.There are hidden meanings in them. Culture could be understood in terms of their meanings.

3. *Acquired aspect:* These are those habits and capabilities, which are learnt by man as members of society. These include norms, values, knowledge, art, morality, belief and law.

SAQ 2

What are the three different aspects of culture?

8.4 CULTURE AND CIVILIZATION

You have already understood the meaning of culture and its elements. The origin of the concept civilization is highly controversial. It is often used in contrast to non-civilized group. During the colonial era the so-called

civilized Europeans looked down upon certain other people with profound contempt as culturally non-civilized, uncivilized, or barbaric. However, there is no inherent distinction between the culture of a so-called non-civilized groups and civilized groups except that there may be more numerous cultural complexes among the latter.

The term civilization is derived from a Latin root *civis*, meaning citizen. The term lacks one clear and unambiguous definition. According to renowned sociologists R. M. MacIver and Charles H. Page (1961: 408), civilization refers to 'the whole mechanism and organisation, which man has devised in his endeavour to control the conditions of his life. It would include not only our systems of social organisation but also our techniques and our material instruments.' Generally, the term is used to imply a particular type of culture that is characterised by a relative degree of sophistication of economy, polity and social structure. V. Gordon Childe (1951) has identified the following five primary characteristics of civilization related to aspects of human organisation:

1. city settlement
2. labour specialisation
3. concentration of surpluses
4. class structure
5. state organisation

Further, he has also identified the following five secondary characteristics of civilization related to aspects of material cultures:

1. monumental public works
2. long distance trade
3. standard monumental art work
4. writing
5. arithmetic, geometry and astronomy

How is civilization different from culture? The distinction between culture and civilization is subjective and, therefore, not very clear. Nevertheless, scholars consider civilization as possessing certain attributes, which are greater than those characterising the so-called simple culture. MacIver and Page (1961) have identified many distinctions between the two. The most fundamental distinction is that while culture is directed to human's control over nature; civilization, on the other hand, is 'the techniques directed to the regulation of the behavior of human beings'. Some other distinctions between these two terms have been identified by MacIver and Page (1961: 408) as follows:

- Civilization has a precise standard of measurement, but not culture.
- Civilization is always advancing, but not culture.

- Civilization has passed on without effort, but not culture
- Civilization is borrowed without change or loss but not culture.

SAQ 3

How is civilization different from culture?

8.5 HIERARCHY OF CULTURE

The physical environment of the earth is an important factor in the study of culture. Human attitudes toward physical environment shape patterns of **cultural traits** and **cultural complexes** on the earth's surface. A **cultural trait** is the method of handling a single concept or artifact, for example, how people plant seeds. However, cultures are not series of unrelated traits. Rather they are complex whole. They are integrated units in which all parts fit together causally. Thus, a **cultural complex** refers to a group of traits employed together in a more general activity, such as agricultural production. It is a complicated activity as it involves a number of cultural traits causally integrated into a cultural complex.

It is not possible to understand the distribution of one facet of culture without understanding the spatial variations of other facets of that culture in order to see how they are interrelated and integrated with one another. Religious belief has potential to influence a group's dressing and dietary behaviour as well as its house types. For example, Islam forbids consumption of liquor, pork and smoking, thereby influencing both the dietary and shopping patterns of its members.

The distributions of cultural traits and complexes on the earth's surface are clearly visible in their diverse regional configurations at various geographical scales. Such regional configurations are expressed as cultural region, cultural area, cultural realm and cultural hearth.

A **cultural region** is a region occupied by people who have one or more cultural traits in common (i.e., *formal cultural region*); or a spatial unit that functions politically, socially or economically as a distinct entity (i.e., *functional cultural region*); or a region perceived to exist by its inhabitants (i.e., *vernacular cultural region*).

A **cultural area** is a composite formal cultural region. Cultural area is delimited on the basis of whole cultures or totality of traits displayed by a culture. Each culture area is divided into formal sub-cultures and has a nucleus, where it first took place. Because of the greater complexity of traits involved, cultural areas are characteristically even more arbitrarily delimited than are formal cultural regions based on fewer characteristics. They are often based more on the geographers' intuition, derived from intimate knowledge of an area, than on carefully marshaled facts. Example of a cultural area would be Awadh, Bundelkhand, Braj, Bhojpuri, Maithili and Magadhi.

A **cultural realm** is an area in which numerous artifacts or cultural complexes are adhered to by most of the population. The term cultural realm signifies a large area that has fundamental unity in the composition, arrangement, and integration of significant traits, which distinguishes it from other cultural realms. Cultural realms are in fact macro-regions, which are defined on the basis of the most dominant cultural traits.

A **cultural hearth** is a source area where a culture complex has become so well established and advanced that its attributes are passed to future generations within and outside the immediate hearth area. Historically, cultural hearths were repositories of human traditions, where cultural traditions became stabilised and in which the humans way of living defined the standard of what human living ought to be. Out of these hearths, rules of living, technologies, traditions, and human systems spread to other territories. Examples of major historically important cultural hearths are the *Mesopotamia* (Tigris-Euphrates rivers) in Iraq, *the Nile Valley* in Egypt*, the Indus Valley* in South Asia*,* the *Hwang Ho (Yellow River) Valley* in China. Examples of secondary cultural hearth are the *Mayan civilization* (northern Central America and Southern Mexico), the *Aztec* (Central Mexico), the *Inca* (developed during 1500 B. C. in the middle Andean Mountain areas in Peru and Bolivia) and the *Bantu* developed in West Africa.

SAQ 4

Define cultural region.

8.6 CULTURAL REGION: MEANING, TYPES, ORIGIN, FORMATION AND PERSISTENCE

A cultural region is an area occupied by people who share one or more cultural traits in common (language, religion, idea, material culture); or a spatial unit that functions politically, socially, technologically or economically as a distinct entity, or an area perceived by its inhabitants to be culturally distinct from its surrounding areas.

From above definition, three types of cultural regions can be identified – formal, functional and vernacular. A **formal cultural region** is a region inhabited by people who have one or more cultural traits in common (e.g. linguistic region). Formal cultural regions are characterised by cultural homogeneity in a given contiguous geographical area. Cultural geographers delimit formal cultural region by grouping people with similar cultural traits in a defined area. Cultural regionalisation is a tool cultural geographers use to describe spatial differences/variations in cultural traits. For example, an Oriya-language cultural region can be drawn on a map of India showing the distribution of speakers of different languages, and it would include the area where Oriya is spoken. An example of coconut farming region would describe the parts of India where coconut is a major crop. Nirmal Kumar

Bose (1956), the famous anthropo-geographer based various material cultural traits to divide India into 18 cultural zones in India. These cultural regions are simplest levels of cultural regions based on single cultural trait. Cultural regions can be delimited on the bases of multiple related cultural traits or complex as well.

Functional cultural region, on the other hand, is a region that functions politically, socially, or culturally as a unit (e.g. district headquarters, zone of influence of a city, a temple, a factory). Functional cultural regions are based on nodes and their linkages with surroundings.

The **vernacular or perceptual cultural region** is a region perceived to exist by its inhabitants (based in the collective spatial perception/feelings of the population at large), as evidenced by the widespread acceptance and use of a regional names and nicknames. Examples of vernacular cultural region are *Shekhawati* region in Rajasthan and *Braj* region in Western Uttar Pradesh.

To understand the origin, formation and persistence of cultural region, we need to consider three characteristics traits of human beings, i.e., *biological*, *ecological* and *social*. Humans' biological traits (i.e., sensory organs – eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin) fulfill his requirements of seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting and touching. Historically, these organs together influenced behaviours and habits of human beings and their methods of interaction with the environment.

Ecological environment also influences people's culture. In the process of adapting themselves to the natural environment and establishing harmony or hegemony with it, human beings develop cultural traits. It should be noted that human's biological traits have remained more or less unchanged for a long time. In contrast, culture has always been evolving. It could be attributed to abilities of human beings to innovate new things in order to adjust themselves to the changing ecological environments of the earth.

As a social animal, human beings possess social and intellectual traits. They interact with fellow human beings. Living in social group, they develop distinct language, literature, art, beliefs, style, ideologies and symbols. Human beings have capacity to learn and invent new things to meet the needs and requirements of individuals and groups. Human beings have remarkable abilities to form splendid ideas out of their experiences and then act on the basis of these ideas. They can change not only physical environments; but they can knowingly change them in directions suggested by their experiences. It is primarily due to their social and intellectual abilities that human beings have reached present stage of cultural evolution by passing through the gathering, hunting and agricultural stages.

Cultural regions originate due to interaction of people (living in specific area) with specific social and intellectual traits with their surroundings. When people with particular social and intellectual traits inhabit a geographically distinct region for a long time, they develop their own distinct cultural traits and complexes. A new trait, such as irrigated

agriculture or plough, might be invented by people living in an area, and this could lead to increase crop yield and permanent settlement.

When particular cultural traits or cultural complexes are distributed consistently over a well defined part of the earth's surface, they take the form of a cultural region. Cultural region is also formed around a functional node or centre, such as a city or a temple. A cultural region may also come into existence when people living in a contiguous area feel that they are culturally different from their surrounding areas. It should be noted that the distinctiveness of that cultural region comes from geographical environment or social and intellectual traits of the people or combination of both.

As mentioned above, cultural regions originate in specific geographical environments due to interaction between physical environment and people. River valleys have provided fertile grounds for the development of cultural hearth. For example, cities first originated in river valleys of the world, such as in Indus river valley (South Asia), Huang Ho valley (China), Nile river valley (Egypt) and Tigris and Euphrates river valleys (Mesopotamia). Other geographical regions, such as mountain valleys, plateau and island, have also witnessed development of cultural hearths. For example, the first farming villages were on the hill side above the river flood plain. Similarly, early civilizations blossomed in mountains and plateau as well, such as in Meso America (Mayan civilization), Mexico (Aztec civilization) and Peru and Bolivia (Inca civilization).

Cultural regions are not permanent. Their regional boundaries keep on either expanding or contracting. But some cultural regions may persist for long while others only for short time. A cultural region persists due to long period of persistent isolation or relative isolation. The isolation is created due to geographical or political barriers. Today, many minority and ethnic groups are struggling to preserve their established ways of life due to globalisation.

SAQ 5

What are the three different types of cultural regions?

8.7 PROBLEMS OF DELIMITATION OF CULTURAL REGIONS OF THE WORLD

According to Broek and Webb (1967), any division of the earth, including the division of the earth into cultural regions, involves following decisions:

1. *Criteria* – what criterion or criteria to be employed for defining cultural regions?
2. *Dateline* – because cultural regions are dynamic, what date is to be used for delimiting cultural regions?

3. *Scale* – what spatial scale is to be employed for delimiting a cultural region?

4. *Regional boundary* – where are the boundary lines or zones to be placed?

Cultural geographers divide the earth into cultural regions. They select what seems to them the universally significant cultural traits or complexes and note their spatial variations to identify their spatial configuration. However, there is problem in identifying cultural traits and complexes, which are universally significant. Moreover, the traits and complexes that may be good indicator for one culture may be quite different from those characterising another. Therefore, cultural geographers study a cultural region in its totality – as a historically evolved individual entity.

Cultures are always in a state of flux. Territorial limits of cultural regions keep on expanding and contracting. Therefore, selecting a date line of preparing a map of cultural region is an issue to be decided by the geographers. A map of cultural region is like a still from a movie, an image true only for a specific cross-section of time.

The geographical scale of investigation of a culture is an important issue. If one is studying patterns of cultures of a part of the earth, such as the South East Asia, West Asia or Central Asia, one can make fine distinctions based on cultural traits and produce a map showing many cultural areas. On the other hand, when one is dealing with the cultural configurations of the entire world, then inevitably one must avoid details and ignore exceptions. It must give a generalised overview of patterns of cultures.

Elements of cultures are dynamic and fluid. Therefore, cultural boundaries are rarely sharp. One cultural region grades one into another in a continuum. Though a clear cultural divide may be visible on a map, but closer investigation reveals a transition zone where elements from two or more cultural regions mingle. For this reason, cultural geographers speak on cultural border zones rather than lines. Such border zones may vary in their width as no two traits display the same spatial distribution. Cultural geographers are interested in cores of cultural regions where the defining traits are strongest. Away from those cores, the defining traits gradually weaken and disappear and merge into another cultural region. Therefore, effort to precisely locate cultural boundaries may not always be a meaningful exercise.

Cultural geographers aim to identify and precisely locate cultural borders. Because cultures are fluid, such boundaries are rarely sharp, even if even a single cultural trait is being mapped. Most formal cultural regions have a core where the defining traits are strongest. Away from the core, the defining traits gradually weaken and disappear. Sharply defined formal cultural borders exist, they usually correspond to physical barriers or closed political boundaries that separate different cultural groups. But in most cases, culture blend gradually into one another through boundary zones. Cultural borders, whether zones or lines, often survive long after the

forces that created them have vanished. Such lines are known as *truce lines*.

Despite several ambiguities in the concept of cultural region, it is a useful device to understand world cultural patterns. It provides a spatially generalised outline of patterns of cultures, which otherwise look messy.

SAQ 6

What are the basic principles followed in delimiting boundaries/zones between cultural regions?

8.8 MAJOR CULTURAL REGIONS OF THE WORLD

The earth is characterised by large number of cultural traits and complexes. Many cultural geographers have attempted to divide the world into 'world civilizations', 'cultural realms', 'major cultural regions', 'macro-cultures' or 'cultural worlds'.

They usually deal with most general form of regions – the realm. This is done to get away from possible misuse of the regional concept, and to emphasize the scale involved. The first attempt to delimit world cultural regions was made by Russell and Kniffen in 1951. They first recognised different cultural groups and then related to their areas. Each area was identified as cultural region and its boundaries were delimited. They identified seven regions and a transitional area. Each cultural region was regarded as the outcome of a long evolution of human and land relations. However, the most widely accepted scheme of cultural regionalisation has been proposed by Jan O. M. Broek and John W. Webb (1967). On the bases of size and importance, they grouped the cultural realms of the world into two broad categories - major and minor cultural realms. Among major cultural realms they include occidental (Western European), Main Islamic (North African-South-West Asian; Arab-Persian), Indic (Indian, Hindu) and East Asia (Sinitic). Among minor cultural realms they include South East Asia, Meso-Africa (Negro-Africa) and Southern Pacific (Melanesian-Polynesian).

The above schemes of regionalisation of cultural patterns of the whole world into cultural realms or regions are not applicable in the contemporary context. Those regionalisation shemes were done over forty years ago. They were based on the then existing cultural patterns. Since then several significant changes have occurred in patterns of cultures on earth's surface. For example, Broek and Webb identification of East Europe with Soviet Union (based on ideological and political contiguity) is no longer relevant. Today, due to break up of Soviet Union and subsequent incorporation of many east European countries into the EU and increasing interconnection between them, one can comfortably think of the entire

Europe as a cultural region. Similarly, North Africa was clubbed in Arab realm (West Asia). However, it should be known that after the formation of African Union, there is a rise in feelings of pan-Africanism. Hence, North Africa is as much a part of Africa as that of the Arab World. In view of this,North Africa has been considered here as a separate cultural region.

The contemporary world can be divided into fourteen cultural regions on the bases of a common language, presence of a strong belief in some common religion or philosophy; a social practice or a shared political or economic system or a combination of all.

These regions differ to a great deal from each other in their size, population, degree of development and potentials. Though boundaries of cultural regions on map are thin lines but these are actually bounded not by lines but by broad transitional zones. In the following sections we will be describing contents of cultures of these regions and their areal expressions.

1) ***South Asia:*** South Asia consists of India, Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh and Shri Lanka. Some people include Afghanistan into this region. Together they are referred to as Indic realm/region. It is the seat of one of the most ancient civilizations – Harappa and Mohanjodaro, located mainly in the Indus river valley. The region is characterised by remarkable diversity in physical/geographical make up as well as socio-cultural composition. It is linguistically the most diverse region of the world. Its populations belong to different racial stock –Proto-Austroloid, Negroid, Mediterranean, Caucasoid and Mongoloids, etc. Ethnically, the region is characterised by tremendous diversity. The region is inhabited by people of different faiths – Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Christians, Jains, Sikhs, Parsis and the beliefs and practices by the tribal population. The society is highly stratified along caste line. There is a significant tribal element that generally inhabits the isolated and semi-isolated mountains, hills, forests and plateaus. The plain areas are mostly inhabited by caste people.

2) ***South East Asia:*** This region consists of mainland, peninsula and island countries. There is also a contrast between highland and plains as well as between coastal and maritime. This is an extremely diverse and interesting region. The region carries a record of very ancient occupation, several religious infusions, Chinese and European settlements, and political fragmentation.The region as a whole is characterised by linguistic diversity – Cham, Mon-Khmer, Malay, Papuan, Burman, Karen, Vietnamese, Tai, Miao-Yao, etc. The people of this region practice Islam, Buddhism and Christianity. The predominant race is mongoloid. The region displays enormous ethnic diversity – Chinese, Malaya, Burmese, Karan, Rohingya and Mon-Khmer. The region is dominated by agriculture – both subsistence crop and commercial plantation. The region has been a cultural low pressure area as the region has been recipient rather than donor of cultural traits. Due to tremendous diversities of populations and ethnic and

political fragmentation, the region is referred by some scholars as a kind of 'Asian Balkans'.

3) ***East Asia:*** This is the area of Chinese or Sinitic civilization with its variants in Korea and Japan. China has a great cultural history. It is a world in itself. It had barricaded itself from the rest of the world since the Communists gained control in 1949. However, since 1970's China has been opening slowly. By virtue of its economic performance and sheer size, is has acquired a great power status.

Japan is a highly industrialised and urbanised island country. Despite smaller size and shortage of raw materials, it is one of the economic powers of the world on account of social stability, managerial acumen and industriousness of its people. It imports raw materials from the world over and exports finished products throughout the world. Japan's modern political and economic history is unique. Its achievements are unparalleled. Its ability to fuse Asian and Occidental strains assures its uniqueness in cultural regions of the world. In terms of language and culture Japan is profoundly Japanese but in terms of economic and political systems it has imitated the occidental. North Korea is characterised by the predominance of agriculture in its economy. Its political system is authoritarian. On the other hand, South Korean is a democratic and highly industrialised capitalist country. Despite political enmity and ideological divide there are deep underlying currents of cultural and historical unity between the two.

4) ***West Asia:*** It is also known as Arab-Persian, dry or Islamic realm. However, it incorporates significant non-Arab, wet and non-Islamic component. Its location has always given it strategic significance either as a bridge or as a barrier between different cultures. It is not a homogeneous region. Internal diversities are pronounced. This diversity has resulted in conflicts and tensions between countries of the region. The region remains politically unstable. The basic unifying cultural traits of this region are predominance of religious tradition of Islam and speakers of Arabic, Persian and Turkic languages and similarity of geographical conditions (i.e. dry - arid/semi-arid climate) and of mode of life. Since 1973, due to rise in prices of energy resources (i.e. oil and natural gas) many countries of the region have become material rich. Of late, they have been investing in social sectors and aim to diversifying their economy.

5) ***Central Asia***: Earlier the region was a part of erstwhile Soviet Union. After the breakup of the Soviet Union many countries of central Asia got independent. While Soviet influence is still visible in landscape and society. But the region is in process of transformation towards acquiring a new identity. Important cultural traits of the region are – predominance of Islam as a heritage and nomadism, the influence of Persian and Turkic and Chinese culture, racially belong to mostly Mongoloid and Caucasoid groups.

6) ***Russia:*** Territorially it is the largest country. It is different from Europe (i.e. Western Christianity) as it is considered as successor to Byzantine-Eastern Christianity. The Marxist ideology swept the erstwhile Soviet Union in 1917 when the first communist state came into existence. As a communist state, it was one of the most powerful and influential countries during the most parts of 20th century. The breakup of Soviet Union in 1991 led to many political and economic reforms. Many countries came into existence in Europe and Central Asia after breaking away from erstwhile Soviet Union. The distinct cultural characteristics of Russia – the predominance of Christianity faith and speakers of Russian language, and existence of ethnic diversity.

7) ***Europe*****:** Many cultural geographers divide Europe into two distinct cultural regions - West and East Europe. They argue that West Europe has remained politically and economically akin to the United States. Compared to Eastern Europe it has remained more industrialised and urbanised. The region is inhabited by protestant Christians. The region has impacted politically, economically and culturally the rest of the world for many centuries. It has remained a dominant theme in the world history over the past several centuries. It has exported political system and religious system to other regions of the world. On the other hand, though physically East Europe has been a part of Europe continent, it was under the ideological and political influence of the erstwhile Soviet Union till 1990. Iron Curtain was used to signify ideological boundary between East Europe (under the influence of communism) and West Europe (under the influence of capitalism). Traces of Soviet and communism are still found. During the much part of the 20th Century it was politically unstable. Therefore, it was referred to as shatter belt.

   But since the breakup of erstwhile Soviet Union and eastward expansion of European Union, the east Europe is getting integrated politically and economically to the West Europe. As a result the entire Europe is in the process of acquiring a distinct cultural identity. Some of the distinct cultural characteristics of the unified Europe are the dominant religious tradition of Christianity, speak one of numerous Indo-Aryan language, majority population belong to Caucasoid racial stock, highly industrialised and urbanised, high percentage of people are literate and rich and dominance of commercial agriculture.

8) ***North Africa*****:** North Africa is geographically a part of Africa but culturally the region is closer to Arab region. Therefore, the region is also known as Arab Africa. For many centuries Caucasoid peoples speaking Hamitic and Semitic languages have penetrated into Sudan, the highlands, and the coastal lands of East Africa. French called it the *Levant* – "rising", land of the rising sun. It essentially refers to the lands around the eastern Mediterranean. The influence of Mediterranean culture is deeply felt in the region. The Southern boundary of this region is complex. The cultural break between Arab

Africa and Central (tribal) Africa cut several countries including Sudan and Nigeria. Some of the important cultural traits of this region are – a religious tradition of Islam and dominance of Arabic language speaking population and colonial legacy of France.

9) ***Middle Africa:*** It is also referred to as 'Negro' or 'Black' Africa. But these terms have racial connotations and therefore should not be used. It is also referred to as Central or Middle Africa, but these have geographical meanings. It has preserved its identity to a much large degree than other tribal groups of the world. It is the core of African tribal culture. It is a kind of shatter belt between Arab North Africa and Christian South Africa. It is a large territorial unit. Some of the important cultural characteristics of this region are nomadism, and primary economic activities such as mining, fishing, forestry and subsistence agriculture.

10) ***South Africa:*** South America is an extension of Meso-American cultural region. The region is numerically dominated by black African population. There are significant European white populations of Dutch and English origin in the Republic of South Africa and Zimbabwe. The region is also populated by ethnic groups from Asia, such as Indians and Malays. Some of the distinct cultural characteristics which differentiate this region are the predominance of Afrikaners. The region has history of conflicts between indigenous blacks and white immigrants in countries such as Zimbabwe and South Africa.

11) ***Australia:*** Australia, New Zealand and other smaller islands of the Pacific Ocean constitute a distinct cultural region. Both Australia and New Zealand have been populated by white settlers from across Europe and other countries. In Australia, large majority of population live in narrow coastal zone while the vast area has virtually remained uninhabited. The Australian aborigines constitute insignificant minority. The white settlers constitute the majority population. The Maoris are the indigenous people of the country. They are integrated in the mainstream society. New Zealand has climate similar to that of England.

12) ***North America:*** As a cultural region North America consists of the United States of America and Canada. Sometimes it is referred to as "Anglo" America. However, the term "Anglo" is not liked by many communities in North America, such as black people of United States and French speaking people of Quebec (Canada). For these people "Anglo" refers to an essentially alien heritage. The white settlers from Europe virtually eliminated the entire indigenous Indians. Later, the black population from Africa were imported as slaves to work in plantation fields as manual labourers. Today, black population constitute a significant minority. Though racism has long been abolished, it remains a very important issue in American society even today. This cultural region is a melting pot – people with distinct ethnic and nationalities have immigrated and culturally inter-mixed together. Today,

North America is the most powerful and one of the prosperous regions of the world. The main cultural characteristics which set apart the North America cultural realm are dominance Christianity faith and English language, industrialism, capitalism, democracy and cultural intermixing, and a tendency to politically, militarily and economically dominate the world. Most part of Canada remains wild and only a narrow strip is populated. Much of the wilderness is sporadically inhabited by the hunters, loggers and miners. The country is dominated by the European white Christians who speak English and French languages. With the exception of Quebec, the British tradition dominates. The tension between French speaking Quebec and English speaking rest has existed since long.

13) ***Middle America:*** The countries between river Rio Grande (boundary between the US and Mexico) and Columbia in South America along with the islands of the Caribbean constitute a distinct cultural realm. Although, Mexico is economically closer to North America. From the pre-European times this was a significant cultural hearth, where cities were founded thousand years ago, crops were domesticated, and empire was built. This, too, was the scene of the first European arrivals and for some time it remained the focus from which the white man's influences radiated outward. Middle America is a distinct cultural region because of its historical depth and cultural distinctiveness. Some other cultural traits of this region are predominance of Christianity faith, Spanish language and mixing of racial groups. This region shares these characteristics with neighbouring South America. Culturally, Middle America and South America are part of 'Latin America'.

14) ***South America:*** This cultural region consists of whole of the continent of South America. It was once a seat of impressive Indian civilization. It was swamped by the White European civilization. There was an overwhelming influence of Latin of Iberian Peninsula origin (Spain and Portugal), in the region. Portugal and Spain occupied almost the entire continent. From the colonial period emerged the modern political landscape. Portugal dominated in Brazil. Spanish domain divided into nine countries. A clear cultural identity of this region- Latin America - is shaped by its history and culture. Some of the important cultural traits of this region are: have religious faith of catholic Christianity, speak languages of Latin origin (Spanish is predominant except Brazil where Portuguese is spoken), widespread intermixing of racial groups and sharp divisions between left and right ideologies, and existence of most primitive to most modern forms of social formation in the continent.

SAQ 7

Name major cultural regions of the world.

8.9 GLOBALISATION AND CULTURE

Globalisation is defined as the process of widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness. This interconnectedness is realised through flow of people, capital, information, goods and services. The process of globalisation is contentious issue in the study of cultural patterns of the earth. The modes and infrastructures of global communication have resulted in transnational spread and growing contacts between different cultures. Also people with different cultural backgrounds are legally or illegally moving in large numbers across national borders and continents. Thus, the new age of globalisation that took place in the late 20th century has brought unprecedented level of intercultural interaction. This is leading to simultaneous tendencies towards both an expanded sense of global solidarity among the like-minded people and difference and hostility between different cultures, nations and ethnic groups. There is cultural fusion as well as conflicts. The metropolitan centres of developing societies are fast changing so as to meet the norms and practices of culture of capital and capitalism.

On the other hand, many local and regional cultures are experiencing rapid and widespread unwanted changes from the cultural contact with cultural traits of capitalist occidental world. These cultures and cultural regions have to deal with the hegemony of the occident and neo-liberal capitalism. Cultures and social orders of these societies are under clutch of the occident. Therefore, not surprisingly, the new wave of globalisation has met local resistance from regional cultures, which are seeking to preserve their cultures and social orders.

SAQ 8

How is globalisation process affecting cultures of the world?

8.10 SUMMARY

In this unit you have studied:

- Meanings of culture and its various types and aspects.
- Differences between culture and civilization.
- Description of the hierarchy of culture.
- Meaning, origin, formation and persistence of cultural region
- Problems of delimitation of cultural region of the world
- Cultural regions of the world.
- Impact of globalisation on culture.

8.11 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Define culture and discuss its expression as varied regional configurations.
2. Explain various aspects and hierarchy of culture.
3. Discuss the origin, formation and persistence of cultural regions.
4. Discuss important problems in delineating the cultural regions.
5. Define cultural region and describe major cultural regions of the world.
6. Discuss the impact of globalisation on culture with suitable examples.

8.12 ANSWERS

Self-Assessment Questions

1. Culture may be variously defined as the total way of life or design for living of people or as a learnt and shared behaviour.
2. There are three important aspects of culture. These are m*aterial, hidden and acquired.* Material aspects of culture include all the humans' concrete creations. The hidden aspects of culture include the means of communication and symbols that human has learnt as a member of the society. Finally, the acquired aspects of culture incorporate those habits and capabilities, which are learnt by human as member of the society.
3. Culture is directed to human's control over nature. Civilization, on the other hand, is the set of techniques directed to the regulation of the behavior of human beings.
4. A cultural region is an area occupied by people who share one or more cultural traits in common (language, religion, idea, material culture); or a spatial unit that functions politically, socially, technologically or economically as a distinct entity, or an area perceived by its inhabitants to be culturally distinct from its surrounding areas.
5. The three types of cultural regions are – *formal*, *functional* and *vernacular*. A formal cultural region is a region inhabited by people who have one or more cultural traits in common. A functional cultural region is based on functional nodes and their linkages with surroundings. A vernacular or perceptual cultural region is a region perceived to exist by its inhabitants on the basis of their collective territorial feelings.
6. The delineation of cultural regions generally follow the following four basic principles - c*riteria*, which are employed for defining cultural region; the *dateline*, which is considered for delimiting a cultural region; the s*cale*, which is employed for delimiting a cultural region; and finally *regional boundary*, where the boundary lines or zones between cultural regions are to be placed.
7. The whole world can be divided into the following fourteen cultural regions - South Asia, East Asia, South-East Asia, West Asia, Central

Asia, Russia, Europe, North Africa, Middle Africa, South Africa, North America, Middle America, South America and Australia.

8. This growing interconnectedness between places of the earth is creating cultural fusion through adaptation as well as tension and conflicts, particularly between the hegemonic cultures of the developed countries of the United States of America and Europe and cultures of developing countries.

Terminal Questions

1. Define culture and explain through types like material and non-material. Thereafter discuss the varied regional configuration at various geographical scales like cultural region, cultural area, cultural realm and cultural hearth. Refer to Sections 8.2 and 8.5.
2. Describe material or physical aspects, hidden aspects and acquired aspects of culture. In the next section you may discuss the hierarchy of culture through cultural region, cultural area, cultural realm and cultural hearth in terms of geographical scale. Refer to Section 8.3 and 8.5.
3. Discuss the origin, formation and persistence of cultural regions as to how these originated with interaction of people living in an area, their formation and persistence. Refer to Section 8.6.
4. Discuss the problems related to the delineation of cultural regions in the light of criteria, dateline, scale and regional boundary. Refer to Section 4.7.
5. First define cultural regions and discuss about the major cultural regions of the world. Refer to Sections 4.6 and 4.8.
6. Discuss the impact of globalisation on local and regional cultures. Cite examples including the impact seen around your place. Refer to Sections 4.9.

8.13 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

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GLOSSARY

Adaptation : The adjustment that humans make to a particular set of circumstances; changes in behaviour to reduce conflict with the environment.

Artefacts : Those elements of culture directly concerned with matters of humans' livelihood.

Austro Asiatic or Austric : Austric is a language family found in the central and east Indian tribal belt mainly and also in Meghalaya and Andman and Nicobar Islands.

Belief System : A belief system is defined as a set of mutually supportive beliefs. The beliefs of any such system can be classified as religious, philosophical, ideological, or a combination of these.

Belief : An acceptance that something exists or is true, especially, theone without proof.

Bilingualism : Ability of speakers who can speak two languages.

Cult : A particular system of religious worship, especially with reference to its rites and ceremonies.

Deity : In religious belief, a deity is a supernatural being, who may be thought of as holy, divine or sacred.

Dialect : Social or regional variant of a language is called dialect.

Divine : Like God; having the nature of or being a deity.

Dravidian : Dravidian is a language family mainly found in the southern India and central and eastern Indian tribal belt.

Ethnic Group : A group of people having common descent and cultural background.

Ethos : It is a Greek word meaning "character" that is used to describe the guiding beliefs or ideals that characterise a community, nation or ideology.

Faith : Faith is confidence or trust in a deity, view, or in the doctrines or teachings of a religion.

Indo-European : It is a language family found in the entire central, northern, eastern and western India.

Language Family : A group of languages originated from a single speech having common words, vocabulary, grammar and phonetics.

Language Shift : A situation where a language is displaced or replaced by other in a society or region.

Language : An organized system of words, sounds and signs by which people communicate with each other.

Learnt behaviour : Any behaviour that is received from society or which becomes part of the individuals' habit because of his participation in the society.

Monolingualism : Ability of speakers to speak only one language.

Multilingualism : Ability of speakers to speak more than two languages.

Peopling : Peopling is the process of early in-migration and settling down of people of various racial/ethnic origins into a region or landmass from outside over a long period of time.

Race : Human groups similar to each other based on physical (appearances) and some biological traits (skin, colour, hair, etc.) or a physically distinguishable population within a species.

Religion : Religion can be explained as a set of beliefs concerning the cause, nature, and purpose of the universe, especially when considered as the creation of a superhuman agency or agencies, usually involving devotional and ritual observances, and often containing a moral code governing the conduct of human affairs. It is a set of beliefs and practices.

Religious Fusion : It refers to the fusion or amalgamation of diverse religious beliefs and practices into one system of faith/practices.

Scheduled Caste : A group of people of the lowest strata of the caste system, who are identified and notified by the Government of India providing constitutional safeguards to them for their protection and development.

Scheduled Tribe : A group of geographically segregated people primarily living in remote, hilly and mountainous regions with low level of development indicators, who are identified and notified by the Government of India providing constitutional safeguards to them for their protection and development.

Semito-Hamitic : A language family with the language arabic/arbi.

Supra-natural : Beyond what is natural.

Tibeto-Chinese : It is a language family mainly spoken by the people of mongoloid origin in the Himalayan region starting from Ladakh in the west to all the north-eastern states in the east.

Tradition : The handing down of statements, beliefs, legends, customs, information, etc., from generation to generation, especially by word of mouth or by practice.