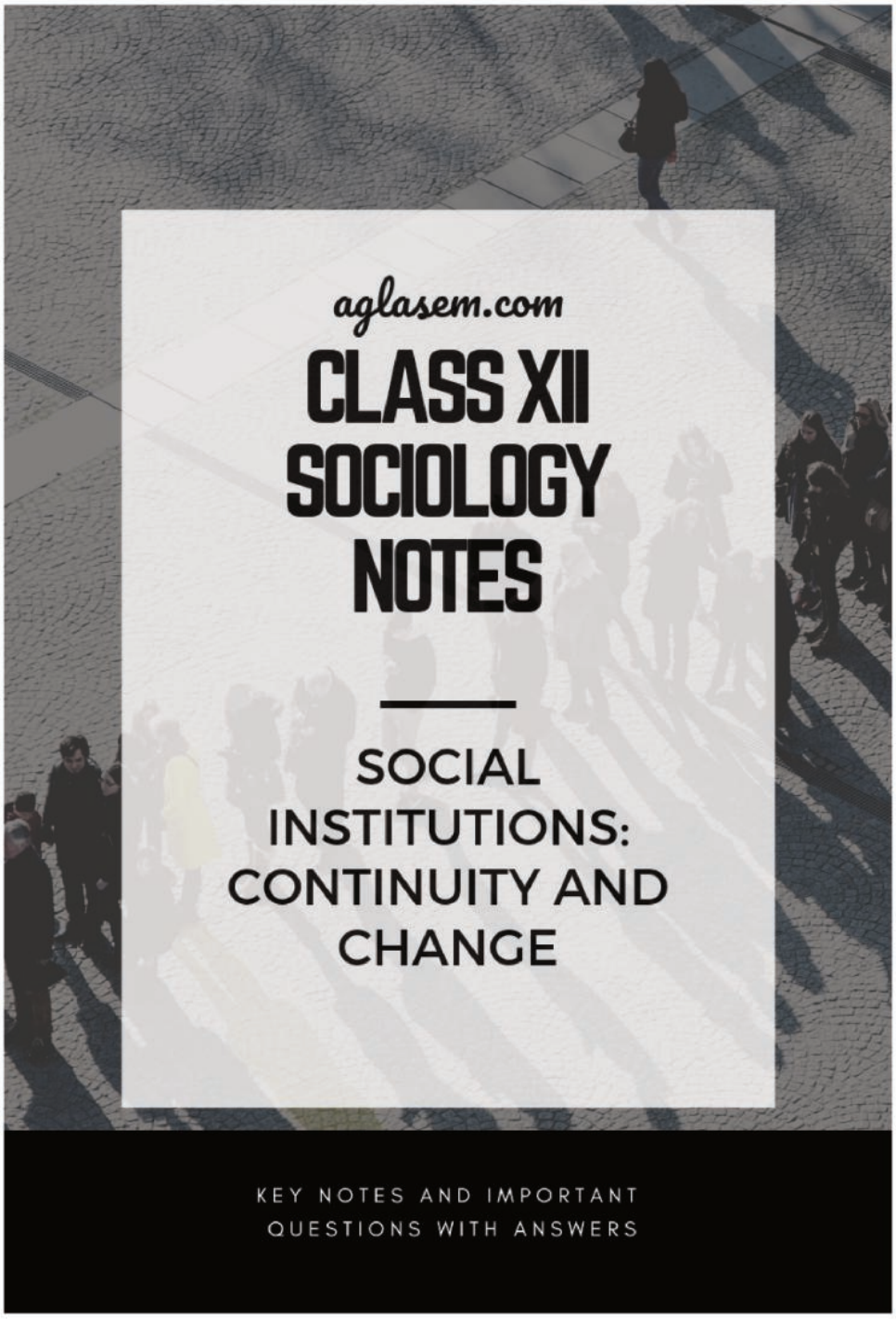

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CLASS XII
SOCIOLOGY
NOTES
SOCIAL
INSTITUTIONS:
CONTINUITY AND
CHANGE
KEY NOTES AND IMPORTANT
QUESTIONS WITH ANSWERS

CHAPTER 3

SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS; CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

Caste and The Caste System

- A population is made up of inter-related classes and communities. These are sustained and regulated by social institutions and social relationships.
- Three institutions Caste, Tribe and Family are central to Indian Society.
- "Caste" is a social institution that has been in existence for thousands of years.

Definitons of Caste :

- "Caste", an English word is derived from a Portuguese word "Casta", meaning pure breed. In Indian language it is referred to two distinct terms, Varna and Jati.

Varna & Jati

- Varna which literally means 'colour' refers is a fourfold division of society into hierarchical order Brahmana, Kshatriya, Vaishya and Shudra. It is an all India aggregative classification.
- Jati, is a regional or local sub-classification terms consisting of hundred or thousands of castes and sub castes. (It is generic term referring species or kinds of anything ranging from inanimate objects to plants, animals & human beings.)

Vedic & post Vedic period

- During the Vedic period the caste system was eleborate, very rigid or determined by birth.
- But, in post Vedic period it became very rigid with certain defining features such as caste being determined by birth, membership of caste adhering to strict rules of marriage, rules regarding food

& food sharing, caste being traditionally linked to occupations and it being arranged in a hierarchy of rank and status.

Features of caste

- **Caste is determined by birth.** A child is born into the caste of its parents. Caste is never a matter of choice.
- **Membership in a caste involves strict rules about marriage.** Caste groups are "endogamous", i.e., marriage is restricted to members of the group.
- **Caste membership also involves rules about food and food-sharing.** Kinds of food may or may not be eaten is prescribed.
- Caste involves a system consisting many **castes arranged in a hierarchy of rank and status.**
- **Castes also involve sub-divisions within themselves.** This is refered to as a segmental orginsation.
- **Caste were traditionally linked to occupations.** A person born into a caste could only practice the occupation associated with that caste.

Theoretical interpretation of caste

- **Caste is a combination of two sets of principles —**
- (1) Difference and separation. The scriptual rules ranging from marriage, food sharing to occupation prevents the mixing of castes.
- (2) Wholism and hierarchy : the hierarchical division of caste, on the other hand is based on the distinction between "purity and pollution."

In the caste system, Endogamy is the practice of marrying within the caste. **Exogamy** is the practice of marrying outside the clan or gotra.

A proprietary caste group is a group that owns most of the resources and can command labor to work for them.

Caste panchayats are panchayats which are controlled by the dominant group and represent their interests, needs & demands. Primarily decision making is controlled by the upper caste, rich landlords and landed peasants.

Colonialism and Caste

- Institution of caste underwent major change during colonial period.
- Caste has been shaped as a result of the influence of the colonial period and changes brought about in independent India.
- The British undertook methodical and intensive surveys of various tribes and castes in order to learn how to govern the country effectively.
- The first such survey was carried out by Herbert Risley in 1901 and thus caste began to be counted and recorded.
- Other institutions like the land revenue settlement gave legal recognition to the coustomary rights of the upper caste.
- **The Govt. India Act of 1935** gave legal recognition to the lists of 'schedules' of castes and tribes.
- Gradually, towards the end of the colonial period the welfare of downtrodden caste was looked after by the administration.

Caste in the Present

In Post Independent India, programs were undertaken for the upliftment of depressed classes. Social reformers like Jyotiba Phule, Periyar etc. worked towards lower caste upliftment, abolition of caste distinctions and other restrictions.

The abolition of caste was explicitly incorporated in the Constitution by the state. During this period some of the steps undertaken were reservation of seats for SC & ST's no caste rules in the jobs created in the modern industry, urbanization & collective living in cities and stress on meritocracy.

In the cultural & domestic spheres, caste has remained unaffected by modernization and change while in the sphere of politics it has been deeply conditioned by caste as formation of caste based political parties.

New concepts were coined to understand the process of change. The terms were sanskritization and dominant caste by **M.N. Srinivas.**

Sanskritization is a process whereby members of a caste (usually middle a lower) attempt to raise their social status by adopting the rituals & social practices of the higher caste.

Dominant caste was those which had a large population and were granted landrights. They were politically, socially and economically dominant in their regions for example : the **Yadavs** of Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, and **Vokkaligas** of Karnataka, **the Reddys and Khammas** of Andhra Pradesh, the **Marathas** of Maharashtra, of **Jats** of Punjab, Haryana, and Western Uttar Pradesh and the **Patidars** of Gujarat.

In the contemporary period caste has tended to become invisible for the upper caste, urban middle and upper classes and more visible for the lower caste.

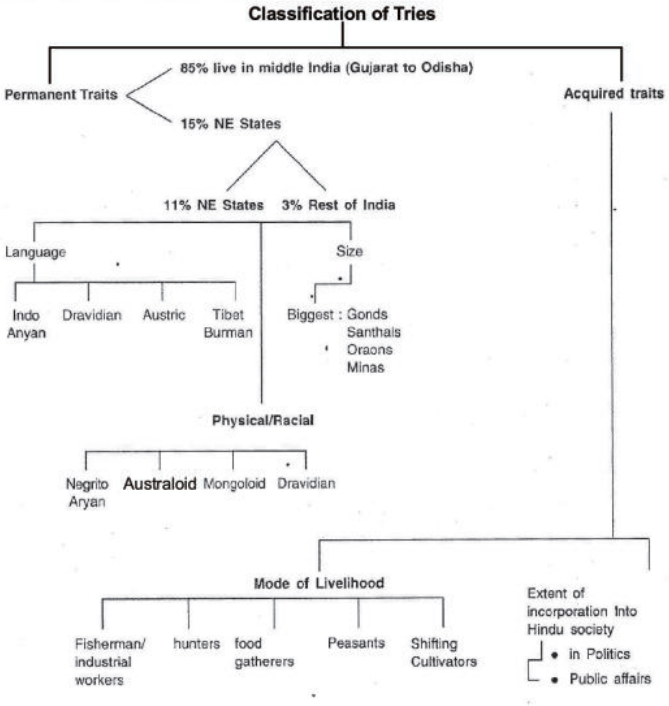
- Upper caste Groups have benefitted the most from the development policies of the post colonial era.
- Took full advantage of the opportunities offered by rapid development and able to take advantage of the expansion of the state sector jobs, immediately after Independence.
- The did no face any competition and their privileged status got consolidated in the second and the third generations.
- For this group, caste plays no part in their public lives. Whereas for the SC, STs and backward castes–opposite happened.
- Caste has become too visible.
- They have no inherited educational and social capital.
- Moreover, they have to compete with the already established upper caste group. They cannot afford to abandon their caste identity.

TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

Definition of tribes

- The oldest inhabitants of the sub-continent.
- Tribes were communities that did not practice a religion with a written text.
- did not have a state or political form of the formal kind;
- did not have sharp class divisions; and
- they did not have caste distinctions

Classification of Tribal Societies



Tripe-caste distinction

Caste	Tribe
• Based an the notion of purity and pollution	• Kinship based mode of social organization
• Believes in Religion (oral and written)	• Do not practice text a religion with a written text.
• Hierarchical system.	• Egalitarian system.

<u>Tribes and not primitive communitives living isolated lives.</u>

- Tribes are seen as secondary phenomenon arising out of the exploitative and colonialist contacts.
- There are several Gond kingdom in central India such as that of Garha Mandala.

- Many of the Rajput kingdoms of central and western India emerged through a process of stratification among Adivasi community themselves.
- Adivasi often exercise dominance over plains.
- Occupied a special trade niche-trading forest produce, salt and elephants.
- Capitalist economic drive the exploit forest resources and minerals and to recruit cheap labour brought Tribal societies into the mainstream.
- Capitalist economic drive exploited the Tribals.

The 'isolation' and 'Intengration' debate on tribes is based upon tribal societies as isolated wholes. The isolationist believe that tribals needed protection from traders, moneylenders and Hindu and Christian missionaries, all of whom try to reduce tribals' to detribalised landless labour. **The integrationists,** believe that tribal's are merely backward Hindus, and their problems had to be addressed within the same framework as that of other backward classes.

22. National development involving the building of large dams, factories and mines were undertaken at the expenses of the tribes. Eg. Narmada Bachao Aandolan.

National Development Vs. Tribal Development

- National Development involving the building of large dams, factories and mines were undertaken at the expense of the tribes.
- Tribals have paid disproportionate price for the development of the rest of Indian Society.
- The loss of the forests on which tribal communities depended has been a major blow.
- Coming of private property adversely affected tribals, especially their community based collective ownership, were placed at a disadvantage in the new system.
- Heavy in migration of non-tribals threatens to disrupt their culture.

Tribal identities today. Are centered on idea's of resistance and opposition to the force exercised by the non-tribal world. The formation of

Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh has been a result of this assertion of tribal identity but the political system is still not autonomous.

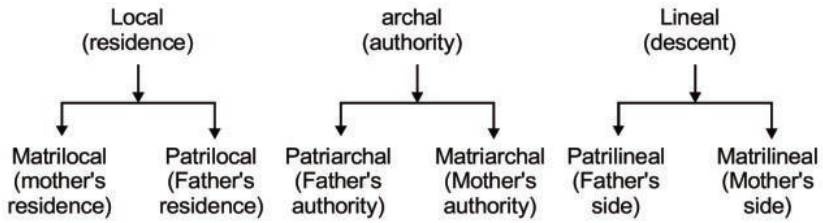
Tribal movements emerged to tackel issues relating to control over vital economic resources, matters of ethnic cultural identity. All this has been made possible due to the gradual emergence of an educated middle class among tribal communities, though the assertion of identity of tribal middle class maybe different from a poor and uneducated one.

23. Family and Kinship

A. Family can be nuclear or extended. Modern family consists of only one set parents and their children unlike extended family where there is more than one couple and often more than two generations living together.

B. Diverse forms of family

Diverse forms of family are :



24. The Khasi matriliny highlights the distinction between matriliny and matriarchy.

- There is an inherent disagreement in matrilineal systems. On the one hand, **the line of descent and inheritance,** where a woman inherits property from her mother and passes it on to her daughter and the other structure of authority and control where a man controls his sister's property and passes on control to his sister's son. The former, which links the mother to the daughter, comes in conflict with the latter; which links the mother's brother to the sister's son.

- Khasi matriliny generates intense role conflict for men. They are torn between responsibilities to their natal house on the one hand, and to their wife and children on the other.

- The tension generated by such role conflict affects Khasi women more intensely. A woman can never be fully assured that her husband does not find his sister's house a more pleasant place than her own.
- The women are more badly affected than men, by the **role conflict** generated in the Khasi malrilineal system, not only because men wield power and women are deprived of it, but also because the system is more lenient to men.
- Thus, men are the power holders in Khasi society; the only difference is that a man's relatives on his mother's side matter more than his relatives on his father's side.

2 MARKS QUESTIONS

1. What is caste?
2. What is dominant Caste?
3. Distinguish between varna & Jati.
4. Mention any 4 dominant caste.
5. Define Tribes.
6. Mention the isolation and integration debate on tribes.
7. Mention the two broad sets of issues most important in giving rise to tribal movements.
8. Distinguish between Nuclear and Joint Family.
9. Define Kinship.
10. Distinguish between Endogamy and Exogamy.

4 MARKS QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the features of caste.
2. Explain the role of caste panchayats.

3. Differentiate between tribe & Caste.
4. Explain the main factors influencing the formation of tribal identity today.
5. Explain the meaning of Sanskritization.
6. What is the role of the ideas of separation and hierarchy in the caste system?
7. What are the rules that the caste system imposes?
8. How have tribes been classified in India?
9. In what ways can change in social structure lead to changes in the family structure.
10. Explain the different forms of family.

6 MARKS QESTIONS

1. Discuss the theoretical interpretation / or principles of the caste system.
2. Discuss the ways that strengthened the institution of caste in India under colonial rule.
3. Highlight the sources of conflict between national development and tribal development.
4. Write a note on tribal movement with special reference to Jharkhand.
5. Discuss the classification of tribes based on their traits.
6. Discuss the features of the Caste System.
7. Differentiate between Matriliny and matriarchy, in the context of the Khasi matriliny system.