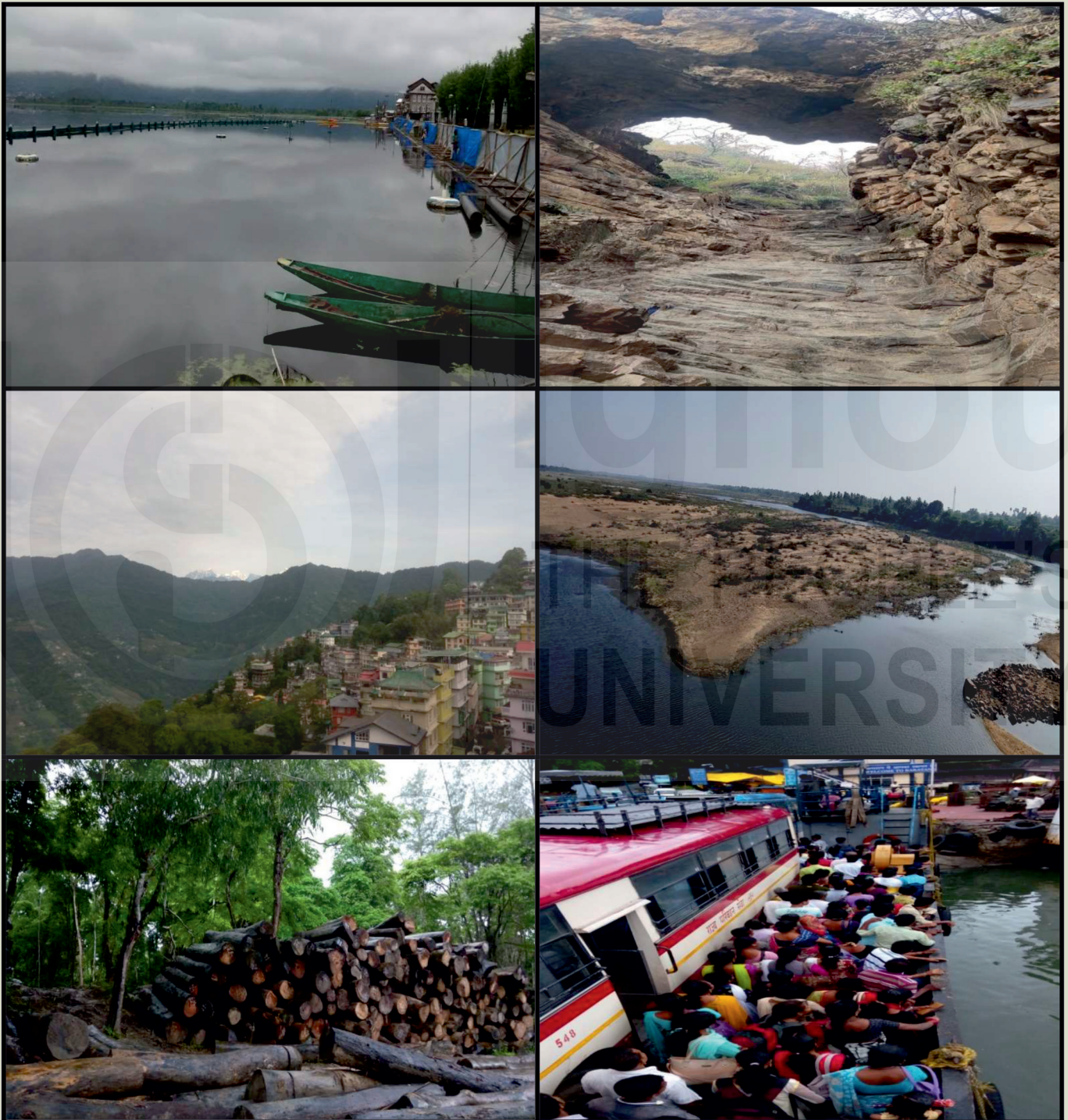


MGG-003
REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY
OF INDIA



**REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY
OF INDIA****Vol.****1****BLOCK 1****FUNDAMENTALS OF REGIONS AND REGIONAL
GEOGRAPHY****(1-86)****BLOCK 2****SCHEMES OF REGIONALISATION****(87-144)****BLOCK 3****MACRO REGIONS****(145-251)**

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MGG-003 REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY OF INDIA:

INTRODUCTION

Geography is one of the oldest disciplines of inquiry in the quest of knowledge. The study of geography goes as back as to the periods of Greeks and the Romans. Subject matter of the discipline revolves around two broad themes namely physical and human geography. Equally important, geography subject is known to provide the key filaments as far as the study of any region over the Earth's surface is concerned. This course will provide a base for understanding India in terms of its complexities especially at the level of historically evolved regional identities. Apart from this, this course would also help in comprehending India better in terms of its diverse personality with regards to regional issues and provide basis for better appreciation of historically evolved concept of unity in diversity aimed for national integration. It would also help in evolving strategies for development of regions by identifying the problems and prospects of regions at various scales, ranging from macro to meso to micro levels.

This course is divided into five blocks, with each block containing three to four units.

Regional geography is one of the most important branches of study in geography and the other being systematic geography. Regional geography of India deals with the complex physical and cultural characteristics that help to shape the geographical regions at different hierarchical levels. It begins with the distinctive explication concerning the fundamentals of regions and regional method of analysis along with varying basis and schemes of delimiting regions that will enable the scholarly comprehension of changing dynamics of India's regional structure. These fundamentals of regions and regional geography are thoroughly discussed in **Block 1** spread over four Units.

The schemes of regionalisation provide a kind of roadmap and platform laden with sound strategies for a country's growth and development. **Block 2** is devoted to the study of schemes of regionalisation aimed for the economic development in three Units. It covers the important themes such as Changing Dimension's of India's Regional Structure and review of major schemes as propounded by key geographers and social scientists.

Block 3 describes macro regions, by covering three macro regions dealt in three Units. These are macro region 1 (Himalaya and associated mountain ranges), macro region 2 (Indo-Ganga and Brahmaputra plains), and macro region 3 (Indian peninsula and islands).

Block 4 introduces you about the select meso regions of India, including six meso regions dealt in three Units. These are meso region 1 (Ladakh and Arunachal Himalayas), meso region 2 (Bengal delta and Indo-Ganga divide), and meso region 3 covering (Chotta Nagpur plateau and Malabar coast).

Block 5 introduces you about the micro regions of India, by covering six meso regions dealt in three Units. These are micro region 1 (Kashmir valley and Sikkim Himalaya), micro region 2 (Sunderbans delta and Assam plains), and micro region 3 (Kathiawar and Bundelkhand).

We hope that after studying this course, you will be able to describe fundamentals of regions and regional geography to explore numerous aspects of regions at varied scales.

In this quest, our warmest wishes are always with you. If you need assistance with this course, please contact us at: vishalwarpa@ignou.ac.in.

**REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY
OF INDIA****BLOCK****1****FUNDAMENTALS OF REGIONS AND REGIONAL
GEOGRAPHY****UNIT 1****UNDERSTANDING REGIONS****11****UNIT 2****BASIS OF REGIONALISATION****27****UNIT 3****PERSONALITY OF INDIA 1****57****UNIT 4****PERSONALITY OF INDIA 2****69****GLOSSARY****83**

BLOCK 1: FUNDAMENTALS OF REGIONS AND REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY

Geography is one of the oldest domains of knowledge. In simple words, it provides the description of Earth's surface. It is concerned with the study of physical and cultural features, their distribution, spatial variations and interrelationship with one another over space and time. Intra-regional issues and linkages help in analysing natural and human resource endowments at sub-national level.

In first Block, we will introduce you to the fundamentals of regions and regional geography, which will cover the key aspects like Understanding Regions, Basis of Regionalisation, Personality of India 1 and Personality of India 2 as discussed in an elaborative manner in four units.

Unit 1: Understanding Regions

First unit is devoted to the study of understanding regions. This Unit introduces the concept of region and regional geography, regional methods of analysis and types of regions.

Unit 2: Basis of Regionalisation

Second unit is devoted to the study of basis of regionalisation. This Unit presents physical, historical, and socio-cultural basis of regionalisation. Besides, it also deals with resources and economic aspects, nature of regional geography along with key issues in delineating geographic regions.

Unit 3: Personality of India 1

Third unit is devoted to the study of personality of India 1. This Unit goes to the core of the argument by examining the factors of unity in diversity in India in detail.

Unit 4: Personality of India 2

Fourth unit is devoted to the study of personality of India 2. It introduces you to the diverse shades of regions, regionalism and federalism and union of states, which have evolved since time immemorial, corresponding to the need and regional aspirations of the populace.

We hope that after studying this block, you will be able to comprehend the fundamentals of regions and regional geography in a better and lucid manner.

Our best wishes are always with you in this endeavour.

MGG- 003 REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY OF INDIA

BLOCK 1 FUNDAMENTALS OF REGIONS AND REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY

- Unit 1 Understanding Regions**
 - Unit 2 Basis of Regionalisation**
 - Unit 3 Personality of India 1**
 - Unit 4 Personality of India 2**
-

BLOCK 2 SCHEMES OF REGIONALISATION

- Unit 5 Changing Dimensions of India's Regional Structure**
 - Unit 6 Reviews of Major Schemes 1**
 - Unit 7 Reviews of Major Schemes 2**
-

BLOCK 3 MACRO REGIONS

- Unit 8 Macro Regions of India 1**
 - Unit 9 Macro Regions of India 2**
 - Unit 10 Macro Regions of India 3**
-

BLOCK 4 SELECT MESO REGIONS OF INDIA

- Unit 11 Meso Regions 1**
 - Unit 12 Meso Regions 2**
 - Unit 13 Meso Regions 3**
-

BLOCK 5 SELECT MICRO REGIONS OF INDIA

- Unit 14 Micro Regions 1**
 - Unit 15 Micro Regions 2**
 - Unit 16 Micro Regions 3**
-

UNDERSTANDING REGIONS |

Structure

1.1	Introduction	1.5	Summary
	Expected Learning Outcomes	1.6	Terminal Questions
1.2	Concept of Regions and	1.7	Answers
	Regional Geography	1.8	References and Further
1.3	Regional Method of Analysis		Reading
1.4	Types of Regions		

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Knowledge about Environment, its constituent elements, their interrelationships and processes are main concerns of most of the branches of knowledge. Since, Environment is a complex and multidimensional phenomenon; so, it is difficult if not impossible to develop a holistic and comprehensive understanding about it within one discipline or branch of knowledge.

Therefore, most of the disciplines have resorted to a more convenient taxonomic divide (binary) between the Natural and Human sciences (branches) of knowledge. The former specialising in the understanding about the elements, processes and interrelationships that are active among the attributes of Nature independent of human interventions. On the contrary, the latter i.e., the Human sciences specialise in aspects that have been created by humans through their interaction with the attributes, processes and interrelationships of the nature its elements, regulated through technology on the one hand and with other members of society by evolving network of social relations (institutions) on the other hand.

However, there are branches of knowledge like Geography, by virtue of its subject matter and corresponding methods of enquiry specialises on the theme that ensembles both the attributes of nature and society. Therefore, Geography while underplaying the taxonomic approach to knowledge specialises in synthesising the knowledge (Fig. 1.1).

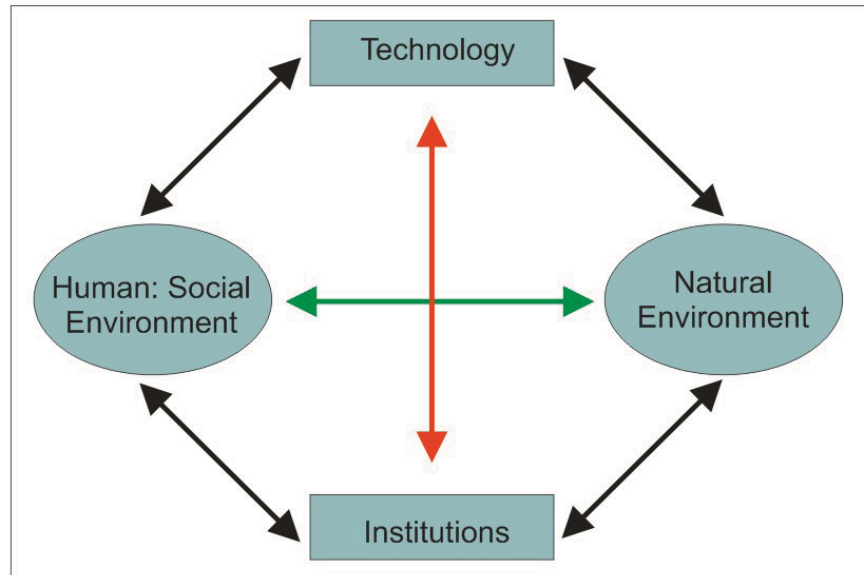


Fig. 1.1: Synthesising Model of Human-Nature Interaction.

Presenting a holistic and synthesised account of dynamic interrelationships between the elements of the Nature (n) and Human (socio-cultural) environment is anything but simple and straight. It needs specialised skills and approaches to unpack the dynamic interrelationships between the attributes of natural and socio-cultural environments. Though, there are multiple challenges and approaches in developing a holistic and synthesising understanding, yet from the point of view of present enquiry, the choice between the general and specific understanding is most significant. In other words, in this Unit, an attempt has been made to understand the interrelationships between the whole and its parts. Therefore, the obvious questions it tries to answer: Is the summation of parts equals the whole? Or is it possible to understand the whole by understanding its constituent parts as autonomous stand alone units?

In this first Unit, Section 1.2 is devoted to the study of Concept of Regions and Regional Geography. Next two Sections i.e., 1.3 and 1.4 will discuss the regional methods of analysis and types of regions.

Expected Learning Outcomes

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- understand and comprehend the Concept of Regions and Regional Geography or regional approach to Geography;
- describe the regional methods of analysis or region as a method of enquiry; and
- define the types of regions.

1.2 CONCEPT OF REGIONS AND REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY

Geography as a branch of knowledge and the way it ensembles diverse themes, methods, approaches and reached to its present form, has travelled diverse spaces and historical stages. It owes its origin to the historical

conjunctures created with the rise of modernity in 17th and 18th centuries, initially in Western Europe, which subsequently spread over other parts of the World through the processes of colonisation. Though, scholars have diverse opinions about unpacking the modernity, yet they finally reached a broad consensus that there are not one but multiple entry points to modernity. Meaning thereby, modernity is not an undifferentiated, monolithic structure, rather there are multiple modernities, which in turn formed the bases for the emergence of different branches of knowledge, each with their own discrete notion about the ontology (core concerns) and epistemology (philosophy, methods to knowing) about modernity and the phenomena associated with it.

Once again, there are differences of opinions among the scholars about the prime movers for such a radical change. However, one of the most significant and widely agreed opinions was emergence of human ability to think independently or rise of citizens in place of the subjects of the pre-modern ages. Citizens free from the fear of excommunication (religion), prosecution (political power) and physical intimidation (might is right) created an ontological break about the Humans themselves.

According to Victor Hugo “Nothing else in the world not all the armies...is so powerful as an idea whose time has come” (Victor, H.). It was an idea of a free citizen. Meaning thereby, not to think according to business as usual was considered a first stage in human liberation (free citizen). Thoughts held bondage by the past prejudices were not only considered a futile exercise, but also formidable impediments in achieving real freedom. It was to liberate the thought from the Powers including Religious (psychological Church), Political (Emperor), Physical (Wealth and Biological) etc., and replace it with Knowledge as power. To think means ‘to be’, which in turn mean to doubt, to question and be inquisitive without fear and prejudices.

Taking advantage of the spirit of the age of independent (free) thinking Geography as a branch of knowledge that emerged along with other branches of knowledge under modernity, too questioned the then existing knowledge about phenomena from micro entities like a tiny drop of water, a miniscule grain of sand and tiny living organism to macro entities like the Earth, Planetary System and the Cosmos etc., including the motions, forces and interrelationships among the constituent parts and with their respective surroundings.

However, the prime focus (core concern) of the Geographers was on the Earth and its interrelationship with other members of our Solar System on the one hand and the interrelationship among various constituent elements within the Earth itself: by raising two fundamental questions:

1. Are different constituent elements (spatial units, regions) of the Earth different from each other in terms of the attributes that have?
2. Do the interrelationships among the attributes of the constituent elements (spatial unit) contribute in creating a distinct identity for the given element (spatial unit, region)?

Though, apparently these are straight questions yet have multiple entrenched queries within namely:

'Will you tell me please', she said, 'which way I must go from here'?
'Yes' said the Cat, 'but mustn't you tell me where you want to go'?
'Well any place'- Alice began.
'Then you can go any way' the Cat said.
'If it is a place', Alice said (Carroll, L. 1872).

So, Geographical knowledge is not only just about the question of "what", "where", "when" and "how" but also "why" (Angrew, J. and Livingstone, D. 2011)? The range of questions it raised varied from What, Where and How and Why? Giving rise to taxonomic, descriptive, interpretative, exploratory and analytical approaches in geography related to two fundamental aspects:

1. The essential, being, reality, which exists independent of the knower and;
2. The episteme, method (theory) of accessing, proving and mapping the being (reality).

Initially, geographers were concerned more about textual meanings of the Greek roots of the branch of knowledge Geo (Earth) Graphica (description), which remained confined to the physical features of Earth's surface: its relief, slope, drainage, distribution and description of physical attributes like continents, oceans, mountain, plateau, plains, rivers, lakes, coasts, deserts, islands, and glaciers, precipitation, temperature, cyclone etc.

Subsequently, it was realised that knowledge for the sake of knowledge is no knowledge at all. And above all, knowledge for knowing is not a necessary condition for an enquiry staking its claim to be a distinct branch of knowledge. Knowledge should be for enlightened understanding; understanding the interrelationships among the apparent and structural or immediate and real attributes. In other words, deciphering the interconnections between the hidden and the public scripts should be the main objective of geographical enquiry.

Furthermore, knowledge should be for change, conscious change, which is an essential attribute of humans. Therefore, there is no nature without human and vice versa. Subsequently, incorporation of humans as an inseparable part and force of nature formed an integral part of the scope and thrust area within the subject matter of geography.

So, the subject matter of geography was to understand the processes involved in the humanization of nature and naturalisation of humans as a result of continuous and dynamic relations between the two inseparable parts, which was different from the disciplines oriented to taxonomic approach, most popular in the other branches of knowledge, whose approaches and understanding of the phenomena were regulated through a prism of creating binaries between nature versus human (culture), natural sciences versus human (social) sciences etc., wherein one is always counter posed against the other.

Geography took a position of understanding the phenomena not in terms of the binaries but complementariness. Not in terms of discreteness but in terms of interrelations and interdependencies. "Not to create continents but bridges" across different branch of knowledge (Peter Haggett). The other fundamental

difference was in terms of the approaches. Initially, similar to other branches of knowledge, Geography too approached its subject matter with an overriding obsession to establish general, universal and generic principles and laws considering the world as a unified integrated whole.

It is believed that at the dawn of modernity, German Geographer Bernhard Varen popularly known as Varenus raised doubts about such universalising approach and highlighted the significance of specific features (Diagram of Generic and Specific Regions - I) which were properly developed by Humboldt and Ritter in the 18th Century. Their path breaking postulations ultimately led to the rise of dichotomy in geography between the Systematic and Regional Geography.

Systematic Geography: It deals with one or a few selected aspects about human environment both natural and human and studied its/their aspects on the surface of the Earth as an undifferentiated predefined geographical space. Similar to other branches of knowledge that emerged under the enlightenment and modernity projects, the essential features of systematic geography were formulations of general laws or principles and identification of generic concepts and their patterns over the surface of the Earth. By virtue of its over emphasis on generalisations, it was mostly concerned with the aspects of physical environment: distribution of continents and oceans, mountain ranges, plateaus and plains, ocean currents and precipitations etc.

According to this approach, the essence of a branch of knowledge (discipline) lies in its ability to formulate universal laws and concepts. Humboldt, the protagonist of the systematic Geography emphasised on the unity of the discipline with the other branches of knowledge on the one hand and various constituents of the discipline itself on the other hand which was later on extended to the fields of Human Geography: particularly Political Geography. The concept of the State by Friedrich Ratzel, Carl Schmitt: Geopolitics etc., were some of the examples of systematic approach in Geography. Moreover, Geography as a discipline was acclaimed a branch of knowledge specialising in understanding the “unity in diversity”.

According to Humboldt, the most important aim of all physical sciences is to recognise unity in diversity, to grasp nature’s essence under the cover of outward appearances. Its purpose is to indicate the manner in which natural science can be endowed with a higher purpose through which all phenomena and energies are revealed as one entity.

So, systematic geography primarily dealt with universal laws and generic concepts within a broad analytical framework, considering space (whole world) an undifferentiated unit.

SAQ I

What is systematic geography? Highlight its essential features.

1.3 REGIONAL METHOD OF ANALYSIS

Regional Geography: Unlike the Systematic Geographers, the Regional Geographers were teleological in their approach. For them, Geographical knowledge is for the well-being and better understanding of the Human society and their environment (natural and socio-cultural). Though, they did not oppose the existence and formulation of universal laws in Geography yet were not in hurry to establish such laws at any cost. In place of these general principles and laws, they emphasised on establishing the special (regional) arrangements of terrestrial phenomena.

The main task of a geographer is to unpack the interrelationships and the unique characteristic features it assigns to a particular areal unit. Over emphasis on physical environment, most often at the cost of specific features particularly related to human population, culture and human artifacts etc. raised objections in the mind of most of the geographers and they advocated the importance of the specific and particular aspects, where it was difficult to identify general principles.

Though, many geographers did apply the laws of Newton to explain the migration of people, flow of goods, commodities and services, Darwin's Laws of Evolution to explain the evolution of cultures and state and Laws on Inheritance of Lamarck to explain the racial and cultural differentiation etc., in Human Geography, yet they realised that these proved counterproductive to the development of geography. On the contrary, they contributed in making geography subservient to physical sciences, environmental determinism and particularly social physics etc. Ritter the contemporary of Humboldt was the main advocate of this approach. According to him, the goal of geography was to get away from mere description to the law of the thing described; to reach not a mere enumeration of facts and figures, but the connection of place with place and the laws which bind together local and general phenomena of the Earth's surface.

Taking clues from Ritter, Alfred Hettner attempted to re-nomenclature geography into idiographic (regional) and nomothetic (general) and emphasised on unity of human and nature in specific regional setting, which ultimately paved way for the emergence of Regional Geography in France by Vidal de La Blache, who after rejecting the Ratzalians deductive approach and extensively promoted specific regional studies. Though, in his studies, he attempted to create a synthesis between nature and humans, considering one inseparable from the other, which according to him are better articulated in small spatial units which he named 'Region' as compared to considering surface of the Earth as an undifferentiated whole. Region, according to him is an epitome of intimate relationship between (hu) man and nature developed over time constitutes a region.

La Blache considered human societies similar to the flora and fauna, all living together yet each leaving its stamp on other in reciprocal relationships of mutual benefits. He believed that humans and their respective natural habitats represent closer reciprocal relationships and one cannot be truly represented in all its relationship without the other. Regions are the ideal unit for the study of such relationship and such regions should be the primary task of the

geographer to understand the local relationships in architecture, agricultural practices and a general way of life. According to him, communities lived in such close association with nature that they might be self-sufficient in majority of goods. He advised geographers to carry out research in folk museum and collection and to investigate agricultural equipment which had been used in the past to study the individuality of development of a region. He was for self-sufficiency of regional economy despite its breakdown under the steam rolling normalising, homogenizing and standardising agenda under modernity.

The subject matter once formulated was taken further mostly geographers in America and Britain. Some of the prominent geographers were Hartshorne, Carl Saur, Patrick Geddes and many others. According to Richard Hartshorne, the basic purpose of geography is to attain **two principal objectives**. These are:

1. To understand the features of the specific spatial units in their unique attributes, and,
2. To understand the region as an independent entity relevant in the context of a large whole.

He tried bringing together various aspects both natural and human of the environment within a regional setting. Therefore, he emphasised that it is improper to formulate universal or general laws in geography, but it is possible to formulate hypothesis and structured ideas in Geography.

Furthermore, Hartshorne emphasised on the aspects of areal differentiations, which were substantiated by the geographers in the Post World War -II with the help of quantification and data collected through extensive field works integrating physical and human aspects within the study of a particular landscape (region). Thus, geography in that phase was developed essentially ideographic (regional), meaning thereby, regional geography quintessentially used a synthesising approach while dealing with unique situations and their peculiarities. He was the first to divide the world into major natural regions on the basis of climatic parameters, though he faced criticism for moving close to environmental determinism, yet continued to remain the precursor of the concept of ecosystem which was later on developed by British Ecologist Arthur Tansley in 1935.

Hartshorne was also the first one to provide accurately, orderly and rational description of the interrelated variables characteristic features to differences over the surface of the Earth. In his book 'Perspective on Nature of Geography' he mentioned that Geographer's main concern is how things are distributed over the surface of the Earth, how physical and cultural features of area are like and different from places to place, how the varying content of different places come about, and what all these differences and similarities mean for the people?

The difference between the two branches of Geography or more appropriately two approaches to geography can be explained with the help of the following Fig. 1.2.

CONTEMPORARY GEOGRAPHY SPECIAL GEOGRAPHY							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
General Geography	North America	South America	Europe	Africa	Asia	Australia	Antarctica
Landforms							
Climate							
Soils							
Plants							
Economic							
Social							
A Urban							
B Settlement							
C Population							
D							
Political							
Notes: D – Many new branches growing here.							
		Special (regional) geography of Africa					
		General geography of population which consider its geo-regional variation throughout world.					

Fig. 1.2: Systematic and Regional Geography or Systematic and Regional Approaches to Geography.

(Source: Adapted from Minshull, R. (1967). Regional Geography: Theory and Practice)

It is evident from the above discussion that, though, the approaches adopted were an ensemble of: total general reasoning, partial general reasoning, partial special reasoning and total special reasoning yet, once the regional approach was established within the framework of Geography, then the next important question was to conceptualise and define region with the following important question:

Whether regions are objective or are they mental constructs?

A direct answer to such questions could be possible only in the branches of knowledge that are quintessentially exclusionary in nature. Meaning thereby, it is mainly applicable to disciplines that have predominantly well defined subject matters. Most of these branches of knowledge have their subject matters independent of human interventions. They do not require any specific qualification from society and culture to delimit the scope and content of the theme of study from society and culture. For example, Physics, Chemistry, Geology, Botany, Zoology, Forestry etc., are broadly covered under such branches of knowledge. Since their subject matter largely deals with the phenomena that exist independent of human control and regulated through the interplay of natural forces, so disciplines claim to decipher the content, from, processes and forces involved in the existence and formulation of universal laws and principles.

As opposed to these, there are branches of knowledge that are primarily concerned with the aspects related to human activities as social animal, their myths, cultural practices, political choices, livelihood, and social contracts that have been evolved through the social actions in relations to different environmental and historical situations. Thus, their subject matter exists

largely because human beings have collectively contributed in providing required structure and form. The subject matter of disciplines like political science, history, economics, and philosophy etc., do not have an independent existence apart from meeting the human needs. Therefore, these branches of knowledge do not claim to formulate universal laws and principle. These are characterised by having equally unambiguous epistemic methods of enquiry.

Unlike these two broad branches of knowledge, there are a few that have part of their subject matter very similar to natural sciences existing independent of human existence and intervention and the other equally significant half is concerned with human efforts and activities. In other words, there is a major overlap in their subject matter with the natural sciences on the one hand and the social sciences and humanity disciplines on the other. Geography is one of such branches of knowledge. Therefore, true to its core subject matter relief, slope, vegetation, soil, climate, desert, coastal regions and geomorphic regions etc., have their existence independent of human presence and interventions. These could be considered objective regions and the major changes taking place there in are regulated by the processes independent of human efforts and these are relatively stable over long time.

As opposed to this, there are regions that have been created, recreated and transformed according to the changing technologies, human needs and choices. Planning regions, transport regions, economic regions, resource regions, political regions etc. are articulations of predominantly human creations. The scale and frequency of their change is very dynamic. Agricultural regions, core-peripheries, port-hinterland, planning regions etc., are very dynamic and change very frequently. Hence, these could be called subjective regions.

Whether regions are a means or an end in themselves?

An equally important issue related to the regions is whether region is an end in itself (teleological) or region is a means to end? Carl Ritter was of the view that if Geography has to seek recognition and acceptance from the knowledge seekers it should not remain confined to abstract concepts, insensitive to the questions that confront the people in their normal life. Therefore, it is imperative to geography to have purpose in whatever it tries to understand. Based on such an approach, mere identification of region should not be the objective of the region. It should not limit its activities to the identification of regions and leave it to other disciplines to use it as deemed fit to their purpose. They were of the view that teleology will restrict the freedom in the exploration of truth and geography claiming to be a mother discipline of a synthesising knowledge will fail to justify its pursuits of independent enquiry. It will be counter-productive to the very existence of the discipline in the long run.

On the contrary, there are geographers who believe that each and every exercise in identification and demarcation of region should be to enhance and enrich human understanding and region are best suited to enrich the knowledge by bringing in specific and particular facts in the otherwise abstract canvas. They criticised that limiting the geographical knowledge to the demarcation of regions will be counterproductive because the future users will

manipulate the template to highlight the uniqueness and differences at the cost of reaching wholistic understandings. In order to avoid the misuse of the regions and create conditions for the balkanization of the whole, regions should be specific purpose oriented and with the change in the objectives and purposes the demarcation of regions should also change. According to Spate, understanding should always be preferred and given importance over classification, if regional understanding has to be relevant to human well-being.

Based on these axiomatic, the geographers have defined regions in different ways. Some of the important definitions are as follows:

Definition of Region

1. The region is an area of the Earth's surface – Taylor.
2. A region is a unit area of the Earth's surface differentiated by its specific characteristics - F.J. Monkhouse.
3. The region is a geographic area or areas which given civilisation, standard of a people seems to require for the fulfillment of the aspiration through material resource – C. Aronovic.
4. Any Surface over the Earth's surface where physical conditions are homogenous is region - Woolfgang and Joerg.
5. Regions are genuine entities, each of which express both natural and cultural differentiation from its neighbours - G.T. Ranner.
6. "A region is a complex of land, water, air, plant, animal and man, regarded under their spatial relationship as together constituting a definite portion of Earth's surface - A.J. Herbertson.
7. "A region is a domain where many dissimilar things are artificially brought together have subsequently adopted themselves to a common existence" - Vidal-de-La-Blache.
8. "A region is an area of specific location which in some way very distinctive from other areas and which extends as far as the distinction extends" - Richard Hartshorne.
9. "A region is an area within which the combinations of environment and demographic factors have erected homogeneity of economic and social structure" - T.T. Woofer.
10. "An area throughout which a particular set of physical type of economic life" - R.E. Dicknison.
11. Region is an area delineated on the basis of homogeneity of land – character and occupance - R.S. Platt.
12. "Region is an ecological aggregation of persons and economic framework and cultural order. It is at once a faithful expression of the distribution of population, resource, occupation and the inter-related cultural unity" - R.K. Mukherjee.

It is evident from the above definitions of region propounded by geographers that there is no uniformity of opinion about defining a region, it only indicates about the sound health of a discipline, because adherence to specific definitions is always counterproductive to a branch of knowledge that is concerned respecting the diversity of nature, pluralities of socio-cultural viewpoints and usefulness of the discipline to the changing environmental (physical and social) aspects.

However, for the purpose of reaching broad consensus, it is always desirable to identify some broad characteristics of regions.

Characteristics of a Region

The major characteristics of the regions are discussed as under:

1. Region is different from place, area and space.

- (a) Place is essentially lived and experiential entity, specific to psychological and subjective, intertwined with emotional, qualitative and personal interest. It has special meaning in relation to people where they can satisfy their biological, social and psychological needs. Though, it has no observable boundary and visible expression, yet based on strong emotional attachment and sense of belonging are essential for a place.
- (b) Area is two dimensional without exception. It is experimental, measurable and quantitative. It is always expressed in terms of square miles/kilometres. It bears no attachment to the people, their culture even the characteristic features of the unit. It is also considered an abstract entity.
- (c) Space is not multi-dimensional extendable to infinity. However, it could be one dimension such as gender space sees only masculine space. Historical materialists see only production space. It could be two dimensional i.e., objective and subjective space, which has been vehemently criticised by Lefebvre for celebrating binary logic. Hence he opened space with infinite dimensions: abstract space, absolute space, relative space, perceived space, conceived space, lived space, experiential space, emotional space, gender space, knowledge space, and epistemological space, etc. On account of which it is always without any substantial meaning.

2. Principle of Homogeneity: Regions are spatial entities that are delineated on the basis of maximum homogeneity of the selected parameters within it and heterogeneity from the surrounding special units. This principle is always against the principles of homogenization, normalisation and standardisation which are antithetical to the principle of region. Homogeneity is based on the principle not only celebrates diversity of environment and social pluralities but also enhancing the interdependence among these for the enrichment of uniqueness, specificities and distinctive features of the region among other regions. While, homogenization is based on steam rolling the diversity, which imposes the principle of one fits all in the name of standardisation and normalises exceptions.

3. Distinctive: Every region is distinct in terms of its history, identity and personality and ecological setting.

- 4. Uniqueness:** It is different from distinctiveness, because to be unique it is essential to share many common features including historical/evolutionary processes. Darwin while postulating the evolutionary taxonomy for the organism emphasised on the morphologically identical and reproductively isolated characteristics as the unique features of one species from other species. Though, all are closely interrelated to each other in the evolutionary processes, yet each one has uniqueness.
- 5. Homogeneity:** Homogeneity in one or more geographical elements within the boundary. It is made of continuity without rupture within a given space and time frame of reference.
- 6. Heterogeneity:** Heterogeneity in those elements towards its regional boundaries. The boundary of a region is always a function of the parameters selected for the identification of the region. For example political regions stand for the sovereignty of the region such as nation and state. Such boundaries have linear demarcation. As opposed to this, there are regions demarcated on the bases of culture, economic activities, climatic parameters, vegetation types and to some extent soil types etc., where it is difficult to locate a linear boundary. In such a case, there exists zone of transition or frontier.
- 7. Dynamic/Changing Character:** Since the subject matter of geography includes both the natural and human aspects of the environment therefore, it is an imperative that region has to be neither static nor dynamic. On the contrary, it has to be statically-dynamic and dynamically-static. A region has to be dynamically-static because its features related to natural environment like geology, relief and climate etc., are relatively stable while the human aspects like economic activities, culture, architecture, transports network etc., are always in a state of flux. Similarly, though, the political boundaries of the region changes continuously yet its absolute and relative locations are always static.
- 8. Hierarchy:** Every region has some kind of hierarchical arrangements. There are certain features that have homogeneity at the macro levels (scale) but moving down to meso, micro, mini, mili and nano levels, the variations tend to become more pronounced. Take for example, India falls broadly under monsoon climate but at the micro level there are well pronounced hot and cold desert climatic pockets, and equatorial climatic regions within it. Moreover, there is hierarchy within every region. There are core, periphery and transition zones in every region.
- 9. Identity:** Regions have definite identity, which is the result of the historical changes through the processes of assimilation and rejection over time.
- 10. Dynamic Scale:** A region can be different in scale according to their shape and size.
- 11. Problematic:** Every region has similar problems within its boundary. It is persistence of these problems that keeps region as a live entity.
- 12. Purposive:** A region is delineated for specific purposes.

- 13. Resourceful:** A region should be resourceful or have some specific resources so that they were utilised in the planning process.
- 14.** Regions have core, periphery/ies, frontiers and transition zones. The cores are characterised by higher intensity of the selected parameters, which tends to thin down with the distance from the spaces of maximum occurrence. Moreover, the core has strong attraction towards it, popularly known as the centripetality, which is different in the frontiers and zones of transition demarcated by centrifugal tendencies.

SAQ 2

- a) What is principle of homogeneity?
- b) What are two principle objectives seen in terms of basic purpose of geography according to Richard Hartshorne?
-

1.4 TYPES OF REGIONS

Typology of Region

On the bases of the definitions and characteristic features of region, it can be placed under following typologies.

Formal Region: These are also known as Homogenous, Uniform Regions. A formal region is a geographical region which is homogeneous and uniform within a specified criterion. This specified criterion could be physical, social, or political. Examples are Himalayan Region and Sub-Tropical Region etc. Formal region can be identified on the basis of single feature physiographic regions, Multi Features resource regions and compage agricultural region. Whittlesy (1956) defined 'compage region' as a uniform region where all the features of the physical, biotic and social environment are functionally associated with the human occupance.

Formal region is a spatial unit in which everyone shares common, one or more distinctive characteristics. This common characteristic could be a cultural value such as language, an economic activity such as production of certain crop, or an environmental property such as climate and weather patterns. Whatever the common characteristic is, it is present throughout the selected region. In certain formal regions, the characteristic may be predominant rather than universal, such as the wheat belt in North America. It is an area in which the predominant crop is wheat, but other crops are grown here as well.

Functional Region: These are also called Heterogeneous, nodal functional regions: Metropolitan axial Region mainly; because there exist broad homogeneity in terms of the selected features but heterogeneity in terms of other features. For example, a crop combination region may indicate some level of homogeneity in selected crops, but heterogeneity in terms of soil types, drainage system, and transport system etc. Similarly, it is also known as nodal region organised around a node or a focal point. Sometimes, it is also addressed as polarized region which invariably consists of

heterogeneous units and features such as cities, villages in the hinterland that are functionally interrelated such as port and hinterland.

The characteristics of the functional region are also determined by the features of the focal point or centre, which displays certain functional coherence, an interdependence of the parts defined on the basis of certain criteria known as functional characteristics of the region. An important aspect of a functional region is that, the functions are well pronounced and more intense at the centre (core) and tend to diminish in intensity and importance with the increase in the distance from the centre (frontiers and zone of transition), which is popularly known as an application of principles of distance decay.

Functional regions are more dynamic and undergo frequent changes along with changes in its attributes and their functional associations. Circulation area of newspaper is one of the most common examples of functional region.

Vernacular Region

A "vernacular region" is also known as perceptual region. It stands for a spatial unit where people live as part of their cultural identity. It has a distinctive area where the inhabitants collectively consider themselves interconnected by a shared history, mutual interests, and a common identity. Such regions are "intellectual inventions" and a form of shorthand to identify things, people, and places. A vernacular region reflects a "sense of place," but rarely coincides with established jurisdictional borders. The realities of vernacular regions vary from person to person. They emerge from a person's informal sense of place. An example of a vernacular region would be the Cultural region or Transitional regions, and depressed area etc.

Adhoc Region: It is also known as planning region, which can be defined as a geographical region where designing and implementation of development plan is possible for tackling of regional problems. It could be both formal and functional and generally transitional in nature: Example – Delhi Metropolitan Region. The planning region ceases to exist once the desired objectives of the planning projects are accomplished or subjected to major modifications in the plans.

Apart from the above Classification, there are other typologies of regions adopted for different purposes. Some of them are: Multi-Level Planning Regions divided in - Macro, Meso and Micro Regions. Sometimes, special efforts are initiated to minimise the gap between the developed and backward regions by demarcating the regions in terms of the levels of development i.e., Developed, Developing/Intermediate and Backward/Depressed Regions.

SAQ 3

- a) What is a vernacular region?
 - b) Define formal region?
-

1.5 SUMMARY

In this Unit, you have learnt the following:

- Defining and understanding a region is most significant to the discipline of geography.
- The problem of arriving at consensus about defining a region is primarily on account of using taxonomic methods to a synthesising discipline like geography.
- Highlighting the aspects of heterogeneity or differences among the parts of the whole thus promoting division is not the purpose of delineating a region. The aim of delineating a region is to foreground the aspects of the parts that are significant for the overall understanding of the whole.
- Whole is more than simple summation of the parts. The crucial difference between the whole and its parts is not quantitative. It is mainly qualitative followed by differences in scale.

1.6 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. How is taxonomic approach different from synthesising approaches of understanding with reference to Geography as a unique branch of knowledge?
2. What is the difference between Regional and Systematic approaches to Geography?
3. Develop a scheme of the typology of Regions. How are formal regions different from functional regions?
4. Is a region objective or is it a mental construct?

1.7 ANSWERS

Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)

1. Systematic geography deals with one or few selected aspects concerning human environment including both natural and human. Its essential features are formulation of general laws or principles and identification of generic concepts and their patterns over Earth's surface.
2. a) It refers to the delineation of regions as spatial entities based on maximum homogeneity in terms of chosen parameters within region and heterogeneity from neighbouring regions.
b) First principle objective is to understand the features of specific spatial units in their unique attributes and second one is to understand the region as an independent entity relevant in the context of a large whole.
3. a) It is also known as perceptual region. It refers to a spatial unit where people live as part of their cultural identity.

b) It refers to a geographical region having homogenous and uniform characteristics within a specified criterion. It could be physical, social or political etc.

Terminal Questions

1. Refer to Section 1.2.
2. Refer to Section 1.3.
3. Refer to Section 1.3.
4. Refer to Section 1.4.

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BASIS OF REGIONALISATION |

Structure

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|----------------------------------|--|
| 2.1 Introduction | 2.4 Key Issues in Delineating Geographical Regions |
| Expected Learning Outcomes | |
| 2.2 Bases of Regionalisation | 2.5 Summary |
| Physical | 2.6 Terminal Questions |
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| Economic and Natural Resource | |
| 2.3 Nature of Regional Geography | |

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In first Unit, you have studied and learnt about understanding the regions. In Unit two, you will study and learn the nuances of basis of regionalisation. The methods of enquiry developed by the Greek philosophers particularly Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle and Euclid etc., were marked by understanding the absolute (ideal, general, and universal) and evaluating the real (particular, specific) through the parameters of the general.

Since, access to the ideal was exclusively restricted to the philosopher; the common public was neither listed nor counted in their contribution to knowledge. It was known as the deductive method of enquiry which was challenged by philosophers and scientists with the onset of modernity particularly Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton etc. "The real scandal of Galileo's work was not much in having discovered, or rather rediscovered, that the Earth revolves around the Sun, but in having constituted a space that was infinite, and infinitely open – so that the medieval (hierarchized ensemble of space: the sacred places and profane places, protected places) was dissolved in it, as it were. A thing's place was no longer anything but a point in motion, just as a thing's rest was nothing more than its motion indefinitely slowed down" (Foucault:1998: Different Spaces).

It was the beginning of new methods of enquiry known as inductive method. Identification of region and regionalisation of space was a modest effort by the geographers to bring the diverse, multi-dimensional and complex geographical reality within tangible comprehension of human mind. Regionalisation was an

attempt to understand the whole not at the cost of the specific but as an ensemble of the parts, their interrelationships with other diverse parts in order to create a dynamic and inclusive whole. Unlike other disciplines, the task of geographers is more complex because of its inclusive methods of enquiry ensembling investigation into objective natural features and qualitative socio-cultural features. It is much easier to follow the principles of maximum homogeneity in case of the natural features but quite formidable to map the socio-cultural diversities and modes of cultural articulations.

Therefore, it is unrealistic to search for a 'one fits all' methods of regionalisation and evolve a 'best fit method or least deviation method of regionalisation'.

With this background, Section 2.2 deals with diverse bases of regionalisation encompassing Physical, Historical, Geo-Political, and Socio-Cultural, along with Resource and Economic bases. Next Section 2.3 throws light on the nature of geography. Key issues in delineating Geographical Regions are discussed in Section 2.4. Study of this Unit should make the learners aware of various methods of scientific enquiry.

Deductive and inductive methods of knowledge have separated the pre-modern from the modern methods, respectively. The young students should explore alternative methods of enquiry such as counter inductive, abdicative, and circular (paradoxical) etc.

In addition, the students should get acquainted with qualitative and quantitative methods or anthropological and ethnographic methods used in social science research and if possible explore other than binarism as a dominant method of enquiry under modernism and post-modernism.

Expected Learning Outcomes

After studying this Unit, you should be able to:

- understand and comprehend the Concept of Regions and Regional Geography;
- describe the regional methods of analysis; and
- define the types of regions.

2.2 BASES OF REGIONALISATION

Geography as a branch of knowledge in its present form and content emerged under the enlightenment movement and rise of modernity. Similar to other branches of knowledge, it shared some basic principles of objectivity, rationality and critical enquiry with other disciplines. But, unlike other branches of knowledge, its subject matter as well as the methods of understanding (enquiry) were marked by dualism between physical (nature) versus Human (cultural), dichotomies such as General (systematic) versus Regional (specific), Historical versus Contemporary, Formal versus Functional and Determinism versus Possibilism etc.

Owing to the nature of its subject matter inclusive of nature and human, the taxonomic (classificatory) methods of understanding treating nature and

human separate and distinct entities, popular among other branches of knowledge served limited purpose in geography. Geography treats human particularly his labour “a process in which both man and nature participate, and in which human on his/her own accord starts, regulates, and controls the material re-actions between him/herself and Nature. He opposes Nature as one of her own force, setting in motion arms and legs, head and hands, the natural forces of his/her body, in order to appropriate nature’s productions in a form adapted to his/her own wants. But, acting on the external world (nature) and changing it, (s) he at the same time changes his/her own nature” (Capital-173). Thus, Geography is primarily interested in cultures that grow with original vigour out of the lap of a maternal natural landscape, to which each is bound in the whole course of its existence. Geography is based on the reality of the union of physical and cultural elements of the landscape (Sauer, 325).

It is evident from the above that the subject matter and canvas of geographical enquiry is complex closely interwoven and diversely interlinked phenomena both in nature and culture. Furthermore, the scale of its inquiry ranging from a small agricultural field and hamlet to planetary system makes it difficult to select an appropriate scale of enquiry. There are differences of opinions among the geographers about choosing the appropriate scale of its enquiry. Richard Hartshorne advocated that region should be an appropriate unit of analysis in geographical enquiry for the following reasons:

- a) **Region as Covering Sets:** Since the subject matter of geography is diverse encompassing natural and cultural aspects of Earth (ensemble of nature and culture) along their static as well as dynamic aspects, so it is essential to reduce the complexity of understanding the whole Earth by delineating manageable units in order to understand/emphasise the essential attributes and removing/underplaying less significant ones.
 - b) **Regions as Samples from a Population:** Basic aim of a scientific enquiry is to understand the reality in its diversity and totality and identify the features of normality in order to formulate general principles. A region, therefore, acts as the most appropriate representative of the complex multi-dimensional universe/space. Regions act like exemplars and provide specific inputs for generalisation.
 - c) **Regions act as Analogues:** Region unlike an area is living, relative and dialectical concept. Area generally refers to geometric portion of earth-space with no implication of homogeneity or cohesion. As compared to this, a region exists on the basis of specific criteria and is homogeneous or cohesive only in relation to those criteria. Moreover, no region can exist in itself and needs the existence of other regions that are dissimilar from it on some parameters yet similar in many others.
- Therefore, in order to exhibit a region presupposes the existence of other regions, which is also a precondition for its self affirmation, authentication, and comparison.
- d) **Regions as Modulators:** A region is always a synthesis of multiple natural and human components which are diverse in terms of their extent, magnitude, and frequency of change over time and space. The internal dynamics of these diverse elements help in identifying the contributions of each component in the overall achievement of the region and indicate

towards moderation and modification of the inter-relationship within the region and in comparison to other regions.

Region therefore, neither stands for divisions, nor highlighting differences nor even advocating irreconcilable unique characteristic features. On the contrary, it stands for specificities that would be otherwise missed while searching the bonds of interdependence in the name of generalisation.

The main aim of delineating regions is to study specific aspects of each spatial component, to compare them in terms of their differences, limitations, challenges, opportunities, and identify the possible linkages of interdependent both within (intra) and without (inter) and network of interactions in order to develop better and holistic understanding about the system as a whole. A region can neither undermines the importance of the system nor can it stand alone.

It is in the backdrop of these postulations, geographers have presented different schemes of regionalisation for India on the bases of various parameters. Some of the important ones are discussed as under:

2.2.1 Physical Bases of Regionalisation

Geography is quintessentially concerned with understanding of the Earth and its primary enquiry is to understand its surface constituting, geological structure, relief, alignment of relief features, climate, slope, drainage, vegetation, and soil etc. Though, climate, geological structure, soils, flora and fauna etc., are also the main concerns of other branches of knowledge such as Meteorology, Geology, and Botany etc. respectively, yet, most of these branches of knowledge try to understand these as substantive and standalone subject matter of their enquiry specific to the respective disciplines. Unlike these branches of knowledge, Geographical enquiry is different. It is inclusive and attempts to understand these as interdependent elements of a unified system including nature and society.

Moreover, these interdependent are in constant interactions with each other. Its enquiry begins the way the interdependent interactions among various constituent elements are manifested over the surface of the Earth and continuously changes over time and space. Therefore, the relief of a given region is both the outcome as well as cause (basis) of the nature-human interactions. On the basis of these assumptions, India has been divided into the following physiographic regions popularly known as triple tectonic divisions:

- 1. The Indian Plateau:** Some geographers prefer to address it as Peninsular India because of its tapering shape into the Indian Ocean flanked by Bay of Bengal in the East and Arabian Sea in the West.

According to the advocates of the theory of Plate Tectonics among the geologists, the Indian Plateau is one of the several major plates of the Earth's crust. This region made of old crustal rock stands like a rigid and inflexible block since the Pre-Cambrian times and often compared to a horst. Included in this region are the regions to the South of Tropic of Cancer along with the West and East Coastal Plains. Inadvertently, the

nomenclature Indian Peninsula excludes regions of Northern Gujarat, large parts of Madhya Pradesh, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand, Rajasthan, Meghalaya, and Karbi Anglong Plateaux. Though, these regions are not parts of the Indian Peninsula, yet, they share common geological history and structure among themselves and with the Indian Peninsular. The relief of Rajasthan dominated by Aeolian landforms does appear to be closer to the North-Indian Plain, which is the result of high level of aridity, but the underlying geological structure of Rajasthan is similar to the Deccan Plateau.

The geologists believe that the Indian plateau is part of the Pre-Cambrian deposits on the seabed, which have emerged on the surface over long time. The process of the upliftment of deposits from the seabed was initiated during the Paleozoic period and continued over a long period. The existence of a table land above the sea level is largely responsible for the emergence of subsequent landforms in this region. The first phase of upliftment resulted into the formation of mighty Aravali and other mountain ranges, including the mighty Vindhya in the North and Nallamalai hills in the South. In its long geological past, this landmass experienced many changes due to tectonic movement resulting into the formation of horst, table top land, block mountains, rift valleys, emerging and submerged coasts along the eastern and western margins of the plateau, respectively.

The Indian Plateau experienced two significant changes during the time of Himalayan Origin nearly 225 million years ago from today. The first was the massive volcanic eruption in its north-western parts depositing lava in those regions. The submergence of the western parts of the plateau gave way to the encroachment of the Indian Ocean in the form of Arabian Sea, leaving the high mountain ranges known as the Western Ghats. Though, some scholars believe that the rise of Western Ghats is largely because of the dipping and tilting of the Indian Plate under the Eurasian Plate in its North-Eastern direction.

- 2. The Extra Peninsular Mountains or the Himalayan Mountains:** It is believed that Himalayas along with the Northern Plains have emerged from the ocean bed (Tethys Sea) in between the two massive land masses i.e., Angara Land in the North and Gondawana Land in the South during and after Mesozoic Period. The deposits on the bed of Tethys Sea brought from the adjoining landmasses in the North and South were subjected to compression due to tectonic movements resulting into the rise of Himalayas during the Tertiary Period. It is believed that the movement of the Indian plate towards the north during 60 to 70 million years ago exerted massive pressure on the deposits on the seabed against the Eurasian Plate in the North. It is estimated that the Tethys Sea began to shrink giving rise to the Himalayas between 20 to 30 million years ago. The erosion of these young mountain ranges and its subsequent deposition in the south created the molasses basin. According to the Geological evidences, the process of the upliftment of the Himalayas occurred in three phases:

First phase marks the rise of the Central Himalayas composed of old granular sedimentary rocks during the Oligocene Period,

Second phase marks the formation of Potwar Basin in Western Pakistan composed of sedimentary deposits during the Miocene Period, and;

Third phase marks the origin of folded Sivalik Ranges in Upper Palaeocene Period.

The geologists are of the opinion that the process of the formation and rise of Himalayas is far from over and it is still active. As opposed to this, the mountain ranges to the north of the Himalayas popularly known as the Karakoram and other ranges had their origin during the Cretaceous Period much before the rise of the Himalayas.

The geologists are also of the opinion that the alignment of the Himalayan Ranges particularly along the India-Myanmar Border in the North East indicate that the force exerted by the Indian Plate was largely responsible in changing the direction of the ranges from South-West-North-East directions in Bhutan and Arunachal Himalayas to North-South directions along India-Myanmar border, particularly from the knee band at Dihang Gorge in Arunachal Pradesh.

The origin of Himalayas, their young age due to tectonic movements to the North and South of the Tethys sea and the importance of the Tethys sea in the formation of the Himalayas can be corroborated with the presence of the lacustrine deposits in the form of the Karewa at a height of 1500 to 1800 metres on the slopes of Pir Panjal ranges in Kashmir and the presence of the fossils deposits of mammals in the Sivalik Foothills.

3. **The Northern Plains:** The vast river plains of North India situated in between the Himalayan arch to its North and the Indian plateau to its South is believed to have originated from the deposits on the ocean bed. The upper layers of sedimentary deposits of the plain are situated on the continental shelf during the Tertiary Period.

It is also believed that large part of the plain was also formed by dipping of the Indian Plateau in the foredeep during the time of Himalayan progeny. The detached part of the Indian plateau in the form of Rajmahal hills, Chhota Nagpur plateau, and the Meghalaya plateau separated by Malda Fault are in fact two shores of the foredeep and the Damodar valley fault is also the indication of the same tectonic activity.

2.2.2 Historical Bases of Regionalisation

John Heywood an English playwright once mentioned "Rome wasn't built in a day, but they were laying bricks every hour". Up to a great extent, the same could be said more appropriately and emphatically about India. It is partly because now, Rome for all practical purposes is "history". It had a grand past during the Roman Empire from 31 BC to 476 AD and its present is only a pale shadow of what it was. It is left with very little except it continues to be the centre of Roman Catholic religion where the Pope holds unquestioned Supreme Head of Catholic religion and amphitheatres the epitomes of brutalities against slaves. Unlike, Rome, India had a grand past; it guided the World much before the rise of the Roman Empire, experienced First Enlightenment (Lord Buddha) and continues to be in the limelight even today.

In the words of poet Iqbal:

Yunan-o-Misr-o-Ruma, sab mit gaye jahan se,
Ab tak magar hai baaki, naam-o-nishan hamara.
Kuch baat hai ki hasti mitatee nahee hamari,
Sadiyon raha hai dushman dourey jahan hamara (Alama Iqbal).

यूनान-ओ-मिस्र-ओ-रूमा, सब मिट गए जहाँ से। अब तक मगर है बाक़ी, नाम-ओ-निशाँ हमारा।।
कुछ बात है कि हस्ती, मिटती नहीं हमारी, सदियों रहा है दुश्मन, दौर-ए-ज़माँ हमारा।।

Moreover, Rome distinguished itself by championing unitary culture, particularly religion. India on the contrary, had been the cradle of many cultures and civilisations and it continues to nurture social pluralities and cultural diversities. It is a country where Bhawa (emotions), Raaga (melody), and Taala (rhythm) contribute in creating a symphony called Bharat. There is much wisdom in saying that: “*Yanna Bharatey Tanna Bharatey*” (means whatever is in Mahabharat (both the epic and the country) is everywhere and whatever is not here that is nowhere).

India as nation is a melting pot of cultures, which is an ongoing process while itself passing through a long revolution. It can neither be fixed to its grand past nor reduced to any type of singularity under the mesmerising impacts of modernity. If one were to summarise the history and culture of India is using Bakhtinian expression it could be said “Indian history is prestratified, its culture is heteroglossic, social space an epitome of heterotopias, politics is pluralistic and geography diversified”.

Therefore, any attempt to map the socio-cultural space(s) in India, it is an imperative to keep these facts in mind. It is in the backdrop of these assumptions, the socio-cultural space(s) in India have been viewed by various scholars both within and without in different ways. A detail of these views has been presented in “Socio-Cultural Regions of India”. For the purpose of the present discussion, the historical basis of regionalisation has been done with the following six assumptions:

1. Diversity is one of the most basic features of India’s cultural history. Throughout its long history, it has always exhibited “unity in diversity”. Meaning thereby, it epitomised unity without uniformity and diversity without fragmentation.
2. India with its vast geographical personality encompassing enormous environmental and cultural diversities makes it difficult for the researchers to treat as a single unit at any period for a considerable duration.
3. History of India has been a saga of conflicts between centripetal and centrifugal forces engendered by its geography.
4. The historico-cultural spaces in India display “zone and strata” concept which can also be called “age and area” concept (Subbarao, B., p.4). Meaning thereby, “If there is a centre where evolution is (whether of organic or inorganic type) taking place..... then, after a reasonable lapse of time, the various differentiated classes will be found to be ranged in zones.... So that the most primitive is at the margins and the most advanced at the centre of series of zones. Thus, the earliest class will

have covered the largest area in its migration: but the fossil evidence of this class will be found at the deepest stratum, under the later strata at the centre of evolution" (Subbarao, B. p.4).

5. Natural diversities and socio-cultural pluralities are neither the consequence nor the bases of regional disparities and social discrimination (exclusion). On the contrary, regional disparities and social discrimination in India are the results of its colonisation under the British.
6. Diversities and pluralities had been/are the real strength of India and the path for a sustainable, inclusive, and resilient development will always be possible by acknowledging these as valuable and real assets.

Bendapudi Subbarao in his famous book 'The Personality of India: Pre and Proto-Historic Foundations of India and Pakistan' (Subbarao, B. 1958) was forthright in acknowledging the contribution of new facts made available by the archaeological research in India. These new evidences helped him to draw correlations between space and time in terms of cultural diversity in India. According to him, "one of the most basic features of India's cultural history is the diversity" (Subbarao, B. p.1). The Indian subcontinent with its vastness and its great environmental and cultural diversities create formidable challenges to the researcher for mapping the socio-cultural diversities.

Therefore, he suggested that though, the Indian history "cannot be treated as a single unit at any period for considerable duration" yet, he opined that looking at the macro level the "whole history of India in a sentence can be described as a conflict between centripetal and centrifugal forces engendered by geography" (Subbarao, B. p.2). He talked about the interplay between two types of forces, as discussed below:

- a. The **centripetal forces** have always tried to give a political expression to the fundamental unity based on common culture and social heritage linked by a transcontinental communication system. These forces have been strengthened by certain technological traditions common to the whole country. Taking clues from the centralised 'Pan Indian' Empires such as the Mauryas, Satavahanas, Guptas, Harsha, Mughals, and British, he substantiated his thesis and claimed that though, these centralised powers had a relatively shorter life span as compared to the regional local empires, yet, they symbolised pan Indian power of unification.
- b. The **centrifugal forces** are the manifestations of the more vital geographical factors and have counteracted the forces of unification. The regional empires like Kosala, Magadha, Gauda, Avanti, Lata, Saurashtra, Kalinga, Andhra, Maharashtra, Karnata, Chera, Chola, and Pandya seems to have eternal lives. These have survived as "perennial nuclear regions" (Subbarao, B. p.2). These cultures have manifested the overwhelming influence of regional geographical factors irrespective of the changes taking place "within and without the subcontinent" (Subbarao, B. p.3).

It is because of the interplay of these forces along with the specific geographical factors and the locations of these regions have yielded a distinct spatio-temporal pattern of culture and cultural landscapes in the Indian sub-

continent. Taking clues from the biological analogy used by Griffith Taylor, Subbarao mentioned that the cultural space in India displays “zone and strata” concept which can also be called “age and area” concept (Subbarao, B. p.4).

Thus, according to Subbarao, the interplay of the centripetal and centrifugal forces, the age and area concept, regional geographical factors along with India’s position of relative isolation cum cul-de-sac in relation to the trans-continental waves of migrations have resulted in evolving unique patterns of settlement-displacement-adjustment/settlement throughout its history. The location of India to the South of the Himalayan Mountain and the way these ranges created formidable barriers between the countries of South Asia and other Eurasian countries, with the exception of occasional limited interaction restricted to high mountain passes after prolonged gap sometime extending up to centuries left this region almost alone for most of the time in its historic past.

India, unlike the other countries which stood directly in the way of the waves of the trans-continental migrants did not face the total destruction of its historic achievements from time to time as was the case with other cultures:

*“On their own feet they came, or on shipboard,
Camel-back, horse-back, ass-back, mule-back,
Old civilisations put to the sword” (Lapis Lazuli: W.B. Yeats).*

On the contrary, the trickles of migrants at intermittent intervals compared to the mainstream of migrants found it difficult to create a major disruption in the existing cultures except gradual displacements-adjustments leading to the evolutions of cross-cultural mosaic of give and take or composite cultures. Since, most of the immigrants had to cross the high mountain passes on the Hindukush and Himalayas, the number and frequencies of their movements were limited spread over many years of disruption. So, there were limited options left except evolving composite cultures.

Moreover, these immigrants were also constrained by the incompatibility of their then existing institutions and technologies. Consequently, they followed a path of least resistance while settling temporarily and again getting displaced by successive waves of migrants in India. The final outcome of all these interrelated factors was: the peopling of India followed a “Z” pattern of movement starting from the Jangerain Gate and Kabul valley in the North to Tamil Nadu-Malabar coast in the South. It is along with these routes of migrations and settling-displacement along with the local geographical conditions, Subbarao divided India into the following three cultural regions:

- 1. Areas of Attraction**
- 2. Areas of Isolation**
- 3. Areas of Relative Isolation**

- 1. Areas of Attraction:** On the basis of the archaeological evidences, particularly from the Proto-Historic sites of excavation, it has been revealed that the Indus Basin particularly evidences of Harappan culture were prevalent in Punjab, Ghaggar basin, Quetta, Kili Ghul Mohammed, Ghazi Shah, Pindwahi, Amri, Kot-Diji, Sindh, Mohanjo-Daro, Kathiawad, Hissar (Rakhigarhi).

The next important site for the evolution of areas of attraction was the Ganga Basin: It includes Hastinapur, Maheshshvar-Navdatoli, Kanouj, Rajgir, Vaisali, Sonapur, Patna, Bengal: Dinajpur, Midnapur, and Hooghly.

Malwa Plateau and Maharashtra: Maheshvar, Narbada South Bank, Eastern Rajputana, Ujjain, Nagda, Maharashtra: the Valleys of Tapi and Upper basins of Krishna and Godavari, Prakasha, Bahal, Nasik, Jorwe, and Nevasa.

Lower Krishna-Godavari Basin (Andhra-Karnataka Areas): Brahmagiri, Sanganakallu, Piklihal, Muski, Tamilnad: Pala, Kaveri and Tamraparni, Teri, Arikamedu, and Sengamedu.

These areas have always provided suitable ambience for the emergence and growth of economy and culture. Spate finds the material base i.e., fertile soil, rich biodiversity, and ideal climatic condition for the growth of perennial regions in these places. Subbarao on the contrary gives importance to cultural fusion "melting pot of cultures and added their own indistinguishable element to the make-up of this cultural complex" for the same. The alluvial plains, the tropical monsoon forests, and dense network of rivers provided ideal ecological conditions for the survival of a variety of cultural traits deeply embedded into the base, yet, adjusting frequent changes at the surface contributed in the evolution of the areas of attraction or perennial nuclear region.

2. Areas of Isolation: Tribal India or Areas of refuge. These can be defined as cul-de-sac. Predominantly inhabited by hunter and gathering communities and they have "managed to survive in a perfect ecological equilibrium in small communities with simple life suited to their technological attainments" (Subbarao, B. p.142). Unfortunately the developed communities that continue to exploit their rich biotic and abiotic resources and address them as laggard "they missed their bus" (Subbarao, B. p.144). The Himalayas, the north-eastern hills, the central highlands inhabited by the indigenous population are among such areas.

3. Areas of Relative Isolation: Since the predominant waves of the migrants came from the North and most of them from Central Asia to the North of the Himalayas, their technology was less compatible to the local geographical condition prevalent in the moist and sub-humid conditions as well as extreme arid conditions. Therefore, Bengal and Assam on the one hand and Rajasthan on the other hand presented the areas of relative isolation.

Gujrat: Saurashtra, Lata, Lothal, Rangpur, and Kathiawad

Assam: Kamrup

Orissa: Ganjam, Puri, Cuttak, and Balasore

Thus, the cultural map of India according to Subbarao has three important regions mentioned above and there exists no well demarcated boundary to separate one from the other. On the contrary, there have been transgressions from the areas of attractions to the areas of isolation particularly under the colonial rule and independence of India. The rich resources base in terms of the natural resources, biodiversity, and traditional knowledge systems, these areas have been subjected to transformation of their culture in significant ways.

There are no doubts that the contributions made by Subbarao in mapping the historico-cultural spaces of India are significant. With due credit paid to him, it can be humbly mentioned that his research was primarily based on the evidences provided by the archaeological research, particularly the works of F.J. Richards, H.D. Sankalia, Mortimer Wheeler, Fairservis, and Gordon Child etc. It is very rich and robust in case of the past records based on archaeological evidences but relatively tentative on the changes that happened in history. So, there was a need to raise the research to another level based on the fresh evidences made available through other sources. The contributions made by historians particularly D.D. Kausambi, K.M. Pannikar, R.S. Sharma, D. P. Chattopadhyaya, Romila Thapar, Irfan Habib and others in this context are worth acknowledging.

These scholars acknowledged that the history and geography of India are deeply embedded into each other and understanding one without the other is inconceivable. The southward extension of the Indian sub-continent from the great landmass of Asia, and the formidable barriers created by chains of high mountain ranges of Himalayas in the North, the West Asian desert in the West, the mighty rivers and thick vegetation in the East and the flanks created by the Indian Ocean particularly Bay of Bengal and Arabian Sea in the South have permitted limited interactions among the cultures that occasionally came to this region, which in turn contributed in creating unique geographical conditions for the enactment of historical events.

Since, the entry of the cultural groups and communities in the West Asia, Central Asia and East and South East Asia had highly restricted access to the South Asia over time and space, it was but natural for these communities to evolve and modify their institutional arrangements, social contracts, and technologies for settling in this region. Some of the manifestations of these adjustments from the point of view of social space are as follows:

1. River valleys were the most preferred areas of human settlements.
2. The outskirts of the river valleys offered relatively less hospitable conditions for the emergence of large permanent human settlements but proved favourable for the communities engaged in hunting, food gathering, and pastoral activities.
3. The areas away both from the river valleys and their outskirts were considered hostile for human settlements. The areas included among these were the islands, deserts, hilly and mountainous areas, marshes and swamps. These areas were inhabited by primitive people, which the British called Tribes.
4. The settlement of these communities in such areas of harsh conditions was not a result of their choice. On the contrary, it was the result of constant displacement of earlier settlers by the new waves of settlers equipped with relatively advanced technology and institutional set-ups.
5. Thus, the cultural space in South Asia was marked by enormous socio-cultural diversities on the one hand and creation of social hierarchies among the dominant and the subordinates on the other hand.
6. The social hierarchy was also manifested in the creation of spatial hierarchies: the perennial nuclear regions broadly coinciding with the areas

of attraction mostly in the river valleys, areas of relative isolation were a combination of opportunities and limitations, while the areas of isolation or cul-de-sac were characterised by few opportunities and more limitations.

In the process of interplay of these geographical and historical factors, the first authentic mapping of the historical regions of India is documented in the form of Janapadas and Mahajanapadas. The differences between these two historical regions were in terms of their size, ecology, locations, and social formations. The Mahajanapadas were mostly prevalent in the fertile river valley plains of the North India and functioned like monarchies, while the Janapadas were some sort of proto-republics along the northern and southern peripheries of the Ganga Valley. Though, initially the conduct of these Janapadas was regulated by the assembly of the community but gradually these were controlled by single tribe and ultimately got transformed into monarchies. However, there were instances when the Janapadas were regulated by the confederation of more than one tribe. Thus, the transition from Janapada to monarchy was marked by egalitarian tribal social order to caste based hierarchical social structure.

The references of the existence of these Janapadas and Mahajanapadas were made available in the Buddhist Texts Angustra Nikaya, Digha Nikaya, and S.M. Ali's Geography of the Puranas etc.

Table 2.1: Sodasa Maha Janapadas

Maha Janapadas	Capital City/City	Dialect/Language
Kuru	Indraprastha (Hastinapura)	Kuruvi (Khari Boli)
Panchala	Kampil (Ahichchitra)	
Kosala	Saket (Ayodhya)	Kosali (Awadhi)
Kasi	Kasi	Kosali (Awadhi)
Malla	Kusinagar (Pawa)	Bhojpuri
Vajji (Videha)	Mithila	Maithili
Magadha	Rajagriha	Maghai
Anga	Champanagari	Maghai
Vatsa (Vamsa)	Kausambi	
Chedi		Bundeli
Surasena	Mahtura	Braj Bhasha
Matsya	Viratnagar	Bagari
Avanti	Ujjaini	Malvi
Asmaka		
Gandhara	Taxila (Purushapura)	Gandhari (Pushto)
Kamboja		

(Source: Ahmad, A. (1999): Social Geography, p.97).

The next most authentic mapping of the historical regions was available in Abul Fazal's Ain-e-Akbari during the Mughal rulers.

Table 2.2: Mughal Provinces and Sarkars

Subahs	Sarkars
Kabul	Kashmir, Pakli, Sawad (Swat), Daur-Banu-Isakhel, Qandahar, and Kabul
Multan	Multan, Bhakkar, Tattah, Hajkan, Sewistan, Nasirpur, and

	Chakarhalah
Lahor	Bet Jalandhar Doab, Bari Doab, Rechnau Doab, Chenhat (Jech) Doab, and Sindh Sagar Doab
Delhi	Delhi, Badaon, Kumaon, Sambhal, Saharanpur, Rewari, Hisar, Firozah, and Sirhind
Ajmere	Ajmere, Chitor, Rantambhor, Jodhpur, Sirohi, Nagor, and Bikaner
Ahmadabad	Ahmadabad, Pattan, Nandod, Baroda, Broach, Charnpaner, Surat, Godhra, and Sorath (Kathiawad)
Malwah	Ujjain, Raisin, Garha, Chanderi, Sarangpur, Bijagarh, Mando, Handiah, Nandarbar, Mandesor, Gargron, and Kotri Parawa
Agrah	Agrah, Kalpi, Kanauj, Kol (Koil), Gwalior, Irij, Bayanwan, Narwar, Mandrael, Alwar, Tijarah, Narnol and Sahar
Illahabad	Illahabas (Allahabad), Ghazipur, Banaras, Jaunpur, Manikpur, Chanadah (Chanar), Bhathkhora, Kalinjar, Kurrah, and Karah
Awadh	Awadh, Gorakhpur, Bahraich, Khairabad, and Lakhnau
Berar	Berar, Mongher, Champaran, Hajipur, Saran, Tirhut, and Rohtas
Bengalah	Udarnbar (Tanda), Jannatabad (Lakhnauti), Fathabad, Mahmudabad, Khalifatabad, Bakla, Purniyah, Tajpur, Ghoraghat, Pinjarah, Barbakabad, Bazuha, Sonargaon, Sylhet, Chittagong, Sharifabad, Sulaimanabad, Satgaon, Mandaran, Jalesar, Bhadrak, Katak (Cuttack), Kaling Dandpat, and Raj Mahendrih

(Source: Ahmad, A. (1999): Social Geography, p.105).

An interesting aspect about the formation of these early historical regions in India is the overlapping of areas in most of the Janapadas and Subahs. Some of the most notable cases were:

Table 2.3: Sodasa Mahajanapadas and Mughal Provinces

Janapadas	Corresponding Subah
Gandhara-Kamboja	Kabul
Kuru-Panchala	Delhi
Matsaya	Ajmere
Avanti	Malwah
Surasen-Panchala-Chedi	Agrah
Vatsa-Chedi	Allahabad
Kosala	Awadh
Malla-Vajji-Magadha-Anga	Behar
Anga	Bengalah
Asmaka	Berar

(Source: Aijazuddin Ahmad (1999): Social Geography, p.105)

It has been claimed by many scholars that the integration of India in the World market under British colonial rule was the major factor that claimed to have brought in fundamental changes in the social, economic, and regional structures in India. The changes were so encompassing that these surpassed even the changes brought by foreign invasions and natural calamities like earthquakes and famine etc. But as far as the historical and spatial structures were concerned, it appears that there was strong continuity with some

changes, which also formed the bases of reorganisation of states and union territories in Independent India. It is evident from the formation of most of the states in India that they are deeply rooted into their historical roots: areas of attractions or Perennial Nuclear Regions, Subahs and Colonial provinces. The states like Bengal, Assam, and Rajasthan falling into the category of areas of relative isolation and the peripheral state and union territories in the Himalayas, the North-Eastern region and the Islands of Indian Ocean are included in the group of Areas of Isolation.

However, it would be incorrect to say that the progression of Areas of Attraction, Areas of Relative Isolation, Areas of Isolation into Janapadas, Mahajanapadas, to Subah and Sarcars, to British Provinces and Princely States and finally formation of states in Independent India were a saga of continuity. On the contrary, there were adequate changes and modifications over time particularly under colonialism. Some of the major changes brought in by the colonial rulers had the following characteristic features as under:

1. Opening of sea routes and emergence of Port Towns for trade completely inverted the limited spatial interaction and space relation with our terrestrial neighbours and replaced these by strong linkages with distant countries interacting through sea routes.
2. Most of these external relations had strong forward linkages, characterised by cantilevered suction mechanism for the export of raw materials and drain of wealth (capitals) and weak feedback linkages were for the marketing of foreign manufactured goods leading into the destruction of industries (deindustrialisation), rapid unemployment, de-urbanisation, and increasing the population pressure on traditional agriculture. These changes not only put India on the path of underdevelopment but also resulted into the rapid increase in underemployment, poverty on the one hand and rise of absentee landlords and an army of middlemen on the other hand.
3. The historical centre of Political Power Delhi-Agra-Lahore was replaced by new centres of power at the metropolitan outposts Calcutta (Kolkata)-Madras (Chennai)-Bombay (Mumbai).
4. The areas of Relative Isolation were 'developed' for the production of commercial crops like Jute and Tea and the Areas of Isolation were used for extraction of raw materials like timber for the construction of railways, coal and mineral resources, and above all for spreading Christianity (proselytisation).
5. The mountain ranges and hill tops in the Middle Himalayas were developed as Hill stations, Army cantonment towns and the piedmont plains between the High Himalayas and Plains of Northern India were selected for the development of Gateway towns: Jammu, Pathankot, Kalka, Dehradun Haridwara, Kotdwara, Ram Nagar, Haldwani, Kathgodam, Tanak Pur, Siliguru, New Mall, Alipur Dwar, Dimapura etc., from West to East.
6. The isolated areas were subjected to the exploitation of mineral resources, displacement, and deportation of population as plantation workers within the country and overseas.

7. The isolated areas of the earlier times became more significant over the period and continue to draw the attentions of the scholars, planners, and strategists mainly because of the identity assertions of numerous indigenous communities, reckless exploitation of its resources, and biodiversity resources along with issues related to environmental justice, ecological vulnerabilities, and social-cultural marginalisation.
8. In the backdrop of these physical and socio-cultural diversities it was but natural that the economy and livelihood of the people and regions in India went under continuous changes. Scholars have tried in mapping the economic personality, discussed in ensuing sub-Section 2.2.5.

2.2.3 Geo-Political Bases of Regionalisation

The credit for introducing the concept of Geopolitics in the field of Political Geography goes to Swedish Political Scientist Rudolph Kjellen who along with the ideas of the Organic Theory of State propounded by Ratzel and Heartland Theory of British Geographer Mackinder was able to provide adequate academic rigor to this concept. But establishing geopolitics as a developed branch of knowledge in the field of political geography was on account of efforts made by a group of geographers from Germany, particularly Karl Haushofer and an academic journal named: Zeitschrift fur Geopolitic during the inter-war period (1922-1944) in Germany were most significant. The most significant aspect of Geopolitics was the overwhelming influence of Social Darwinism and Social Physics on its theoretical postulations, after faulty understanding and applications of Charles Darwin and Isaac Newton's laws of evolutions and laws of motions respectively.

Since then geopolitics have moved on by incorporating various approaches within its subject matter. During the first half of the 20th century, geopolitics remained over occupied with the concepts like pivotal position of Heartland (Mackinder), Organic Theory of State and concept of Lebensraum (Ratzel) and Rimland Theory (Spykman) etc. The end of the World War-II, success of freedom struggle and national liberation movements in the colonies and beginning of the Cold War brought in the themes of Power Relations and Power Blocks in the international politics and geopolitics. On the part of the post colonial countries the policy of equidistance from the power blocks and formation of the Non-Alignment group of countries were the new themes introduced in the field of geopolitics. The highlights of the concerns of the post colonial countries were discourses on world political economy, critical evaluation of the modern world system, unequal exchange, and development of underdevelopment. The Twenty First Century witnessed new challenges in the subject matter of geopolitics. Ecological crises, environmental justice and cultural identity assertions have dominated the themes of the subject.

India, which is one of the victims of the distortions brought in its geography, history, economy, politics and culture during the colonial rule is the second largest country of the world in terms of the size of population, fifth largest economy in terms of the GDP, one among the top soft power of the world as well as largest democracy in the world has witnessed the enactment of different geopolitical strategies. Consequently, its geopolitics displays certain unique features:

1. India's strategic position to the South of the high Himalayan Mountain arch in the North and North East, the West Asian Deserts to its West and the Indian Ocean to its south along with its two arms the Bay of Bengal along the East Coast and Arabian Sea along the West coast have contributed in making it an area of Relative Isolation if not a total blind alley (Cul-de-Sac). Consequently, it could develop its own unique composite culture having great geopolitical importance.
2. Its strategic locations between Arabic and Persian cultures and civilisations to its west, Buddhist cultures and Civilisations to its North and East, autocratic states among its neighbours, yet continuing an important link between the industrially developed west, oil rich middle east and agriculturally developed South-East Asia, industrially developed East Asia, Oceania and relatively underdeveloped East Africa have played an important role in its geopolitical location.
3. India is called a country having unity in diversity. Its vast landscape measuring approximately 3,287,263 square kilometres is diverse in terms of natural, socio-cultural, historical, and political aspects, surrounded by equally diverse nature of its international borders play significant roles in shaping its geopolitics. It shares land borders with Pakistan and Afghanistan in the West and North-West, Tibet (China), Nepal and Bhutan in the North, Myanmar and Bangladesh in the East. Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Indonesia are its nearest maritime neighbours in the Indian Ocean. Thus, its expansions from the towering rampart created by high mountain ranges of Himalaya in the north to the Indian Ocean in the south, the terrestrial and maritime borders with its neighbour have made its international border sensitive and dynamic in the following areas: Border disputes and conflicts, territorial claims and counter-claims, super power strategy in the formation of regional power blocks, illegal international migrations, cross border terrorism, violation of geographical indicators in regional political formations leading to disputes over river water sharing and power generation, climate change, retreat of the Himalayan glaciers, floods and natural disasters and submergence and emergence of coastal areas and islands in the Bay of Bengal.
4. India is not only the largest democracy and second most populous country in the world, but it is also a most important regional power in South Asia (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, SAARC). It is a recognised nuclear power, fifth largest economy in the world, high potential of demographic dividend, composite culture and dominant soft power (Information Technology, IT) too play important role in its geopolitical position.

In the backdrop of these specificities, India can be broadly divided in the following five Geopolitical Regions:

1. The Northern Region

It broadly includes the Union Territory of Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, bordering areas of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, North Bengal and Assam, state of Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh. These areas are dominated by numerous indigenous communities practicing their traditional livelihood.

This region is rich in terms of biodiversity, culture, hydro power potentials, tourism, forest and biodiversity resources. These have rich potentials of cross border trade, water resources sharing along with border disputes are the major bone of contention in this region.

2. Western Region

The Union territory of Jammu and Kashmir, state of Punjab, Rajasthan and Gujarat are the main states and union territory included in this region. Cross border terrorism, dispute over river water sharing, hydroelectric power generation and illegal occupation of the North-Western parts of the Jammu and Kashmir and dispute over fixing fluid international boundary at Sir Creek with Pakistan along with anti-social activities are the main geopolitical concerns in this region. Apart from these smuggling of illegal arms and drugs are the main issues of geopolitical concerns in this region.

3. The North-Eastern Region

The North-Eastern Region of India is most complex in terms of its Geopolitical dimensions. Culturally, it is one of the most diverse regions of India. With the success of the secular and democratic fabric of India, majority of the people from the region have been participating in the democratic process of India. However, illegal border trade of arms, drugs and animals along with illegal migrants have placed the peace process under stress in the region. Rich biodiversity, cultural pluralities, strong traditional knowledge system and nearness to the developing market in the South-East Asia have played an important role in shaping the geopolitical importance of this region. Consequently, the government of India enunciated a proactive "Look East Policy" in 1992, to integrate this region with India and India with the South-East Asian countries. This could be a game changer in the geopolitical importance of this region.

4. The Peninsular India

The Peninsular India with rich repository of agricultural products especially species along vast coastline and natural harbours on the West Coast have always attracted the Arab and East African Traders since ancient times and during the age of oversea navigations, it was frequently visited by the European traders. Though, the East coast being an emerging coast has limited number of natural harbours yet the trade and cultural contact of India with the countries of South East Asia have contributed in the cultural diffusion from India to these countries along with Polynesian Archipelagoes. Speakers of Tamil Language in these countries particularly Singapore and Bali Yatra celebrations on Kartika Purnima usually in November in Odisha are indications of the geopolitical significance of the peninsular India. It is believed that the diffusion of Buddhism to Sri Lanka and South East Asia had taken place through the sea routes and similarly, the spread of Islam and Christianity had taken place initially from the peninsular India. The geopolitical significance of this region has increased manifold in the age of surveillance and satellite guided wars. Consequently, most of the testing sites of the strategic and space technologies are located within the peninsular India.

5. The Islands on the Indian Ocean

The gist of Mackinder's heartland theory states that "Who rules East Europe commands the Heartland; who rules the Heartland commands the World-Island; who rules the World-Island commands the World". This is true about the significance of the islands in the Indian Ocean to India. Apart from being rich in terms of the marine resources, these islands have great strategic significance particularly when the rivalry between the USA and China is increasing to establish their domination over the Indian Ocean.

2.2.4 Socio-Cultural Bases of Regionalisation

Aristotle was the first to say that humans are political animal. Since he was the philosopher born and brought up in a society divided into two extremes i.e., the minority slave master and majority slaves. Culture either did not figure in his discourses or the etiquettes of the masters were treated as cultures. The Slaves were never considered as humans therefore there was no question of their culture. For the first time the Aristotelian belief system was challenged during the age of enlightenment, rationality and scientific discoveries. In the name of objectivity over emphasis on facts and experimentation reduced culture to instrumentalities and themes that could not be objectified and rationalize were treated either without culture or superstitious.

This rationality paradigm was challenged by two significant historical events during the 20th century. The first was the success of the Bolshevik revolution in Russia and success of anti-colonial movements after the world War-II. These events brought culture at the forefront of academic and political discourses, which finally triumphed by countering the scientific-instrumental rationality by practical-impansatory cultural rationality. The post modernists thinkers championed the importance of the cultural rationality: "Post-Modernism is the Cultural logic of late capitalism" Fredric Jameson. Nineteenth Century British anthropologist Edward Tylor was the first to define culture. According to him, culture is the complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, customs and any other capabilities and habits by humans as members of society. Similarly, German Anthro-po-geographer Friedrich Ratzel analysed the ecological relationships between physical attributes of the earth's surface and human cultures. These investigations were taken to higher academic echelons by American Cultural Geographer Carl Sauer from Berkeley School. According to Sauer, culture hearth is the core area in a diffusion process whereby new cultural practices are spread, through human agency to create new cultural regions. Furthermore, he ascertained that culture is the agent, the natural area the medium, the cultural landscape is the result.

It is, therefore, evident that culture is a multidimensional phenomenon and it cannot be reduced to either a single or few most representative aspects. Geographers have tried to use factor analysis to create composite index of culture to demarcate the cultural regions. Geographers in India have also tried using religion, belief systems, language and dialects, ethnicity, caste, settlements types and patterns, food habits, dance and songs, music, legends, lifestyle, customs and cultural practices associated with agriculture, forestry, animal husbandry, fishing along with historical achievements etc., to identify the socio-cultural regions. Similarly, there are differences of opinions among

the geographers to select the most inclusive unit for demarcating the cultural regions in India. The state reorganisation committee Headed by Retired Chief Justice of Supreme Court of India Justice Fazal Ali along with K.M. Panikkar and K.M. Kunzru as members constituted in December 1953 and submitted the recommendation in 1956. The commission suggested language as the basis of state reorganisation, which was partly implemented in the states in South India but could not be implemented in other parts. Thereafter, suggestions were made to identify linguistic regions by combining districts on the basis of dominant language, which was subsequently brought down to the block levels and village levels. Consequently, attempts were made to identify monolingual regions, bi-lingual regions and multi-lingual regions.

These academic exercises faced formidable challenges with the advancement of education and literacy, mass media, transport and communication, entertainment particularly cinema and television. Today, there are challenges coming from social media which have impacted the socio-cultural mosaic of the country and made it difficult to fix the indicators and identify the level of socio-cultural regionalisation in a diverse country like India which is going under rapid transformation.

Thus, it is evident from the above that identifying socio-cultural region is difficult because of dynamic natures of the controlling factors. But, in the resurgence of the cultural rationality there is certain amount of trade-off between inclusive and exclusive indicators of regional identification. In the context of resurgent identity politics in India, the following socio-cultural factors play important role in the formation of the regions:

1. **The Peopling Process in India:** Meaning thereby India was not made in one day, year, decade and century and it is still in the process of making. According to B. Subbarao, the peopling process followed a particular route and created regions of three different orders (as discussed in Section 2.2.2 under Historical bases of regionalisation).
2. **Exclusive Inclusion and Inclusive Exclusion:** The peopling processes in India had/have been an unending saga of displacement and settlements over centuries. Every incoming new wave of migrants, mostly after crossing the high mountain passes located in Afghanistan Himalayas either pushed most of the previous settlers to margins or placed the remaining at the lowest levels in the social hierarchy. These processes were repeated many times over centuries. Consequently, most of the settlers pushed to the margins were the earlier settlers. These can be corroborated by the high concentration of ethnic groups (mostly the Scheduled Tribes) in the islands, hills and mountains in the Himalayas and the North-Eastern Regions, in the high land plateaux of the Central India and Indian Peninsula i.e., from Karbi Anglong and Maghalaya plateaux in the North-East through Jharkhand, Chattishgarh, Odisha, Telangana, Maharashtra, Karanataka, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and Rajasthan. The remaining of the previous settlers who were either could not get displaced or resisted the new waves of settlers but lost were placed at the lowest level in the social hierarchy. Most of these are the Scheduled Caste in the Indian society. The end result of these processes was the enactment of

the Griffith Taylor's Zone and Strata concept of population distribution. Meaning thereby; the first settlers are located at the outer most zones and lower most strata and the late comers are at the inner most zone and upper most strata of the socio-geographical spaces. Both these communities are the victims of the exclusive inclusion and inclusive exclusion.

3. **Secularism and Democracy in a Post-colonial Country:** There were many colonies who became sovereign nation after a prolonged freedom struggle after the World War-II. Getting independence was a difficult task but retaining freedom and upholding sovereign status has been the most difficult task for many countries. Philippines is a classic example of getting independence four times and losing it five times i.e., Philippines was colonized by Spain in 1565 and ceded to the USA in 1898. Japan colonized Philippine in 1941 and they surrendered it to the USA in 1945. Though the USA granted independence to Philippines in 1946, yet it continues to be a de-facto colony of the USA. Similar had been the experiences of many other countries. The leaders of India's freedom struggle were well aware of these eventualities; therefore, they made concerted efforts to protect its independence and sovereignty. Following steps proved to be the milestones (pillars) in the success of India as a sovereign nation:
 - a) Supremacy of constitution to protect the citizens of the country.
 - b) Planned economic development with state sector as the lead entrepreneurs both mental and material creativity and production in the country.
 - c) Non-alignment foreign policy with respect to the power blocs active at the international level.
 - d) Sovereignty of the nation and national integration non-negotiable particularly to integrate the 565 princely (native) states within the Indian Union.

Considering the significance of these pillars, the committee constituted for the reorganisation of the India approved linguistic basis of state re-organisation. As mentioned before, though, this principle was not followed in other parts of India except South India and also in the subsequent stages of state formation, yet linguistic bases are still valid for various reasons particularly in terms of the medium of instruction in schools education and examinations, official communication, legal transactions, films and entertainment industry, market and political mobilizations etc. Therefore, the same has been accepted for the socio-cultural regionalization:

Linguistic Regions of India:

1. **Austic Group of Languages and dialects:** Included among these are:
 - (a) Munda: Santhali, Mundari, ho and Korku, and
 - (b) Mon-Khmer; Khasi and Nicobarese.

2. **Sino-Tibetan group of languages and dialects:** Included among these in India are Tibeto-Burman: Tibetan, Balti, Ladakhi, Lahuli, Kinnauri, Lepcha, Aka, Mishing-mishmi, Miri, Bodo, Naga, and Kuki-Chin.
3. **Dravidian Languages dialects:** Included among these are Brahui, Malto-kurukh, Oraon, Gondi, Telugu, Tamil, Kanada and Malayalam.
4. **Indo-Aryan languages and dialects:** Included among these are: Kashmiri, Punjabi, Sindhi, Gujarati, Gujjari, Saurathi, Bangru, Braj, Khari-boli, Kanauji, Awadhi, Bagheli, Chattisgarhi, Bundeli, Bhojpuri, Maithali, Maghi, Bengali, Assami, Oriya, Marwari, Mewari, Mewati, Malavi, Marathi, Konkani, Gorkhali, Kumayuni, Garhwali, Kului and Roma (Gyosy) dialect.

An ideal way to demarcate the socio-cultural regions based on speakers of languages and dialects is to map the speakers of first two languages/dialects at the village level and identify the core, transitional and peripheries of the speakers. The states could be considered a socio-cultural region where language has been the basis of state reorganisation. In the absence of linguistic states, demarcation of the speakers of first and second language should form the basis of linguistic regions. Special provisions should be made to demarcate the cities and urban centres as multi-lingual socio-cultural regions.

2.2.5 Economic and Natural Resource Bases of Regionalisation

It is a well established fact that humans are the only producing animals and production is a social act. In social production, humans enter into “definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will, relations of production which correspond to a definite stage of development of their material productive forces. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society, the real foundation, on which rises a legal and political structure and to which corresponds definite forms of social conscious. The mode of production of material life conditions the social, political, and intellectual life process in general”. Meaning thereby, the material bases constitutes the foundation of all other social relations, but it is a bi-way relation. The examples of the interdependence among the natural, historical, cultural, and economic regions are most appropriate in this regard.

The Subahs as described in the Ain-e-Akbari according to Irfan Habib were quintessentially revenue and economic regions. Similarly, the provinces under the British colonial administration too were revenue or economic regions. The demarcation of economic regions in India was carried out for the first time in “The Imperial Gazetteer of India” in 1903-04. It identified Five Great Industrial Areas noted for their special products as listed in Table 2.4 below:

Table 2.4: Economic Regions of India: The Imperial Gazetteer, 1903-04

Economic Regions	(a) Major Commercial Products (b) Minor Products (Artistic and Minor Products)
Bengal and Assam	a. India rubber, oilseeds and oil, lac, indigo, jute, pepper, hides and skins, silk, opium, tobacco, tea, sugar, rice, gram, coal, iron, saltpetre, mica, and pottery

	b. Ivory carving, umbrella-making, shell-carving, Decca muslins, embroidery, and mate-making
North India: United and Central Provinces, Rajasthan and Central India, Punjab and the Frontier province and Kashmir	a. Resin, lac, oilseeds, perfumery, soap and candles, cutch, myrobalans, cotton, silk, wool, leather, carpets and mats, wheat, flour, biscuits, opium, tea, sugar, beer and spirits, shisham and deodar (cedar) woods, barilla, borax, lead, copper, gypsum, salt, and saltpetre b. Tinned ware, lac coloured metal ware, copper, gold and silver plate, damascened ware, encrusted ware, copper and brass wares, sone carving and lapidary work, pottery, wood carving, inlaid wood work, lattice-work, painted wood and papier-mache, ivory-carving, leather and skin work (belts, flasks etc.) lac-ware, dyeing and calico-printings, tie-dyeing, cotton manufacture, muslins, silk manufactures, woollen goods and shawls, embroidery, carpets (woollen and cotton), and miniature painting
Western India: Bombay presidency, Berar and Baluchistan	a. Gram, oilseeds, cotton wool, hides and skins, drugs, wheat, and salt b. Gold and silver plate, wood-carving, horn, leather and skin work, marquetry, cotton goods, silk manufactures, and embroidery
Southern India: Madras Presidency, Hyderabad, Mysore and Coorg.	a. Oilseeds, ghee and indigo, cotton, coir, skins, tea, coffee, cigar, cardamoms and pepper, sugar, spirits, rice, sandal-wood, pearls, gold, manganese, plumbago, and cement b. Gold and silver plate, encrusted ware, copper and brass ware, stone carving, inlaid wood, sandal-wood carving, ivory carving and staining, dyeing and hand printing, silk manufacture, embroidery, carpets, and mats of cotton and wool.
Burma	Since none of the area included in this region falls under India, so it has been excluded.

(Source: The Imperial Gazetteer, 1903-04)

It is evident that the identification of the economic regions of India under the colonial administration was primarily driven by its export oriented exploitative mechanism characterised by: export of primary products and raw materials, light branches of semi-processed products and deskilling of workforce, de-urbanisation, deindustrialisation, and spurious growth of tertiary sector. It resulted into reinforcing India's dependence on the imported commodities, which lead to regional imbalance and social inequalities, and underdevelopment.

Therefore, it was imperative to the government of India after independence to achieve three main objectives: a) Protection of a sovereign nation, b) Economic growth and c) National Integration. Consequently, concerted efforts were made to mobilise its underutilised natural and human resources and to bring about balanced regional development and social equality. The constitution of the Planning Commission of India under the Chairpersonship of the Prime Minister of the country was a major step in this direction. Thereafter,

various agencies, institutions and individuals made valuable contributions in identifying the economic regions of India. Some of the important scholars were Ashok Mitra, P. Sen Gupta, Galina Sdasyuk, and L.S. Bhat etc. Among these, the contribution made by P. Sengupta and Galina Sdasyuk is worth mentioning here (P. Sengupta and G. Sdasyuk, 1968).

Economic Regions by Sen Gupta, Galina Sdasyuk

The scheme of regionalisation proposed by these scholars was based on the following principles and Methods:

Principles:

1. Regions have objective character as living realities.
2. Supremacy of production over other economic indicators in region formation.
3. Unity of regional and sectoral structure of the economy.
4. Regions are historical.
5. Economic regions are basis of long-term perspective planning.
6. Inter-linkages between economic regions and administrative structure.
7. Special role of planned production in the formation of economic regions.

Methods:

1. Primacy of production specialisation.
2. Economic regions should be based on sound understanding of natural resource endowment.
3. Identification of hierarchy of natural resource regions.
4. Economic regions should start from the bottom: micro regions should be equal to single resource area. Meso region should be always multi-purpose production unit. Macro region should have the potentials of processing a production cycle of national importance.
5. Regional boundaries at different levels should not cut each other.
6. Higher order regions should be formed after combining lower order regions.

Before identifying the economic regions, the authors identified the Natural Resource Regions, Population Human Resource Regions, Agricultural and Food Resource Regions, Industrial Regions, and Transport Regions. They were of the opinion that the Natural Resource Regions and the Economic Regions are closely interlinked, but are not identical. Though, human interference has changed the natural landscape, yet it could not change the zonal character of the landscape. Economic regions do evolves through collective human efforts to satisfy their needs. They identified Seven Macro Economic Regions:

Table 2.5: Economic Regions

Macro Regions	Meso Regions	Micro Regions
North-Eastern Region	Assam, Nagaland, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Mizoram	All the Districts with at least one nodal centre.
The Eastern Region	West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, and Odisha.	All the Districts with at least one nodal centre.
The North-Central Region	Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand	All the Districts with at least one nodal centre.
The Central Region	Madhya Pradesh and Chattishgarh	All the Districts with at least one nodal centre.
The North Western Region	Rajasthan, Punjab, Haryana, Jammu and Kashmir, and Himachal Pradesh	All the Districts with at least one nodal centre.
The Western Region	Maharashtra and Gujarat	All the Districts with at least one nodal centre.
The Southern Region	Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Pondicherry, Yanam, Andaman and Nicobar islands, Lakshadweep, and Goa.	All the Districts with at least one nodal centre.

The authors while presenting the scheme of economic regions of India were impressed by the contributions made by N.N. Kolosovskiy, particularly the concept of Territorial Production Complex in the processing of raw material using regional energy-resources which he called 'Energy-Production Cycle'. The production cycle starts with simple mining of the raw material and completes with the production of finished goods. He identified VIII broad Energy-Production Cycles. In case of India, considering its long coastline, Sdasyuk and Sengupta gave special importance to Marine-Energy Industry Cycles as the IX Energy-Production Cycle in the formation of economic regions.

On the bases of the foregoing discussion, it can be said that considering India's long history of migrations and settlements of waves of immigrants from different parts of the World at different times led to displacement of the earlier settlers. New waves of settlers pushed them to the geographical and economic margins. Thus, it has resulted into the complex socio-cultural mosaic of India. Moreover, large size of India and its enormous diversity in terms of natural and social attributes have contributed in the formation of a complex socio-economic space. The composite culture of India was the result of frequent intermixing of the immigrants over a long period, but the exposure of India to the forces of world market under colonialism was most significant in changing the social and regional structure. Regional disparities, economic dependence, and exploitation of its natural resources for the development of metropolis and forced displacement of people to other countries were largely responsible for the distortions in the regional and economic structures of India.

Concerted efforts have been made after India's independence to undo the distortions. Various economic plans have been introduced to expedite the process but India's dependence on the world market for modern technology

continues to create many impediments in yielding desired results. Consequently, adoption of outdated technologies for extracting maximum profits at very high social and environmental costs have added new challenges in the identification of economic regions for balanced development in India.

SAQ I

- a) Regions act as analogues. Discuss.
 - b) Explain areas of isolation.
 - c) List any four principles of economic regions as postulated by Galina Sdasyuk.
-

2.3 NATURE OF REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY

Nature of Regional Geography is closely related with the nature of Geography as a branch of knowledge. Since, Geography is primarily concerned with the understanding of spatial variations/differentiations in the patterns of human-nature interactions over space, so it is obvious that the subject matter of the discipline too is closely linked to the characteristic features of the space. Space in geography is neither an objective entity as is the case with the disciplines in natural sciences i.e., Geology, Botany, Chemistry and Physics etc., nor a subjective and mental construct as is the case with disciplines in humanity and social sciences i.e. Philosophy, Sociology, Political Science and History etc. On the contrary, space in Geography is either objectively-subjective or subjectively-objective. Meaning thereby, in the process of human-nature interaction, though, humans interact with the nature as its own force yet not as individuals. Humans interact with nature as conscious members of society, linked with the other through various relations and social contracts. These relations and social contracts are formalised through different social institutions: family, clan, political parties and state etc.

Similarly, in their interactions with the nature, the collective past experiences and social labour among the humans is shaped into a variety of tools and techniques, which are operationalised by the social institutions in dynamic inter-dependent interrelationships. Meaning, the institutions get modified while using the technology and in turn the modified institutions constantly improvise the technologies. So, human relationships with the nature are always in a state of flux.

Thus, by virtue of being a conscious member of society human interaction with nature on the one hand and with other members of society on the other hand are influenced by the historical, social-cultural, economic and political norms. Consequently, the impacts of these interactions results into significant leaning of geographical knowledge towards perspectives, interpretation and description and opinions, which is qualitatively different from the precision oriented objective analysis of the Natural Sciences.

Therefore, Geographical enquiry come closure to disciplines in humanities and social sciences. But, the objectivity of the natural environment which is another important component of geographical knowledge makes it difficult for the Geographical enquiry to completely ignore objective analysis. So, Geography is neither a precision oriented objective natural science, nor is it a perspective

based social science. On the contrary, it is neither of these. It is unique. It does not belong to an analytical branch of knowledge, which analyse phenomena either in isolation or within the stringent conditions of *ceteris paribus* (everything remain unchanged or other things held constant), which is the basic assumption of most of the disciplines. Geography is a synthesising discipline (branch of knowledge). Geographers' main task is not to invent the new continents but to build the bridges across these continents including the continents of knowledge.

In the backdrop of these imperatives of the parent discipline i.e., Geography; the Nature of Regional Geography is in no way different. In its pursuit to understand the human-nature interactions in diverse environments and spaces, Regional Geography tries to probe into two basic questions: Are spaces (regions) different in terms of the attributes they have and do the interrelationships among these attributes contribute in shaping the unique identity of a given region (spatial unit)? To answer these two questions the regional geographers probe into three important questions: 'What', 'Where' and 'Why'? The answer to the first question 'What' is about the attributes that forms the bases of identity formation of a spatial unit, which can be answered through simple descriptions about the phenomena under investigations. The answer to the second question 'Where' pertains to the patterns of spatial distribution/differentiation and it can be answered through the interpretations. The final question 'Why' pertains to explanation and analysis using objective methodology.

Thus, while answering the first and second questions regional geography moves closure to the disciplines in social sciences and humanities, but to answer the final question 'Why' Regional Geography moves closure to the natural science disciplines and probes into cause and effect relationships in objective manner.

Last but not the least important aspects about the nature of regional geography is its' relationships with other branches of Geography. Unlike the other branches of Geography i.e. Settlement Geography, Economic Geography, Social Geography, Biogeography and Climatology etc., Regional Geography is not a branch of Geography. It is an approach to understand the geographical phenomena, similar to systematic geography though probing from two diametrically different ends. It is neither against nor at the cost of evolving an objective and comprehensive understanding about the system as a whole (nomothetic).

Similarly, it does not aim to highlight the aspects of uniqueness, differences and heterogeneity and advocating the division (Balkanisation) among the constituent parts (idiographic). On the contrary, regional approach is to highlight the unique and specific attributes of a spatial unit (region) that contributes in the overall enrichment of the understanding about the system as a one organic entity, comprising numerous constituent parts.

Thus, regional and systematic approaches to geography are complementary to each other, whereby the specific reinforces the bonds of interdependences horizontally with other constituent parts and vertically with the system as a whole and the system acknowledges the importance of the specific in evolving an organic whole and sustains by incorporating the uniqueness of each unit in shaping the whole.

The other equally important aspect related to the interdependence between the system and its constituent parts is to understand the following:

Are regions only the means to an end or the regions are an end?

There are differences of opinions among the geographers about it. There are some who argue that the task of regional geographers is to develop a sound methodology, identify the regions and rest of the task should be done by other branches of geography and other disciplines to develop their understanding. As opposed to this, there are others who argue that demarcation of regions is inseparable from the purpose which in turn is based on the techniques and methodologies of regionalisation.

Therefore, regionalisation can never be a standalone exercise. It is always linked to the purpose, methodology and techniques meticulously worked out by the geographers after in depth understanding of all the environmental factors (natural and human) and profound understanding of the methodologies of regionalisation.

SAQ 2

- a) What is the purpose of regional approach?
 - b) Briefly tell about the important aspects of nature of regional geography.
-

2.4 KEY ISSUES IN DELINEATING GEOGRAPHICAL REGIONS

1. Homogeneity and Heterogeneity in the pattern of spatial distribution of geographical features are the two inseparable aspects of region formation.
2. Mapping of the complex socio-cultural diversities across geographical spaces brings regional geography closure to disciplines in social sciences and humanities, while mapping of physical features places regional geography in close proximity to disciplines in natural sciences.
3. Regional inequalities, regional dependencies and uneven regional development are deeply rooted in the nature of human interactions among the socio-cultural groups.
4. There exist no regional inequality and imbalance in the distribution of natural phenomena. Each region is unique in terms of its natural attributes and endowments.
5. The boundaries of the regions are never one dimensional i.e., demarcated by straight lines. On the contrary, regional boundaries are always a zone of transition comprising natural and socio-cultural attributes.
6. Most often, the boundaries are either ad-hoc or arbitrary. It is particularly valid in case of the socio-cultural, historical, political and historical regions. It is only in case of the natural regions that the boundaries are relatively more permanent.

7. Choice of the phenomena identified for the demarcation of the regions are always determined by the objectives and purposes of region formation. So, demarcation of regions is primarily subjective.
8. To moderate the intensity of subjectivity in the demarcation of the regions it is an imperative that there should be an objective methodology. So, that the regional geographers are in position to state that the "Regions are self-evident" instead of saying "My regional division is ... orA possible regional division is as follows".

SAQ 3

Explain any two key issues in delineating geographical regions.

2.5 SUMMARY

In this Unit, you have learnt the following:

- According to Kant, things exist in time and space. Therefore, the knowledge of time and space is indispensable to understand anything. Geography, whose primary concerns are to develop an understanding about space is aware of this fact that geography without history would be static and lifeless and history without geography would be rootless and vain. There are very few other regions/spaces other than India where such indispensable interrelationships among the geographical and historical are exhibited.
- Region in India have maintained continuity and changes though, these have experienced changes through their history.
- The process of colonisation of India under the European colonisers specially the British and its subsequent incorporation in the world market as a dependent partner leading to the drain of its wealth brought in many distortions in the regional structure of India, while India remained a dependent partner in the world market, it was put on the path of underdevelopment characterised by distortions in its regional and socio-economic structures.
- Concerted efforts have been made to change the colonial structure after the independence but the process is still far from complete and regional disparities continue to exist.
- There are a few industrially developed regions along with many regions that continue to supply raw materials to these regions and receive finished goods in return. Thus, the gaps between the developed and underdeveloped regions continue to exist.
- The success of much talked green revolution too seems to have reinforced regional imbalances.
- Geographers are aware of these multi-dimensional features of regional mosaic of India and they have attempted to suggest different schemes of regionalisation at different points of time.

2.6 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. Are the regions historic-geographical in India? What are the challenges of delineating such regions?
2. How is an economic region different from a resource region?
3. What is an underdeveloped region?
4. Do you think the processes of underdevelopment started under the colonial rule are still active in India leading to the existence of regional hierarchies?

2.7 ANSWERS

Self-Assessment Questions (SAQ)

1. a) Regions act as analogues means that region unlike an area is living, relative and dialectical concept.
b) Areas of isolation refer to Tribal India or Areas of refuge.
c) Four principles are unity of regional and sectoral structure of the economy, regions are historical, economic regions are basis of long term perspective planning and inter-linkages between economic regions and administrative structure.
2. a) It is concerned with highlighting the unique and specific attributes of a spatial unit or region.
b) It is the relationship of regional geography with sister branches of geography. For example: settlement geography, economic geography and climatology etc.
3. Homogeneity and heterogeneity of geographical feature, and regional equalities, regional dependencies and uneven regional development.

Terminal Questions

1. Refer to Sections 2.2 and 2.3.
2. Refer to Section 2.2.
3. Refer to Section 2.3.
4. Refer to Section 2.3.

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Structure

3.1	Introduction	3.4	Terminal Questions
	Expected Learning Outcomes	3.5	Answers
3.2	Factors of Unity in Diversity in India	3.6	References and Further Reading
3.3	Summary		

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In first two Units of this course, you have studied and learnt about understanding of regions and basis of regionalisation. In this Unit, you will study about the personality of India-1. You know that India, its geography, history, people and culture have experienced many prominences and oblivions in its historical past. Though, it had/has been the cradle of many cultures and civilisations, birth place of many religion, faiths and beliefs and was the centre of enquiry to many scholars, rulers and traders and many times, it was intermittently pushed to the margins, yet every time, it resurged with more energy and vitalities. The ups and downs in its life were responded by scholars either by condemning or praising its failures and successes, respectively. There were some notable scholars like J. S. Mills, Thomas Macaulay, Katherine Mayo and Rudyard Kipling etc., who either wrote-off the Indian peoples without history, pointed out their scholars as plagiarists and the Indians as crypto barbarians, half-savage-half-child, or there were scholars like Arthur Llewellyn Basham and Max Muller etc., who credited India and its culture for making valuable contributions in the progress of entire humankind.

Scholars have attributed many factors for constructing diverse views about India, yet, most of them agreed that: There exists a strong relationship of interdependence among the geographical and historical factors in India. Meaning thereby, there is deep interface of geographical features and historical events and both are not only inseparable but also inconceivable without the other. The interplays of these historico-geographical factors have contributed in shaping India as a region (space) endowed with a strong sense of 'unity in diversity'. Its geographical landscape is endowed with rich natural diversity in terms of geology, physical features, climate, drainage system, flora and fauna, which in turn have provided congenial atmosphere for the evolution

of equally diverse socio-cultural mosaic in terms of religion, language, life-styles, songs, dances, and festivals etc. The blending of the geographical and socio-cultural factors has been so organic, harmonious and strong that neither diversity could become the basis of division nor unity the basis of homogenisation.

Section 3.2 discusses factors of unity in diversity in India. Learners are expected to visualise that diversity and unity are inevitable and inseparable from each other. Mutual respect and appreciation for other cultures and life-styles is indispensable to envisage and develop a vibrant and inclusive society.

Expected Learning Outcomes

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- adopt an interdisciplinary approach in understanding the intricate relationships between the geographical and historical factors; and
- comprehend the factors of Unity in Diversity in India.

3.2 FACTORS OF UNITY IN DIVERSITY IN INDIA

The mid-years of the first decade after the Independence of India could be considered a watershed not only in the history, planned economy, secular and democratic polity, but also in the beginning of the reassertion of self-confident India about its image that was tarnished by the colonial scholars like James Mill, Thomas Babington Macaulay, Vincent Arthur Smith, and Rudyard Kipling etc. In the year 1954, Arthur Llewellyn Basham among many others tried to correct the negative image of India: a country of snake charmers, black magician, plagiarists, and fabricators of lies in the name of mythology, a country of people without history and worshipers of Hanuman the monkey and Sabala the cow etc., in his book "The Wonder That Was India: A Survey of the Cultures of the Indian Sub-Continent". The gist of this scholarly book was acknowledging the roots of Indian culture and civilisation in antiquity, which has remained largely unchanged with a strong thread of continuity while remained continuously engaged with the cultures and civilisation across its border. It is through these interactions that the cultures in the sub-continent underwent numerous social and religious reforms such as Buddhism, Jainism, Sufism and Sikhism etc., and the process is far from over. Yet the basic principles of its culture continued to persist over time and space.

According to Basham, it is primarily because of the strong inner core and external flexibilities, a unique characteristic features, India is said to be a country epitomizing "unity without uniformity and diversity without fragmentation". In a sense, Basham was reiterating what pioneering German Indologist Max Muller said nearly 100 years before him along with Fredrick Nietzsche. Max Muller after getting proficiency in Vedic Sanskrit and through his personal interaction with Vedic philosopher Ramakrishna Paramhansa and Brahmo Samaj etc., made a thorough study of the Vedas, Puranas, and Upanishads. According to him, there is a strong organic/generic link among

the Indo-European languages and Sanskrit is the oldest and most developed among these languages. Moreover, the Vedic culture is at the root and source of the Pagan European religions and holds the key to understand the religions in general. To make it happening, he advocated that language should not be tied to a particular belief system (myth making) and equating Sanskrit with Hinduism, particularly Brahmanism. He also traced the roots of European Romanticism in Nature worship of the Vedic people, Vedic philosophy and the concept of Gods in Vedic literature as acknowledgement of the active forces of nature partly personified supernatural persons at the positive end of it and mythology as the “disease of language” at its negative end. However, Max Mullar was very critical of the negative role played by British colonial power in distorting and forcing irreparable damages to Indian culture, thus, forbade his student to visit India because to him India that was living under the British rule is not true India and the India that was true had to be but dead.

These are only a few of the many aspects of India that have intrigued the minds of different scholars at different times. However, at the core of these opinions as mentioned before, the social ethos of India reflects high degree of Unity without uniformity and enriched diversity without fragmentation.

People of India and Unity and Diversity:

It is often said about Epic Mahabharata and India in one voice: "Yanna Bharate Tanna Bharate", which means whatever is there in Mahabharat/India it is found everywhere and whatever is not here that is nowhere. It together summarises the enormity of the epic and India. Mahabharata is about seven times as long as the Iliad and the Odyssey (written by Greek poet Homer) put together. A small section of its Sixth Parva i.e., the Bhishma Parva is an ensemble of all that are part of human life: birth, love, hatred, rivalry, envy, gambling, greed for power, good v/s evil, betrayal, conspiracy, jealousy, hate, morality-immorality and new morality, oath, war, treachery, action, killing- (massacre), prosperity, peace, and ultimately death etc., - everything is present here. This Meta narrative stands out as an icon of Indian culture, which is the result of fusion of various cultures and ways of life that entered India through various waves of migrants.

Thus, the population of India has neither a single source (ethnic stock and place) of its origin nor a fixed time of settling in places they are found today. Human groups across time and space with highly varied ethnic and cultural backgrounds entered into India, intermingled with other communities, benefitted through the process of cultural exchanges and shaped its cultural mosaic. Though, India is an integral part of the Eurasian continent, located on its southern-south-central margin, yet it remained relatively isolated in most part of its historical past from the frequent and continuous interactions with other cultures. The isolation was reinforced by the presence of formidable barrier created by the ranges of high Himalayas in the North and mighty Indian Ocean in the South. Thus, its interactions with the outside world and their cultures were confined to high mountain passes in the Himalayas in the North subject to intensity and magnitude of impediments created by high altitudes, heavy snowfall, avalanches, glaciers, and blizzards and incompatible technologies. Frequent disruption created by these environmental factors in the movement of people across these high mountain passes did never permit

large and uninterrupted flow of people significant enough overrun the earlier settlers completely.

On the contrary, the process of peopling in India was marked by constant processes of displacement and adjustment, give and take and continuity and change. The population groups inhabiting in the **Areas of Isolation** in Subbarao's scheme of historical regions of India such as the hills, mountain ranges, valleys and deserts in the Himalayas, the archaic belt extending from Karbi-Anglong-Meghalaya Plateau-Chota Nagpur Plateau in the North-East and Eastern India passing through Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Telangana, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, interior parts of Gujarat, Kuchch to Jaisalmer, Barmer in the West to Nilgiri and Annamalai hills in the South are people that had been among the early settlers in India. These have been once settlers in the river valleys and **Areas of Attraction** before their displacement by the successive wave of immigrants. At present, these communities constitute the lower strata and outer zone in the scheme of Griffith Taylor's model of cultural diffusion and assimilation. However, their present locations and material cultures exhibit the traces of their roots in the Areas of Attraction or Perennial Nuclear Regions.

Similarly, the hilly, forested, marshy, flood prone areas, and desert were unattractive to the new comers, so they occupied the Areas of Attractions and pushed the earlier settlers to the areas of isolation. Thus, they constitute the inhabitants of inner zone and upper strata of the same model of Taylor. The movement, settling and displacement of the people in India had followed a broad spatial pattern along the "Z" path of least resistance available through the routes along the river valleys. The most obvious route after crossing the Khyber pass and getting into Kabul valley:

"the Indus, Ganges, Narmada, Tapi, Godavari, Krishna, and Kaveri, were in turn penetrated and exploited by large scale agricultural communities, driving the older and static people in a more primitive economy into the forested mountains, where they have survived to this date".

The movement of the immigrants beyond the Middle Ganga plain characterised by hot and humid climate, swampy and marshy land proved inhospitable and difficult to acclimatise to the immigrants after spending considerably long time in cold and arid environmental conditions in Central Asia. So, after reaching the Middle Ganga Plain, they followed the Son valley and entered into Godavari valley and finally reached the Eastern Coastal plains and ultimately the Malabar Coast in South India. Thus, the route resembled the shape of the last letter of English alphabet i.e., "Z".

Since, the waves were not continuous, so there were considerable gaps between successive waves of immigrants. Sometimes, the intervals were so long that these were extended up to a few millennia. Taking advantage of relatively low intensity and frequencies of external enforcements, the earlier settlers were able to develop their own regional character, cultures and economy which could withstand the steam rolling impacts of the cultures brought in by the new waves of immigrants. On the contrary, they were successful in assimilating their material culture and in turn developed into perennial nuclear regions or bases of power:

“Gandhara in the Vale of Peshawar and Potwar, Sapta-Sindhu narrowed down to the Punjab, seven rivers to five; Kurukshatra, the Delhi or Sutej/Yamuna Doab; Panchala in the Yamuna/Ganga Doab and Rohilkhand, Saurashtra (Kathiyawad) and Gujarat; the four great kingdoms already apparent in Magadhan times. In the Dravidian south the pattern is more confused, but not without some relatively permanent pieces in the dynamic kaleidoscope: the Kalinga country or Orissa; Andhra, the Telugu country; the Chola (whence coromandel) and Pandya kingdoms in the Tamil country; Kerala or Malabar, the isolated southwest littoral. There are of course many smaller areas which have preserved a historic individuality, e.g., Bundelkhand, Chhattisgarh, Konkan and Kanara. Some areas again have been debatable marches: such as Khandesh, between Narmada and Tapi, or the Raichur Doab between Tungabhadra and Krishna”.

SAQ I

Map the factors of unity and diversity in India. Do you think diversity is a formidable obstacle in the unity of India?

Thus, the patterns of distribution of communities as an outcome of these displacements and adjustments were displayed through unique patterns in their spatial distribution:

1. **The Negritos:** Represented by tribal groups such as Kadars and the Puliyan living in the Andaman Islands.
2. **The Proto-Australoids:** Most of these are living in the hilly and forested areas of central and southern India. Some of them are also widely spread in northern India forming lower stratum of the society.
3. **The Mongoloids:** Most of the Mongoloids are concentrated in the Himalayan borderlands spreading from Ladakh in the North West to Sikkim, Arunachal and other Hill states of North East except Meghalaya. Broadly, the Mongoloids can be divided into two sub-groups: Palaeo Mongoloids and Tibeto-Mongoloids. The former are mostly living in the frontier areas of the Himalayas and the North-Eastern Hill regions and the latter ones are believed to have come from Tibet and mostly living in Sikkim and parts of Arunachal Pradesh.
4. **The Mediterraneans:** The Mediterraneans characterised by their medium stature, slight built, long head and dark skin constitute bulk of the lower castes throughout the northern India. One of its sub-group popularly known as the Oriental type came much later and remained confined to Punjab, Sindh, Rajasthan, and Western Uttar Pradesh.
5. **The Alpinoids, Dinarics, and the Armenoids:** These are distributed in parts of western and south India particularly Kathiawar, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Lower Ganga valley and Delta in the Coorgis of Karnataka and the Parsis are some prominent groups included among these.

6. The Nordics: These are characterised by long head, strikingly sharp nasal and facial index, fair complexioned, and strong body built. They are mostly concentrated in Punjab, Haryana, and Rajasthan.

India and its Physical Features in Relation to Unity and Diversity: India is a relatively isolated geographical region in terms of its space relations and Geological and Geographical features. As mentioned before, it is surrounded by the Indian Ocean and its branches; the Bay of Bengal and the Arabian Sea in the East and West Coasts in the Indian Peninsula in the South, the deserts of West Asia in the West, the mighty rivers, thick jungles in the East and high ranges of the Himalayas in the North. Unlike many other geographical regions demarcated on the bases of their common geological history and geological structure, India is characterised by unity of triple tectonic divisions broadly coinciding with threefold physiographic division: The Himalayas and the Chain of Associated Folded Mountains, The Indus-Ganga-Brahmaputra Plains and the Peninsular India.

The Peninsular India with the exception of the relief features presented by deltas and coastal plains consist of the old crustal rocks, marked by block mountains, rift valleys, lava and black soils. The Himalayas and the river valley plains in the north are youngest landforms in India. It is believed that the Himalayas originated during the Tertiary Mountain Building phase is (Himalayan origin) often referred to as Alpine. The occurrences of frequent earthquakes, landslides and presence of rapids, waterfalls, river terraces, alluvial fans, V-shaped valleys etc., prove that the Himalayas are young, highly unstable and fragile landmass and theatre of active geomorphologic processes i.e., Aeolian (Ladakh cold desert), glacial, and fluvial. The Himalayas are one of the highest mountain ranges in the world separated by deep gorges and river valleys along their longitudinal as well as latitudinal extents. Though, most of the Himalayan rivers flow in the 'V' shaped valleys they have created over the years, yet there are rivers like the Indus, Sutlej, Bhagirathi (Ganga), and Brahmaputra that form antecedent drainages. Moreover, the ranges and valleys in the Great and Trans Himalayas have an emphatic presence of glacial landforms, while the landforms in the Lesser and Outer Himalayas have been created by fluvial processes.

Similarly, frequent occurrences of floods, formations of flood plains, shifting of river channels and associated landforms, deposition of eroded materials on the deltas, migration of distributaries, frequent emergence and subsidence of islands along the deltas too prove that the river valley plains are also part of the young landforms. As opposed to this, the peninsular plateau made of the old crustal rock deposited in the Precambrian times, was lifted above the sea level by the tectonic movements. These stood like rigid and inflexible block all through ages without ever submerging again and least affected by the impulses generated by the folding movements in regions lying to its north during the period of Himalayan origin.

Apparently, these three macro tectonic divisions are unique and diverse from each other, but they share common geological past. The breaking of the Indian Plate from the Gondwana Plate, its northward movement approximately 100 million years before the present and its collision with the Eurasian Plate or Laurasia resulting into massive bulges in the bed of the Tethys's sea is

believed to be the principle causes of formation of the Himalayas. Moreover, the shape, alignment, and direction of the Himalayan ranges from North-West to South-East direction in the Western Himalayas, West to East in the Central Himalayas, South-West to North-East in the Sikkim-Darjeeling-Bhutan and Arunachal Himalayas and from North to South in the Nagaland, Manipur and Mizo Hills are results of the outlying fragments of the peninsular blocks, particularly noticed in the Meghalaya and Karbi-Anglong plateau in the North-East, the Aravallis and Kirana Hills in the West and North-West. It is believed that they played significant roles in shaping the trend lines of the Himalayas. Similarly, the sediments embedded in the rocks of the Himalayas and the peninsular blocks have many similarities with each other.

Apart from these, there are many similarities between the young Himalayas and the senile peninsular block. There are youthful relief feature visible even in the senile peninsular block and there are old worn-down surface features even in the young Himalayas. But, above all these lies the contribution of the sediments deposited by the river flowing from the Himalayas in the North and the Peninsular block in the South into the geosynclines in between these two macro physiographic divisions. It has resulted into the emergence of river valley plains as an epitome of Unity.

The other most significant natural attributes representing unity in diversity in India are the patterns of spatial variations in the distribution of climatic and associated natural vegetation types. The islands in the Bay of Bengal receives more than 350 centimetres annual precipitation combined with moderate to high temperature throughout the year, and has thick tropical and equatorial vegetation types. Mangroves particularly 'Sundari' is the dominant vegetation. Similarly, the Western Ghats with moderate to high precipitation and temperature too have moist evergreen vegetation. The north-eastern states receives moderate to high rainfall but has moderate to low temperature and has temperate evergreen vegetation.

As opposed to this, the rest of India receives precipitation ranging between 100 to 150 centimetres per year. Nearly 85 percent of precipitation occurs during rainy season from late June to early July to September months. The summers are almost dry with moderate to high temperature. Consequently, deciduous vegetations are dominant in most parts of central and north Indian plains. As opposed to this, in the western parts of India particularly northern Gujarat, Rajasthan, Haryana, and Punjab, the precipitation varies from very low to low. The summers are very hot and winters are severe. So, the vegetation varies from desert to semi-arid types. The Himalayas are characterised by sudden increase in the altitudes, so it has moderate to cold climatic conditions and many parts receives precipitations in the form of snowfall during the winter months. Consequently, the vegetation varies along the altitudes. The foothills have deciduous vegetation while the higher places have temperate coniferous vegetation covers or temperate grasslands. Areas above 4,500 metres on the northern slopes and 5,000 metres on the southern slopes of Himalayas are covered under snow most of the time in a year.

It is worth noticing here that the spatial variation in the distribution of the climatic attributes and associated vegetation types are regulated by the rhythms of Indian Monsoon. The pre-monsoon and early summers are marked

by spring season all over India. The pre-monsoon showers are an all India phenomenon known with different names: Tea shower and Bordoli Chherha in Assam, Kaal Baishakh in Bengal and Bihar, Cherry Blossom or Coffee Shower in Karnataka and Kerala. Moreover, the reverence Peepal and Banayan trees and Tulsi plant receives across India and the acceptance of Triphala (Herda, Baherda and Amla) has in the traditional medicines are aspects of the unity of India.

Unity and Diversity in Relation to India's Socio-Cultural Mosaic: It was discussed in the previous section on the process of peopling in India that it had been a melting pot of various cultures and ways of life across the world that succeeded in reaching in this relatively isolated region in different waves of immigrants spreading over millennia. It is believed that unlike other places in the world, the mixing of various cultures had been amicable without any particular culture succeeding in establishing permanent and pan-Indian dominance for a long time and subjugating other communities permanently. It is not the same thing to say that there were no conflicts, domination, and subordination of one culture(s) over the other(s).

On the contrary, there have been conflicts, some of these were also quite violent leading to subjugation of cultures, but most of these were either confined to a few regions, restricted over limited time span or went under change frequently. However, the most significant aspect about these changes was that very few of these could bring the major structural changes in Indian society and continued to reflect some all India characteristics across space and times. Included among these were self-subsisting isolated village community life, joint family system, and social division of labour based on caste, yet got manifested into social reforms including religious movements. Some of the important aspects of diversity in the socio-cultural mosaic of India are:

- a. **Religious Diversity and Unity:** India is considered to be the birth place of many major and minor religions and belief systems. Though, Hinduism is reported by many in India their religion, yet its deities, rituals and practices are very diverse across the country. In Eastern India, particularly Assam and Bengal have the predominance of Durga, Kali, and Kamakhya in their belief systems. Similarly, Manipur one of the eastern states of India has worshippers of Lord Krishna, Mahaprabhu Chaitanya and Vaishnavism. In most parts of Central India, which is also representing the Hindi speaking regions, Gods and Goddesses like Rama-Sita, Shiva-Parvati, Radha-Krishna and Hanumanji are worshipped most. The state of Odisha is world famous for the worship of Lord Jagannath and the Rath Yatra in Puri and Lingaraj in Bhubaneswar. In the state of Maharashtra, the worship of Lord Ganesha (Ganapathi) is the most revered gods, while in Tamil Nadu the reigning deity is Kartekeyan, while in Punjab majority of the population follow Sikhism, Kashmir has majority of the followers of Islam. Ladakh, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, and parts of Himachal Pradesh have followers of Buddhism. The other hill States from the North East have majority of the followers of Christianity. Similarly, in states like Maharashtra and Gujarat there are followers of Judaism and Zoroastrianism. Similarly, there are regions where the followers of Zoroastrianism, Judaism and other religions are present. It is

interesting to know that the followers of Islam are present in most of the States and Union Territories.

Apart from these major religions and belief systems, there are several other regional deities that have enriched the cultural diversity of India. In the backdrop of these diversities, there are overarching bonds of strong unity. The reverence to the fertility cult of Mother Earth is most common across cultures in different forms. The worship of Meenakshi and Kanyakumari in Tamil Nadu, Durga (Chamunda) in Karnataka, Kamakhya (Chhinnamasta) in Assam, Kali and Durga in Bengal, Sherawali-Jattawali-Jyotawali in Punjab, Bhawani in Rajasthan, Hinglaj Mata in Gujarat and Rajasthan, Nanda-Parwati in Himachal and Uttarakhand etc., are all different forms of acknowledging the magnanimity of Mother Earth.

Similarly, the celebrations and festivities associated with cropping seasons and regional festivals like Bihu in Assam, Durga-Kali Pujas in Bengal, Dashehara in Karnataka, Gujarat, North and Central India, Chhatt Puja in Middle Ganga plain, Bhagawati Jagaran (Jagraatas) in North and Western India along with the celebration and festivities associated with Holi (festival of colours), Bihu in Assam, and Deepawali (festival of light) are expression of reverence to bounties of Mother Earth and rhythms of agricultural seasons across India.

b. Cultural Diversity and Unity: Like religious diversity, India has also cultural diversity. Despite differences in culture, both culture and religion helps in maintaining unity in diversity in the nation. The popularity of the classical system of Carnatic and Hindustani music, classical dances like Bharatnatyan (Tamil Nadu), Kathak (Uttar Pradesh) Odissi (Odissa), Kathakali, Mohiniyattam (Kerala), Manipuri Dance (Manipur), Kuchipudi (Andhra Pradesh), Sattriya (Assam), Bhava, Raaga and Taala (Bharata) at the national levels and the Lavani or Turra Kalagi in Maharashtra, Andhra, Telangana, Rajasthan, Lohri, Bhangra-Gidda in Punjab, Raas-Leela in Gujarat and Western Uttar Pradesh, Kajari in Bhojpur, Garba and Dandiya Raas in Gujarat, Yakshagana (Karnataka), Cheraw and Chailam (Mizoram), Nongkrem (Meghalaya) etc., are all part of vernacular culture in different parts of the country. But, the reverence of the fertility cult of Mother Goddess's synchronisation with the rhythms of Monsoon is the common thread that runs through all these vernacular dances and festivities in India.

Language is another significant aspect of culture. It is believed that India is the most diverse country in terms of the linguistic diversity. There are 22 National Languages in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution and there are more than 121 languages, 270 mother tongues and several dialects used by 1.4 billion people in India. Tamil and Hindi are believed to be among the oldest living languages of the world. It is interesting to note that there are some languages like Hindi which is spoken by millions of people and there are some dialects spoken by few hundred, yet all these exist in harmonious relationships with each other. Among the multitude of linguistic diversity, the scholars have identified four-fold regional linguistic regions in India:

1. The Dravidian region of South
2. The Indo-Aryan region of the North and North-West

3. The Mon-Khmer and Tibeto-Burman region of the North-East and the Himalayas
4. The Austric region of the archaic belt i.e., Aravalli-Vindhya-Chota Nagpur complex.

SAQ 2

Do you think that plurality of culture and life-styles and mutual respects for each other constitutes the strong bases of India's unity?

These divisions are more apparent than real. The freedom struggle of India did not only unite millions of Indian against a common enemy politically, but it was also a unity reinforced by evolving and consolidated link language through the processes of inter-language cross-fertilisation. English played an important role in uniting the Indians against the British during the freedom struggle. Initially, English was used but with the graduation of anti-colonial struggle into freedom struggle and independence, a new and widely practiced mode of communication has emerged. This new language is believed to be like a chemical fusion and not a physical mixture where the different components can be easily separated.

During the last three hundred years, each of these distinct groups of languages have come into close contact with the remaining groups, and out of this contact has arisen a vocabulary, which shows a pan-Indian characteristic. The contribution made by national home market and inter-regional economic linkages adequately complemented by the network of transport and communication linkages particularly the Indian railways, National Highways, Golden Quadrilateral, North-South, East-West transport corridors, medium of entertainment, particularly the Bombay Film Industry, curriculum of the School under Central Board of School Education (CBSE) and All India Services etc., seems to have played significant role in giving concrete shape to Pan-India medium of communication.

There are no doubts that there are very strong complementarities among the factors of diversities and unity in India.

The oneness of India in spite of its diversity in natural environment and social plurality is reinforced by the rhythm of the Monsoon, the cycle of seasons and its synchronisation with the economy, culture, and festivities are pan-India phenomena, though manifested in various regional cultural practices in the forms of songs, dances, worships, architecture, dresses, food habits, ways of lives and languages etc. But, there are little doubts that pervasiveness of the Indian Monsoon provides the natural bases for certain degree of uniformity in the human-nature interaction throughout the length and breadth of India. But, above all these lies the bonds of togetherness that were reinforced through the participation of all Indians in the freedom struggle against the colonial power. It helped in synthesising the hopes and aspiration of every Indian in the **Constitution of India** for securing right to citizenship for every Indian without prejudice and discrimination. It was based on the principles of social, economic and political justice, liberty of thought, expression, belief, faith and worship, equality of status and of opportunity. Besides, it also helped to

promote fraternity among all the citizens to assure the dignity of individual and integrity of the nation.

It is largely because of the deep embedded roots of composite culture, institutionalisation of human-nature interaction through cultural practices and formalisation of these in the form of a new social contract enshrined in the Constitution of India has made it possible that a poor post colonial country stands firm and vibrant among the world democracies.

SAQ 3

Give your comments about the constitutional provision in the Indian Constitution that has created a delicate balance among geographical diversity and social-cultural unity of India.

3.3 SUMMARY

In this Unit, you have learnt the following:

- People of India.
- Concept of unity and diversity.
- India and its physical features in relation to unity and diversity.
- Unity and diversity in relation to India's socio-cultural mosaic.

3.4 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. India is considered to be a country having unity in diversity. Critically examine the factors of diversity and unity in India.
2. Why are there regional cores of certain cultures across India? Do you think that geographical location of India in South Asia bordered by great mountain wall in the north and Indian Ocean in the south along with geographical diversity within India are responsible for existence of cultural diversities in India?
3. Why are the regions having maximum concentration of Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Scheduled Castes (SCs) population in India are distributed in exclusive location from each other? Are there exceptions to these norms?
4. Do you think Griffith Taylor's model of Zone and Strata is applicable to the process of population distribution in India?

3.5 ANSWERS

Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)

1. Factors of unity and diversity in India need to be mapped. Diversity is a formidable aspect in the unity of India.
2. Plurality of culture and life-styles and mutual respects for each other constitutes the strong bases of India's unity.

3. The Indian Constitution has created a delicate balance among geographical diversity and social-cultural unity of India.

Terminal Questions

1. Refer to Section 3.2.
2. Refer to Section 3.2.
3. Refer to Section 3.2.
4. Refer to Section 3.2.

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PERSONALITY OF INDIA-2 |

Structure

4.1	Introduction	4.3	Summary
	Expected Learning Outcomes	4.4	Terminal Questions
4.2	Regions, Regionalism and	4.5	Answers
	Federalism and Union of	4.6	References and Further
	States		Reading

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Regions are an expression of homogeneity in terms of the attributes either natural, socio-cultural or both. It is a way of understanding the whole, which is inclusive and sensitive to the unique and specific attributes and contributive to strengthening the interdependent relationships with other constituent parts on the one hand and enrichment of the whole on the other hand. Any imbalance in understanding by over/underplaying the significance of the whole or its constituent parts is detrimental to both i.e., understanding the whole as well as its parts. Any effort to give importance to parts and using it as an expression of identity formation based on geographical, social, religious, linguistic, ethnic, and other chauvinistic identities results into the emergence of regionalism. Thus, regionalism is antithetical to the understanding of both the whole and its parts.

It is a travesty of the rise and growth of Nations and Nationalism that though, most of the nations had their origins in regionalism based on different identities, yet once they succeeded in transforming themselves into national identities, they treat regionalism as a formidable threat to nationalism etc. India, which emerged as a sovereign nation on account of their prolonged struggle against the colonisers, a common enemy, through the united efforts of various cultural identities and since then it had been proactive against the possibilities of regional identity assertions. Concerted efforts were made particularly through the Constitution of India to recognise all these fissiparous tendencies and address the regional aspirations amicably. The constitution is committed to unity of India, its territorial integrity, and social harmony by upholding the quasi-federal structure mentioned in Part - XI, XII, XIII, and XIV of the Constitution of India, particularly under Articles 245 to 323 under Centre-State relations enshrined in the list.

Section 4.2 deals with the regions, regionalism and federalism and union of states. The learners are expected to imbibe the spirit of federal structure of Indian Constitution. It is expected that regional identities and unity of nation are not antagonistic to each other. To be a good Indian, it is an imperative that we should treat each citizen, culture, and ways of life as equal. There is no hierarchy among cultures and ways of life.

Expected Learning Outcomes

After studying this Unit, you will be able to:

- explain the concept of region and regionalism; and
- comprehend the nuanced understanding of federalism and union of states in India.

4.2 REGIONS, REGIONALISM AND FEDERALISM AND UNION OF STATES

Part-I of the Constitution of India makes it explicit that “India that is Bharat, shall be Union of States”. Meaning thereby, unlike many other democracies in the world, the Union of India has overarching powers over the states and Union Territories, though, they have power in their respective spheres. The makers of the Indian constitution were not only aware of the natural, historical, socio-cultural, and economic diversities of India, but they were also equally emphatic in acknowledging the same and promised to preserve, promote and nourish these diversities, because, they were confident that diversities were/are the great strength for a vibrant, tolerant and non-violent democratic society in India. Unlike the federal structures in Canada, USA, and Australia etc., where the states were in existence prior to the formation of a nation and these states came together and formed a nation based on new social contract with a provision of maximum autonomy to be enjoyed by the states. The level of autonomy could be to the extent of promulgation of their own notion of citizenship along with provisions of breaking away from the Nation itself.

In case of India, it was an imperative, as per the then existing political divisions of India among the Princely States, areas directly under the British, French and Portuguese control and areas under the control of local administration of the ethnic communities etc., to bring under one power structure. The processes active in the evolution of India as a socio-cultural and politico-geographical entity are indicative of the fact that most of the areas directly administered by the British were near to the coastal areas for easy accessibility for promoting integration with the world market with three main objectives: export of raw materials, deportation of labour to other colonies and import of manufactured goods and commodities from Britain. Most of the Princely states were spread in the interior parts of India and areas controlled by the traditional institutions were located in the peripheral areas, particularly the Himalayas in the North and the North-Eastern Region.

The other important aspect pertaining to the specificities of India was related to the concept of sharing power between the states and the centre. The apprehension about the counterproductive experiences of the partisan based on

giving autonomy to the states, the makers of the constitution were more cautious about the possible negative outcomes and about the dangers of such autonomy. Thus, they preferred giving preference to the power of union government over the states on the principle of unity, integration and cooperation over federalism and autonomy. In order to formalise these principles, the constitution prepared the list of relations covered within the ambit of power between the Union Government and the States of India. These include the legislative relations, the administrative relations listed in the Part XI of the Constitution under Articles 245 to 263 Relations between the Union and the States. Among all these, the Article 246 has special significance for dividing and listing the subjects/activities in the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution in the Union List, State List and Concurrent List with a provision that the Parliament has the power to transfer/modify/include-exclude these activities across the three lists. There are 99 subjects included in the Union List, which consists of exclusive power given to the Union Government to take decision regarding national defence, foreign affairs, foreign exchange and monetary policy among others. The State List includes 61 subjects and the state government has the power to take independent decision on these subjects. Included among these are the law and order, local administration, public health, education, agriculture, and provisions like imposing different kinds of taxes and duties. There are 52 subjects included in the Concurrent List, prominent among these are Indian Penal and Civil Code, News Paper etc.

The other imperatives of such an experiment were to combine democratic responsiveness to cultural diversities/differences in terms of regional communities, identities and ways of life to take forward the modes of multi-cultural national development. Inclusion of the Fifth and Sixth Schedules in the Constitution of India, were aimed at protecting and promoting the cultural identities of the indigenous communities. Special provisions of Autonomous District Council and Regional Council (ADC and RC) were made to administer Scheduled (tribal) areas of Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura and Mizoram. The main objectives of the ADC and RC were to protect the traditional identity, institutions, and ways of life. These were based on the fundamental principles that: the people of each state/region should be recognised as different if not unique, yet equal both in letter and spirit and above all these, the people have priority over the state and territory without undermining the significance of the geographical factors in the evolving India having 'unity in diversity', a theme discussed in detail under India's Unity in diversity. These ideals were incorporated in the political fabric of India long before independence in order to accommodate the intimate links between the mainstream nationalism and regional identity aspirations. An acknowledgement of this ultimately formed the basis of Linguistic reorganisation of the states in the country.

SAQ I

What is the nature of federal structure enshrined in the Indian constitution?

Linguistic States and Cultural Regions of India: The Constituent Assembly which was constituted to draft the Constitution of India had a formidable task of balancing the regional aspirations and National unity. One of the major

challenges was to find an amicable solution for the official language of the Union and the National Language. The Constituent Assembly had divided opinions on the theme thus, it appointed Linguistic Provincial Commission in 1948 under the Chairpersonship of Supreme Court Justice S. K. Dar, which decided against linguistic reorganisation in favour of National unity and suggested 'coldwater therapy' to postpone the issue for the time being. But, the demand for united Karnataka in 1948-49 demanding the unification of Kannada speakers across Madras, Bombay, Mysore, and Hyderabad, once again reignited the demand for Linguistic autonomy. In 1952, freedom fighter Patti Sriramalu went on fast unto death demanding separate Andhra Pradesh for Telugu speaking people. Similarly, the demands were raised in other regions of India which culminated into constituting the State Reorganisation Committee (SRC) in 1953 with following members: Jurist Fazl Ali, historian K. M. Panikar, and social worker H. N. Kunzru. Finally, the report was submitted in 1955 clearly mentioning the positive and negative aspects of linguistic reorganisation, yet it urged for adopting a "balanced approach, which recognises linguistic homogeneity as an important factor conducive to administrative convenience and efficiency and not an exclusive and binding principle, overriding all other considerations".

Consequently, most of the states in South India were formed on the basis of linguistic homogeneity of major languages: Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, and Kannda. But as one moves towards the North, the principle started getting diluted. However, states like Odisha, Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Bengal too followed it to some extent. But, the same principle did neither find appreciation nor political will across the Northern Hindi heartland from Bihar in the East to Rajasthan in the West. The situation was more complicated in case of Punjab till mid 1960s when Punjab, Haryana, and Himachal Pradesh were reorganised on linguistic basis, Punjabi in Punjab, Hindi in Haryana and Pahari in Himachal Pradesh.

In case of the North-Eastern India, the pluralities of ethnicity and ethnic identity assertions pushed the linguistic homogeneity to the margins and the region witnessed the creation of broad ethnic states. Though, some major ethnic groups like the Nagas, the Mizos, and the Khasis in the region that were successful in the creation of the separate state, yet, there are many like the Bodos, Dimas, Karabis, Kukis, Koch Rajbanshi, Adivasi (Tea Tribes), Cachhari, and Tripuri etc., who are still struggling for their statehood. There were many reasons for the success of some groups in getting separate state and the most plausible reason was their strategically significant frontier and border locations.

Moreover, there are ethnic groups like the Nagas, the Mizos, the Manipuris, and communities from Arunachal Pradesh that have sizeable presence not only in the neighbouring states within India but also in the neighbouring countries and they are still fighting for their unification within one state. The demand for Greater Nagaland (Nagalim) and Zoland are some of the well-known examples of the same.

Apart from these, there are also examples like Tripura where the ethnic Tripuri identity has been marginalised by the influx of the migrants from neighbouring states and countries in spite of getting a promised state after Tripuri ethnic identity. The situation in Manipur is far more complex than any other states in

the region. The Imphal Valley has majority of the Meitei population, while the hills have numerical dominance of the Nagas, the Kukies and other ethnic communities. Loss of culture and cultural identity mainly because of large scale immigrants in the state of Assam initially after the introduction of tea plantation in the 19th Century, later on after the partition of India and independence of Bangladesh were the main reasons for identity movement in Assam. Initially, the demand was raised by All Assam Student Union (AASU) and its political wing Assam Ganasangram Parishad (AGP), but subsequently it was taken over by the insurgent Group called United Liberation Front of Assam (ULFA) etc.

SAQ 2

Do you think that linguistic reorganisation of the states has posed formidable challenges to the unity of India?

The situation is more complex as one move into Central India and interior parts of South India inhabited by numerous ethnic and linguistic groups. The speakers of Tulu, Sadri, Mundari, Bhili, Santhali, Ho, Korku, Gondi, and Kurkh-Oraon etc., are far from such political expressions and most of these communities are parts of different states of India. Though, some of these identity movements had their origins either in opposition to the discriminatory and exploitative colonial rule or it was the direct outcome of their policy of divide and rule. The partition of India on communal lines was one of such examples. However, there were many other reasons which multiplied over time and space after India's independence. Some of these regional movements were:

- 1. Regional Independence/Secessionism:** It was mentioned before that broadly there were three politico-administrative systems prevalent during the freedom struggle of India. One among these was the existence of 563 princely states ruled by local rulers/Rajas but indirectly controlled by the British. These sub-feudatories were highly diverse in terms of their geographical areas, locations, socio-cultural compositions, and population size etc. There were princely states like Hyderabad and Jammu and Kashmir etc. Among these, the Princely State of Hyderabad was not only large and powerful, but also prosperous. Thus, it was pressing for a favourable settlement at the time of India's independence/partition. Recognition as a separate sovereign country like India and Pakistan was one option failing which the Nizam was in favour of its inclusion with Pakistan. Somewhat similar aspirations were also nourished by the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir with two fundamental differences. The Hyderabad Princely State was an enclave within India, where majority of population were Hindu and the ruler was a follower of Islam. As opposed to this, the Princely State of Jammu and Kashmir had a common boundary with India and Pakistan. It was ruled by a Hindu King with majority Muslim population along with sizeable number of Buddhists in Ladakh. These regional aspirations were brought to an end through the accession by India. The Nizam, though very powerful and prosperous became more vulnerable than the Maharaja of Kashmir because of the strong United Andhra Movement based on regional language Telugu.

After the Independence of India, the demands for independence from India were raised by Angami Zafu Phizo in Nagaland and Laldenga in Mizoram, which have been virtually dormant in case of Mizoram after the Mizo Accord between Indian Prime minister Rajiv Gandhi and Laldenga in 1984. But, the demand for independence from India continued to persist in case of Nagaland by some groups like the Isak Chishi Swu-Thuingaleng Muivah (NSCN-IM) and S. S. Khaplang (NSCN-K) groups for the Nagas. It is worth remembering here that Phizo though born to an Angami Naga family was a British citizen and at the time of India's independence, he organised a meeting of the leaders of indigenous Assamese, Garos, Khasis, Lushais, Abors, Mishmis, and Meiteis, who met the British and asked for independence from India. For Nagas, he formed the Naga National Council (NNC), which subsequently got divided into many sub-groups.

However, there are some smaller groups across the North-Eastern border areas of the country that are occasionally active and raise the demands for Independence from India like PLA in Manipur and ULFA in Assam etc. The demands for independent Jammu and Kashmir raised by JKLF and of separate Khalistan in Punjab are also the examples of secessionist/separatist regionalism. Most of these organisations have failed to fulfil their aspirations largely because of diversity of culture, success of democracy and supremacy of constitutions, which has exhibited that India is committed to resolving its differences within the framework of the Indian constitution, respecting individual freedom, human dignity and cultural pluralities.

2. **Full Statehood Demand:** It was mentioned before (in Units 1, 2 and 3) that there are diversities in terms of social composition, cultural practices, resource base, historical experiences, and levels of development across many states. There are some states like Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Maharashtra etc., where the size of the state as well as population is so large that it is difficult to address the problems of every area and community. Consequently, some communities and regions within these states feel that either they are neglected or they are lagging behind within the same state. It was the main reason for the separation of Uttarakhand from Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand from Bihar, Chhattisgarh from Madhya Pradesh and Telangana from Andhra Pradesh. Similar demands are also raised by the people of Vidarbha in Maharashtra, Bundelkhand in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, Bodo Land in Assam and Gorkha Land in West Bengal.
3. **Regional Autonomy:** Since most of the identity groups are constrained by their internal and external limitations, such as internal ethnic divisions including absence of common lingua franca, limited resource availability, and poor infrastructure along with landlocked territories etc., they find it beneficial to remain within India/large state, yet demand for maximum autonomy particularly in relation to the protection and promotion of their identity and ways of life. Persistent of the provision of Inner Line Permit (ILP) in Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, and Mizoram and demand for the same in Meghalaya, Manipur, and Tripura along with the Provision of Autonomous District Council (ADC) and parity among the provisions under Indian Penal Code (IPC) and Special and Local Laws (SLL) crimes are

some of the important themes of the regional autonomy. The formation of Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) and Gorkhaland Territorial Council (GTC) are some of the examples of these regional autonomy movements. There are demands from the regional identity groups in North Bengal and they are demanding an inclusive autonomy of the Gorkhas and the Adivasis from North Bengal and demanding the replacement of Gorkhaland Territorial Administration (GTA) by Gorkhaland and Adivasi Territorial Administration (GATA).

- 4. Son of the Soil Regionalism:** It was discussed before that the history of peopling process of India was marked by displacement of one wave of settlers by the successive waves. The process went over thousands of years. Though, there were some resentments in the beginning, yet gradually things got settled because the then existing levels of technologies and institutions were able to adjust and acclimatise to the new environment. But, the most dramatic changes occurred once India was exposed to 'modernity' under colonialism, which was characterised by: Drain of wealth, rapid pace of changes in techno-institutional arrangements, shrinking opportunities of dignified life to growing population etc. It has resulted into de-industrialisation, de-urbanisation, and large scale deportation of labour to the other colonies as well as within the country and increasing unemployment etc.

These changes have secular impacts on the society and economy of India such as increase in the levels of redundancy and obsolescence among the workers; rise in unemployment combined with forced and distressed outmigration to a few important metropolitan outposts and urban centres. The combined result of all these was rampant unemployment and competition of limited jobs. The non-migrant communities found it difficult to cope with the economic stress created by a false binary between the locals versus non-locals (outsiders). So, to exclude the later from taking jobs and livelihood opportunities, the 'non-migrant' (local) population raised the slogan of 'sons of the soil'. It started in Maharashtra, particularly Mumbai in 1960s against the businessmen from Gujarat, services class from South India and migrants from north India. Similar, demands were also made by AGP, AASU in Assam and KSU in Meghalaya in the 1980s against the so-called outsiders.

The absence of son of the soil movement in Kolkata and Chennai proves this point that the ideological moorings of the left and secular parties and civil society in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu proved an antidote to such parochial politics. Apart from these, the son of the soil demand has also been raised in different parts of the country against the imposition of unitary markers of India from time to time.

- 5. Federalism, Union of States and Centre-State Relations:** It was mentioned before that the constitution of India unequivocally and unambiguously makes it clear that "India that is Bharat is union of states". Meaning thereby, the balance of power is always in favour of the centre. Though, the states have near exclusive rights over the activities listed in the List-II (State List) of the Seventh Schedule of the Constitution and have nearly equal power on matters in the List-III (Concurrent List), yet the centre has exclusive and overriding power to change the list and takeover the

activities from the State List, it deems fit to be taken over or has exclusive power to make laws with respect to matters not enumerated in List-II and List-III.

However, the most controversial article of the Indian Constitution, which had/has created sharp differences of opinions among the States and the Centre is Article 356 of the Constitution related to "Provisions in case of Failure of Constitutional Machinery in State" which in turn is related to Articles 153 Governors of the State, 154 Executive Power of State and 155 Appointment of Governor of State along with Part-XI (Relations between the Union and the States), Part-XII (Finance, Property, Contracts and Suits), particularly its Articles 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 274, and 275. It has been the common demand of most of the states, particularly when there are different political parties in power in the states and at the centre, then the former always feel that they are discriminated by the centre, which has become the basis of regionalism in many states. The rise of regional political party like the Telugu Desham under N.T. Rama Rao in 1980s is one such example.

SAQ 3

Do you think that concentration of power at the centre is the main reason for the rise of regional political parties in India?

It is evident that regionalism has many shades and India has experienced these at different points of time in different states. The most obvious question to ask at this point is what are the reasons behind the rise of regionalism?

1. Regional Backwardness: It was mentioned that India is diverse in terms of its environmental and socio-cultural attributes, which have always contributed in facing many challenges it has been exposed to so far. But, the most formidable challenge India had faced in the past and continues to face even today is the disparities in terms of quality of life and levels of economic and social development across its social and economic spaces. It has been proved through various historical studies that the genesis of regional disparities in India was deeply embedded into the processes of its colonisation under the British. India's incorporation in the world market as a dependent partner under the British leading to drain of its resources through the succession mechanism operating from the metropolitan outposts resulted into the development of few port towns, mining and plantation areas (enclaves), Hill stations and overall backwardness of the remaining areas.

It was expected that the regional disparities created under the colonial rule would be removed after the independence, through planned development. But the experiences of the past seventy years have proved that the economic structure created by the colonial rulers and India's participation in the world market have remained the formidable barrier in bringing about the balanced regional development. On the contrary, the paths of mixed planned development within the all-powerful capitalist relations have accentuated regional disparities and social inequalities. Consequently, the gap between

the developed and backward regions continues to increase with every new effort made by the government to bring regional balance. The much-celebrated Green Revolution too added new dimension in increasing the inter-regional disparities. The development of the regions endowed with assured irrigation has attracted bulk of modern inputs of agricultural development at the cost of areas with less developed irrigation facilities.

Thus, increasing regional disparities, resulting into discontent among the people creates an ideal condition for the rise of regionalism in India.

2. **Cultural Identity Movements:** Culture stands for an ensemble of various material, non-material and social attributes of society and community. Included within the ambit of culture are religion, ethnicity, race, cultural artifacts, cultural ecology, and cultural practices etc., along with various material relations, social contracts, social and cultural capitals etc. Thus, culture always stands for diversity, dynamism, inclusiveness, and irreducibility. Singularity, uniformity, stability, and “othering” are always alien to culture, which can be treated as anti-culture. However, it is an irony that the modern nation states have always appropriated culture to carry forward their unitary agenda of uniformity, normalization, homogeneity and ‘othering’. The rise of theocratic, religious, racial, and ethnic nationalism in different parts of the world at different times has sometimes proved a futile exercise, but only after paying a heavy price in the form of human sufferings and annihilations. Indian’s too had been witness to the cost of religious division of the country at some point of times in its history. However, in India, cultural movements like Gorkhaland movement in West Bengal, the Assam ethnic movements (Bodo tribes), the Jharkhand movement for tribal rights, etc., also helps in maintaining unity in the region.
3. **Linguistic Identity:** It is often said that eating, sleeping, and procreation are common to humans and animals. If human activities get restricted to these biological functions, then not only the differences between the two will cease to exist but humans will only live like animals. Thus, the major differences between the two are that humans not only produce materials for their survival, but they also produce concepts, myths, artefacts, and culture etc. In other words, humans are cultural beings; they are cognitive being which stand for their cultural identity. Language is the first and most important markers of human cultural identity. Language helps in construction as well as dissemination of ideas including the bonds of oneness, brotherhood, common aspirations and welfare.

Reorganisation of the Indian states in 1956 and afterwards, and the elevation of regional languages into the VIII Schedule of the Indian Constitution too have contributed in bringing the demand for linguistic identity at the centre stage of identity formation and assertions in India, particularly after independence. Indecisiveness and ambiguity regarding the status of National language on part of the successive governments at the national level on the one hand and opposition to the imposition of Hindi as a National language at different points of time in different states of India on the other hand continues to be the main reason behind linguistic identity movements, particularly in the states of South India and other bordering states particularly from the North-East.

- 4. Historical Legacy:** There are scholars particularly, historians, archaeologists, and anthropologists etc., who believe that there are close relationships between the history and geography of India. Knowledge about these relations holds the key to understand the continuity and changes in the formation of regions in India. Apart from the inferences available in the Puranic texts, there are evidences right from the time of Janapadas, Mahajanapadas in ancient India, the Subas and Sarcars under the Moguls, the provinces under the British and the states in modern India that substantiate the close interrelationships between the history and geography of India. The **Perennial Nuclear Regions** formed the bases of the formation of the Subbas, provinces, and States with some modifications mostly along the frontiers and boundaries.

Similarly, with some exceptions the **Areas of Isolation** too broadly coincide with the states that have been formed on the bases of ethnic composition mostly in the North-Eastern Regions and the States in the Himalayas. And finally, the **Areas of Relative Isolations** are experiencing cultural identity movements more than the other regions. The Demand for Bodoland (National Democratic Front of Bodoland), Karbi Anglong (Karbi Longri N.C Hills Liberation Front), Assam (United Liberation Front of Assam), and North Bengal (Gorkhaland National Liberation Front) are most prominent among these. Similarly, the formation of Telangana from Andhra Pradesh too was based on the historical legacy of the Princely State of Hyderabad under the Nizam. So, unlike the demand for a separate statehood in other parts of the country, the formation of Telangana was based on its demand for demerger from the state of Andhra Pradesh at the time of linguistic formation in 1956.

- 5. Rise of Regional Elites and Political Aspirations:** The scholars from dependency school are of the opinion that Capitalism is the dominant economic world order in spite of tall claims about Socialist Economy, Mixed Economy, and Backward Primitive Economy etc., because all these interact among themselves and others in a single World Market dominated by capitalist relations. Their participation in the World Market is through Unequal Exchange resulting into the transfer of economic (potential and actual) surplus from large number of countries (colonies) to a few Metropolitan countries is the main reason behind their economic distress and regional imbalances/inequalities. This process resulted into the drain of wealth from colonies and accumulation of wealth in the metropolitan countries. The net outcome of these processes is the division of the world into Developed core (Metropolis) and Underdeveloped peripheries (Satellite).

Therefore, development and underdevelopment are the two diametrically opposite outcomes of the one and the same processes operating through the World Market. Moreover, the division is both an outcome as well as process, which are reproduced at every level. Meaning thereby, the relations of unequal exchange are also reproduced within the underdeveloped peripheries and developed core i.e., there are developed core within the underdeveloped peripheries and there are underdeveloped peripheries within the developed cores.

India was subjected to the processes of underdevelopment under the colonial rule and its unwavering engagement with the world market continues to reproduce the relations within the country. Persistence of such unequal relations after independence and planned economic development in the country has given rise to the regional aspirations articulated by the regional middle-class, regional capitalist class (bourgeoisie), and regional intelligentsia. The rise of entertainment-cinema stars in South India particularly M.G. Ramachandra, K. Karuna Nidhi, Jaya Lalitha, N.T. Rama Rao, Regional Capitalist class in Western Maharashtra (Siva Sena), Agricultural Capitalist class in Punjab, the Regional Economic Potentates in Assam (tea, timber, oil, and natural gas) etc., are expressions of the rise of regional capitalist class (bourgeoisie) in different parts of the country.

Centre State Relations: It was mentioned before that the constitution of India used the concept of Union of States instead of Federation of India that is Bharat, which is a clear indication that the centre has greater power than the states. The provisions to this effect have been outlined in Part-XI of the Indian Constitution, particularly in Articles 245 to 263, which makes it quite clear that no state of India has the power to overturn the laws promulgated by the central government. Moreover, an attempt to achieve and override the laws made by the Central Government will amount to undermining the sovereignty of India amounting to an act of sedition, an act of separation from India and treated as an act of treason.

However, the real strength to these provisions is provided by Section 112-A of Indian Penal Code (IPC) through its definition of sedition as an act “by words by words, either spoken or written, or by signs, or by visible representation, or otherwise, brings or attempts to bring into hatred or contempt, or excites or attempts to excite disaffection towards, the Government established by law shall be punished with imprisonment for life, to which fine may be added...”. Though, it has many interpretations, yet the following three are most significant:

- I. The expression “disaffection” includes disloyalty and all feelings of enmity;
- II. Comments expressing disapprobation of the measures of the Government with a view to obtain their alteration by lawful means, without exciting or attempting to excite hatred, contempt or disaffection, do not constitute an offence under this section; and
- III. Comments expressing disapprobation of the administrative or other action of the Government without exciting or attempting to excite hatred, contempt or disaffection, do not constitute an offence under this section.

The other important issues regarding the centre-state relation are the appointment of the Governors/Lieutenant Governors and use of the Article-356 of the Constitution: provisions in case of failure of constitutional machinery in the states. It has been observed that the central government has invariably invoked this article to dismiss the democratically elected State Governments on the recommendations of the Governors/Lieutenant Governors of the state/UTs. It has happened very frequently and the centre dismissed the state government, if it was formed by the political parties different from the one in power at the centre. Similarly, the provisions under Part-XII of the Constitution

related to Finance, Property, Contracts and Suits giving more power to the Centre have been contested by the State Governments.

Consequently, the acrimony between centre state relations has given rise to the feeling of discrimination by the centre, thus, giving rise to regional identity formation. In Tamil Nadu, the DMK and AIADMK, in Punjab the Akali Dal, in Andhra Pradesh the Telugu Desham, in Assam the Assam Gana Parishad, the National Conference and Peoples Democratic Party in Jammu and Kashmir, Forward Block and CPM in West Bengal, the CPI (M) in Kerala, in Maharashtra Siva Sena, in Odisha the Biju Janata Party, Trinamool Congress in West Bengal and Aam Admi Party in Delhi and Punjab etc., have been continuously demanding a larger share of powers for the states.

One of the most contested issues in recent times is the share of states and the centre regarding Goods and Services Tax (GST). Theoretically, GST includes all those previous taxes imposed under the VAT, octroi, luxury tax, purchase tax, central taxes like customs duty, central excise duty, and service tax. But at present, under the government's one nation one tax policy, these taxes have been clubbed into three broad headings:

CGST: The Central government collects revenue through central goods and services taxes and central government levies taxes on intra-state goods and services transactions.

SGST: It includes all the taxes that were collected before under different heads such as VAT, entertainment tax, luxury tax, octroi, tax on lottery, and purchase tax.

IGST: Integrated Goods and Services Tax is levied on inter-state goods and services transactions including imports and exports. These taxes are shared by the centre and state governments. But, the acrimony created by different state governments regarding the distribution of the share of the states is becoming an important issue of regional aspirations.

Consequently, the discrimination by the government at the Centre with the State governments, particularly if the political parties forming the government at the centre and the state are from different political parties in terms of their ideologies and the processes of region formation and regionalism quite different from each other. Regions are formed on the bases of homogeneity in terms of factors like physiography, climate, natural vegetation, economic activities, cultural attributes, and historical experiences etc. Regions for all practical purposes are real, yet dynamic and stand for complementarities with each other in order to strengthen the bonds of interdependence with other regions. As opposed to this, regionalism by its definition is based on "othering" where the other need not be the hell, what Sartre would like to call it, yet there is a strong sense of insider-outsider prevalent within regionalism. Most often and it could be the nearest instead of the real enemy which is always based on certain myths fixed in time past and attempts to retrieve the paradise lost. "Regionalism is based on an ideology concerned with prolonged injustice, deprivation and neglect and motivating people to increasing political power and influence to mitigate these perceived or real injustices". Sometimes, the regionalists do not question the rights of the sovereign, thus, they don't demand separation or independence. On the contrary, they favour

confederation in place of unitary centre and want to improve the quality of life of the people through better allocation of resources according to the region-specific priorities. It can promote healthy competition, and is never anti-people.

However, the extreme form of regionalism sometimes degenerates into brutal killings and rampant violations of human rights. The Constitution of India has provisions within it to address the issues related to regionalism and the experiences of the last seven decades of independence and democratic governance has been largely successful in dealing with regional aspirations and regionalism.

SAQ 4

Are regionalism and nationalism antithetical to each other?

4.3 SUMMARY

In this Unit, you have learnt the following:

- Regions, regionalism and federalism and union of Indian states.
- Linguistic States and Cultural Regions of India.
- Regional movements in India.
- Prominent reasons behind the rise of regionalism in India.

4.4 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

1. The rise of regionalism in India at different points of time is an outcome the distortions brought in during the prolonged colonial domination. Evaluate this statement with suitable examples.
2. Do you think the policies of inclusive-exclusion and exclusive-inclusion adopted through planned development in India after independence is largely responsible for the rise of regional disparities and regional aspirations?
3. Do you think regional autonomy will be/is counterproductive to the unity of India?
4. Do you think disparities in the levels of development are the causes for the rise of regional identity movements in India? Or can economic development solve the problems of regional identities?

4.5 ANSWERS

Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)

1. The nature of federal structure as enshrined in the Indian constitution.
2. Linguistic reorganisation of the states poses formidable challenges to the unity of India.

3. The concentration of power at the centre is main reason for the rise of regional political parties in India.
4. Regionalism and nationalism are antithetical to each other. It means that overlapping is inescapable phenomenon.

Terminal Questions

1. Refer to Section 4.2
2. Refer to Section 4.2
3. Refer to Section 4.2
4. Refer to Section 4.2

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GLOSSARY

Areas of Relative Isolation	: The regions that flourished their regional culture and ways of life away from the main routes of waves of immigrants into the Indian sub-continent. The development of Bengali, Assamese, and Rajasthani cultures and languages are considered to be as the areas of relative isolation.
Centre-State Relations	: Indian society is diverse in terms of their history, culture, faiths, economy, and ways of life etc. The task of conducting the business of the nation with one fits all rules is likely to be counter-productive. The constitution of India is a testimony of this fact that it is an imperative to balance the powers of the provincial governments and the central governments. The Part XI of the Indian Constitution particularly Articles 245 to 263 are very categorical about the divisions of powers between the Centre and the States. However, there are issues like the cultural identity and allocation of resources that have created many problems in the centre-state relations at different points of time. But, above all these lies the Article 356 of the constitution, which empowers the central government to dissolve the state government on the advice of the Governor of the state in pluralistic and diverse country relations.
Displacement	: The core subject matter of geography is the processes of Humanisation (cultural expression) of Nature and Naturalisation of Humans through human nature interaction. Therefore, there is everything of nature (place) as an expression of human culture and there is everything in human culture (people) that are deeply embedded into nature. The nature-cultural expressions are long historical processes, but at time due to some reasons, there occur disruptions in the organic nature of human inter-relationships and both stands apart from each other. This distancing between human and nature from each other is known as displacement. Displacement has natural as well as social causes having magnitude, direction, and velocity.
Enclaves	: A relatively small isolated foreign territory lying within a separate geographical and politico-administrative unit. The tea plantations managed by the European colonisers in India are the examples of plantation enclaves.
Federalism	: It is a form of government where the powers are distributed between the central government and the state or regional governments within one political system.

Formal Region	: Regions that are objective and exist independent of human knowledge. These regions exhibit homogeneity in terms of the physical or natural attributes. Most of the physical regions are formal regions and these are relatively permanent in nature.
Functional Region	: Functional regions are delineated on the bases of human needs or purposes. These regions exhibit homogeneity in terms of the activities or functions without adhering homogeneity in terms of the physical attributes such as relief, and geology etc. Most of the planning regions and industrial regions are functional regions. These regions undergo changes with the change in their attributes. Such regions are dynamic in nature.
Heterogeneity	: State of being dissimilar in terms of the characteristics (quality and quantity) of constituting attributes.
Homogeneity	: State of being/maintaining similarity especially in terms of quality and quantity of the constituting attributes.
Janapadas and Mahajanapadas	: These were the proto-state formations among the ethnic groups in the Indian sub-continent in ancient times. It is believed that they practice some form of democratic governance. There were 16 Mahajanapadas (Sodasa mahajanapadas) and a large number of small ethnic (tribal) democracies.
Mother Goddess	: Earth is the place of human birth, dwelling, survival, and security. The relationship between the Earth and humans is similar to their biological mother. Though, the relationship is uni-directional from the Earth to human at the receiving end, yet humans on their part feel indebted to the Earth and pay reverence to its bounties by creating a variety of feminine deities and maternal symbols of creativity, birth, fertility, nurturing, and cycles of growth and regeneration. In India, the expression of Mother Goddess in various forms is one of the single most significant factors of unity in diversity. In the East, there is goddess Kamakhya, Durga and Kali, in the North-West the Sherawali and Jyotawali, in Western India there is Durga and Hinglaj Mata, in South India there are Meenakshi and Chamundeshwari.
Perennial Nuclear Region	: Regions that survived and flourished over centuries despite the changes that were brought in by the external influences and succeeded in developing their culture and economy. The core centres of Telugu, Tamil, and Kannada languages and cultures etc., in case of India could be considered as perennial nuclear regions.

Rhythms of Monsoon	: The seasonal movement of wind at the lower layer of atmosphere and above the surface of the Earth is called Monsoon. It has its origin in Arabic language, meaning season. In South Asia, the movement of these winds follows an annual cycle, which is responded and synchronised with many economic and cultural activities
Spatial	: A multipurpose concept as well as technique referred to understand multiple dimensions of a geographical unit encompassing as small as place to global surface.
Synthesis	: It is a method of knowing/understanding the elements/components as an interdependent part of the whole.
Taxonomy	: Branch of knowledge as well as method of understanding phenomena both nature and society through arranging in a rational classification.
Territorial Production Complexes	: The concept as a model of regional development was introduced by Russian Geographer N. N. Kolosovskiy. It is the basis of the formation of economic region comprising interrelated energy, resource, labour, industrial, agricultural, and forest based enterprises within a territory. Kolosovskiy's formulations were based on pyro-metallurgical cycles of ferrous and non-ferrous metals and on the petroleum and gas energy chemical cycles over and above the other five energy production sectors.
Underdevelopment	: Underdevelopment is neither a precondition, nor a stage nor even due to lack of resource needed for the development of an economy. It is a dependent, distorted, and truncated development resulting from the ruthless exploitation of resources and development potentials by the colonial powers from the former colonies. The drain of wealth and resources (economic surplus) was regulated through the participation of the colonies in the world market subjected to stringent conditions of unequal exchange. India was typical example of underdeveloped economy under the British colonialism.
Union List, State List, and Concurrent List	: The constitution of India made adequate and elaborate provisions to streamline the powers and activities of the central and provincial governments. Consequently, it has listed items in three lists i.e., the Union List (97 activities), the State List (66 activities) and the Concurrent List (47 activities) in 1996. Though, there have been many changes in the allocations of these activities through various constitutional amendments, yet the activities remained by and large the same.
Vernacular Region	: It refers to a belief of people as an expression of their cultural identity. Basically, it is a kind of perceptual

region.

Zone and Strata

: Griffith Taylor was among the ardent exponents of environmental determinism. He used biological analogy to analyse the spatial distributions of forms of organic as well as inorganic substances. According to him, the most primitive substances will be available at the outer most zone and lower most strata and the recent ones will be at the inner most zone and upper most strata. Some biologists also called it age and area concept.



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