

UNIT 5 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIOLOGY IN INDIA - II

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5.0 OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to

- describe the contributions of the three pioneers of Indian sociology
- outline the biographical details of Radhakamal Mukerjee, D.P. Mukerji and G.S. Ghurye
- explain some of their central ideas in sociology
- list some of their important works.

5.1 INTRODUCTON

In Unit 4 **History and Development of Sociology India – I** of this block, you learnt about the emergence of sociology in India. We gave you a broad outline of how sociology came to be established as a discipline in Indian universities. You learnt about the role played by several Indian and foreign scholars in the development of sociology and its link with social anthropology and Indology. You have thus obtained a broad idea of the background in which sociology developed in India.

In this unit, we will deal with the contributions of three of the major pioneers of Indian sociology, namely Radhakamal Mukerjee (1889-1968), D.P. Mukerji (1894-1962), and G.S. Ghurye (1893-1984). We mentioned their names in the previous unit also but here we are going to discuss their central ideas. They worked during a time when the spirit of freedom was alive in the soul of every Indian. The National Movement was part of the background of these scholars and critically shaped their writings.

In this unit, section 5.2 gives a general picture of the three pioneers, Radhakamal Mukerjee, D.P. Mukerji and G.S. Ghurye. Section 5.3 describes the biographical sketch, central ideas and important works of Radhakamal Mukerjee. Section 5.4 provides the biographical sketch, central ideas and important works of D.P. Mukerji and finally, section 5.5 gives the biographical sketch, central ideas and important works of G.S. Ghurye.

5.2 THE PIONEERS OF INDIAN SOCIOLOGY

In this unit, some detailed references will be made to the contributions of Radhakamal Mukerje, D.P. Mukerji, and G.S. Ghurye to Indian sociology. They were contemporary figures in the Indian academic works. Radhakamal Mukerjee taught in Lucknow Unviersity's department of economics and sociology along with D.P. Mukerji, while G.S. Ghurye taught in the department of sociology, Bombay University. Their works as teachers, research guides and writers left a deep imprint on Indian sociology, especially in the first half of 20th century. They shared a common approach to sociology. Their works covered a number of social sciences in addition to sociology. Radhakamal Mukerjee criticised the **compartmentalisation** in social sciences. In his writings he combined economics, sociology and

history. He was always in search of linkages or common grounds between social sciences. D.P. Mukerji was a Marxist who wrote on Indian society in terms of the dialectical relationship between tradition and modernity. He was in search of an Indian personality whose modernity was based on Indianness. In his views, an Indian uprooted from his or her cultural heritage could not be called a balanced person. G.S. Ghurye was an ethnographer of tribes and castes but he also wrote extensively on other topics. In his writings, Ghurye emphasised integration. According to him, the guiding force in Indian society was the Hindu ideology. Even the Indian secularism was a product of the tolerant spirit of Hinduism. He used history and statistical data to supplement his sociological writings. However, there was a difference between D.P. Mukerji and Radhakamal Mukerjee. Radhakamal Mukerjee remained an economist in a broad sense throughout his career. Even D.P. Mukerji was an economist. He taught economics and sociology at Lucknow University. But Ghurye did not discuss economic topics in his works.

Neither Radhakamal Mukerjee nor Ghurye employed rigorous research methods to conduct their studies. They did not also employ hypotheses to test Indian social reality. They wrote articles and books partly in response to personal preferences and partly in response to pressures of public life. Hence, in their academic careers there was no consciously laid out plan. They wrote on a variety of topical themes such as family system in India, castes and classes, urban centres and agrarian or rural life. In their works, there were many references to Indian scriptures, **canonical** works, epics and Puranas. Radhakamal Mukerjee translated some important Sanskrit works into English during the later phase of his career. Ghurye was a Sanskritist by training before he entered the discipline of sociology. His work on Vedic India, written in the later years, was an example of his interest in Sanskrit works. Now, let us examine one by one the biographical details, central ideas and important works of each of the three thinkers.

5.3 RADHAKAMAL MUKERJEE (1889-1968)

Radhakamal Mukerjee was pioneer in the areas such as social ecology, interdisciplinary research and the social structure of values. We will first describe the biographical sketch and then discuss his central ideas.

5.3.1 Biographical Sketch

Radhakamal Mukerjee was born in 1889 in a large Bengali Brahmin family, in a small country town of West Bengal called Berhampur. He spent the first sixteen years of his life in this town. His father was the leader of the bar, that is a lawyer and was an accomplished scholar with a great interest in history.

Mukerjee, while describing his early years, says that his home was full of books on history, literature, law and Sanskrit (Singh 1956: 3). The general atmosphere in which he grew up was scholarly. His elder brothers were always reading books from which he, being a child, was kept at a distance. His father used to have long meetings with clients throughout the day and long intellectual and religious discussions during the evening. The interior

of the house, where the ladies of the house presided, there were rituals, ceremonies and devotional songs. Mukerjee remembered that his house used to be full of pet animals, especially a golden-hued cow which yielded milk throughout the year. He wrote that these early years were marked by “peaceful tenor of life with its play and schooling, piety and devotion punctuated by the periodic celebration of fasts and feasts, rituals and sacraments, story telling from the Epics and Puranas and visits of ascetics and saints and guest of the household” (Singh 1956: 3).

Mukerjee’s early memories, which left an imprint on his mind, consisted of the picture of sorrow and misery of a large population devastated by famine in Madras and Orissa during the early years of the twentieth century. He was deeply moved by the pictures of human skeletons on the verge of starvation and death published in the newspapers. This was further deepened by the Bengal famine of 1942-43 which he had witnessed in Calcutta. He also vividly recalled the childhood experiences of Muharram processions, Durgapuja festivals, and so on.

It was during the same period of his life that Bengal saw its socio-cultural and intellectual **renaissance**. In 1905 every city in Bengal was in a state of intellectual and political fervent. The partition of Bengal into East and West Bengal, introduced by Lord Curzon, led to a mass uprising against this event. Political meetings, street processions and singing parties, boycott of British goods and propagating swadeshi products introduced him to the mass movement of time.

Mukerjee had his early education in Berhampur. He went to the Krishnath College in Berhampur. He got an academic scholarship in the leading educational institution in India, the Presidency College in Calcutta. He took his honours course in English and History in this college. Here he came in contact with such scholars as H.M. Percival, M.Ghosh , brother of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh and the linguist Harinath De. He admired these scholars very much. It was here that he read books by Comte, Herbert Spencer, Lester Ward, Hobhouse and Giddings, besides many others, from cover to cover. As you must be aware by now many of these scholars are the leading men of sociology in Europe and America.

During this period of his life, Mukerjee launched himself into the area of adult education which remained his interest till the end. The country was going through a political and cultural upheaval during this period which, according to Mukerjee, completely changed the scale of values. This change was seen far more outside the Governmental institutions, taking the form of a literary and artistic renaissance. This renaissance slowly took the form of a mass movement. It was in order to help the process that Mukerjee started an Adult Evening School in 1906 in the slums of Mechaubazar of Calcutta. He wrote simple texts for adult education which sold in thousands. This school became a Community Centre and even the local physicians started taking interest in this movement of social education. They treated without charging any fee the adults and children of the slums (Singh 1956: 5).

Mukerjee valued his early training in the discipline of History very much but “the face-to-face contact with misery, squalor and degradation in the

slums of Calcutta” turned the focus of his interests towards the disciplines of Sociology and Economics. He wrote that there was a definite call in the country for the tasks and responsibilities of education of the masses, and that call could be answered by an Indian student best through the knowledge of the social sciences (Singh 1956: 5). Social sciences during Mukerjee’s time in Calcutta University included the disciplines of Economics, Politics and Sociology at M.A. level.

It was during this period that Mukerjee came in close association with Benoy Kumar Sarkar (We have mentioned Benoy Kumar Sarkar’s contributions to sociology in the previous unit.) Mukerjee and Sarkar shared the same flat and B.K. Sarkar was at that time Professor at Bengal National College, an institution which had given support to such leading thinkers of Bengal as Tagore and Aurobindo Ghosh.

Mukerjee, like many other Indians of his time, was impressed by the fiery political speeches of Bipin Chandra Pal, one of the Congress extremists. But the main interest of Mukerjee was at that time educational rather than political. He and his friends called themselves “Ministers of the Poor” and dressed poorly, giving up western dresses like shirts, coats and shoes (Singh 1956: 6).

In 1910 Mukerjee went back to his old college in Berhampur as a teacher in Economics. He says that this was the busiest period of his life and it was during this period that he wrote his early works in Economics, such as the *Foundations of Indian Economics*. His interest in social ecology and the study of regions also originated during this period. The Principal of his College, Rev. E.M. Wheeler, was deeply interested in the sciences, especially Botany. Therefore, the teachers, including Mukerjee, spent a lot of time collecting specimens of plants and insects of all kinds and studying them. This experience developed Mukerjee’s interest in ecology and he became aware of its link with human community.

At this time Mukerjee also became the editor of the renowned Bengali monthly, *Upasana*. He wrote for this monthly regularly and kept in touch with the literary development in Bengali literature. He was a voracious reader and his interest in literature was very deep.

During 1915 when there were persecutions by the British Government, Mukerjee was once arrested for a day and all his adult schools were liquidated. The charges against him were that he was a “terrorist” or had sympathy with terrorism under the disguise of adult education. Thanks to his lawyer brother he was released very soon. He was offered a position in Lahore College in Punjab and he went there thus, nipping in bud any interest in politics.

He went back to the University of Calcutta where Asutosh Mookerji had established in 1917 the Post-Graduate Council of Arts and Science. He stayed here for five years and taught Economics, Sociology and Political Philosophy. In 1921 he went to the University of Lucknow as Professor and Head of the Department of Economics and Sociology on the very day when the university started functioning (Singh 1956: 10). He introduced an integrated approach in Economics, Sociology and Anthropology in both research and teaching in Lucknow university.

According to Mukerjee, using comparative methods in the study of social sciences in India, we must aim at the scientific study of the race and culture origins. In his intellectual career he was deeply influenced by three social thinkers. First was Professor Brajendra Nath Seal; second was Professor Patrick Geddes; and the third one was an old, intimate colleague who died early, Narendra Nath Sen Gupta. The first two, Prof. Seal and Prof. Geddes contributed to the establishment and development of sociology as a discipline in the Indian Universities. Mukerjee always consulted Seal in all his works. His stress on comparative method in cultural sciences was due to Seal's influence on his work. Patrick Geddes too, influenced Mukerjee's work on study of regions, ecology and population while Narendra Nath Sen Gupta helped generate Mukerjee's interest in Social Psychology.

Besides these Indian thinkers there were many Western social thinkers with whom Mukerjee worked and who influenced his writings. Some of these were sociologists like, Edward Allsworth Ross, Robert Ezra Park of Chicago, Mckenzie and P. Sorokin. Most of these Americans sociologists were interested in the study of region, urban disorganisation, human ecology, social change and so on. The friendship and intellectual interaction with these sociologists stimulated Mukerjee's own efforts in social sciences to which he gives due credit (Singh 1956: 3-20).

Mukerjee taught economics and sociology in Lucknow University for nearly thirty years. He also became the Vice-Chancellor and Director of the J.K. Institute of Sociology and Human Relation of the University. He wrote erudite volumes on several issues. The basic nature of his writings is the integration of the social sciences and he has been a path-finder in many fields. Many of his students and associates reflect this approach in their writings (Singh 1956: 3-20). He died in the year 1968 but his contributions have left a deep imprint on the students of sociology.

5.3.2 Central Ideas

In the Indian universities, the compartmentalisation of disciplines has dominated the scene. Disciplines such as sociology, psychology and statistics have existed side by side in the same college or university but there has been very little interaction between them. In his teachings and writings, Mukerjee emphasised the need for mutual interaction between social sciences on the one hand and between social sciences and physical sciences on the other. For example, Indian economics, modeled on British economics, mostly neglected the traditional caste networks in indigenous business, handicrafts and banking. Economic development was mainly viewed as an extension of monetary economics or market phenomenon. The Western model in economics focused on the urban-industrial centres.

5.3.2.1 Relationship between economic and social behaviour

In a country like India where many economic transactions take place within the framework of caste or tribe, the "market model" has a limited relevance. Mukerjee tried to show the relationship between traditional networks and economic exchange. The guilds and castes of India were operating in a non-competitive system. The rules of economic exchange were derived from the normative Hinduism, in other words, according to the norms of

Hindu religion wherein interdependence between groups was emphasised. Hence, to understand rural India, the economic values should be analysed with reference to social norms. Religious and/ or ethical constraints have always lent a direction to economic exchange. Values enter into the daily life of people and compel them to act in collectively sanctioned ways. For example, a hungry upper caste Hindu would not eat beef; likewise, an orthodox Muslim or Jew would not eat pork, however urgent may be the need for food. Therefore, it is wrong to always treat economic behaviour as separate from social life or collectivity.

5.3.2.2 Social Ecology

Social Ecology was another theme which preoccupied Mukerjee. He wrote a number of books on the theme. For him social ecology was a complex formulation in which a number of social sciences interacted. The geological, geographical and biological factors worked together to produce an **ecological** zone. In its turn, ecology is conditioned by social, economic or political factors. For example, in the past many Indian ecological regions were opened up for human settlement and agrarian development through political conquests. As there is a definite link between ecology and society the development of ecological zones must be seen in terms of a dynamic process: that is, challenge of the environment and response of the people who establish a settlement.

Ecological balance is not a mechanical carving out of a territory and settling people thereon. Such an attempt weakens or destroys social fabric. For example, in building irrigation dams in India, very often people of the concerned locations are moved to new settlements. The lack of a proper perspective on involuntary resettlement and rehabilitation has often caused damage to social life of these people. In many parts of India, there is a traditional system of interdependence known as *jajmani* in the north or by its equivalents in other regions. If people are moved into other locations such arrangements abruptly come to an end. Only by planning suitable alternatives in advance, can this disruption be overcome. For example, the cooperatives can help people, in the absence of old social patterns of interdependence. Hence, social perspective is necessary for orderly and systematic transformation of India into an urban-industrial economy.

In his works on social ecology, Mukerjee took a point of departure from the Western social scientists. In the USA, the Chicago School of Sociology gave importance to empirical studies of such social problems as social disorganisation, urban deterioration, etc. To this school belonged sociologists like Park and Burgess, Louis Wirth, Giddings and so on. This school emphasised the study of human ecology. Here, the focus was on social engineering involving transfer of slum dwellers to new settlements, improvements in living conditions, better prospects of employment, etc. But, according to Mukerjee, social ecology was the better alternative to the havoc caused by rapid industrialisation. India, with its long history, was a storehouse of values. Therefore, in building a new India the planning must not be confined to immediate and concrete problems but must be directed towards value-based developments.

As part of his interest in social ecology, Mukerjee developed the regional sociology. He argued for a better understanding of regional dimensions of national development. If the regions in modern India were developed so as to make them self-sufficient, then the nation as a whole would stand to benefit. Otherwise, some regions would dominate the rest resulting in a lopsided development. As India was a country of diverse regions, each with a distinctive ethno-history i.e. the history of its various ethnic groups, it was imperative to coordinate the developments schemes for maintaining ecological balance. In sum, he stood for a balance between economic growth and ecological fitness. In achieving this end, many skills, such as weaving, engraving etc., were inherited by caste groups in India. These crafts could be well incorporated into the modern cooperatives. In other words, the modernisation of Indian society should not neglect its traditional economic networks. Incidentally, in the post-Independent India, the traditional crafts have been organised into handloom cooperatives, etc. in Tamil Nadu and other states. Likewise, the Khadi Gramodyog has also used the traditional skills for modern production.

5.3.2.3 Plea for conservation of forests

Mukerjee wrote extensively on the danger of deforestation. The cutting of trees subjects the soil to the fury of floods and reduces the fertility of soil. The topsoil which is washed away by floods or excess rainfall cannot be replenished. Therefore, the forest and woods of India were an ecological asset. His plea for conservation has been taken up at present by a number of activists, voluntary organisations such as Chipko and Apko, which focus on halting the destruction of trees. Mukerjee also referred to the danger of mono-cultivation, that is, raising a single cash crop (such as cotton or sugarcane) to the detriment of rotation of crops. Such practices as deforestation and **mono-cultivation** disturbed the fragile ecosystem and gave rise to severe environmental problems. Every year some parts of India especially in the north suffer either from floods or from droughts. Of course, cyclones of the coastal regions are beyond human control, but the man-made disasters, such as the depletion of natural resources through deforestation can be slowed down or prevented.

Mukerjee advocated the integration of village, town and nation into a single, broad-based developmental process. Urban development at the expense of the village should be kept in check. Agriculture should be diversified and industries decentralised. A more equitable distribution of wealth and resources, not only between sections of people but also between regions, would bring about a more balanced development.

5.3.2.4 An Ameliorative Approach to Urban Social Problems

Mukerjee was also interested in the **ameliorative** approach to the problems of working class. The industrialisation in India, which has been taking place during the last several decades, succeeded in bringing together people from diverse regions and languages. But the living conditions of workers in the urban centres such as Mumbai, Kanpur, Kolkata and Chennai were adversely affected by slum life. In the early days of industrialisation, urban slums gave rise to vices such as prostitution, gambling and crime. It was, therefore, necessary to bring about drastic changes in the lives of workers to improve their economic and moral conditions.

Today, many private industries and the public section units have provided facilities for the social welfare of a number of workers. Besides, the central and state governments have promulgated legislative acts which are binding on the employers. However, unorganised workers (i.e. who are underemployed, or temporarily employed) continue to live in slums. The rampant problems in the Indian slums at present are consumption of illicit liquor and drugs, crimes, and worsening housing conditions and civic facilities. Therefore, Mukerjee's analysis of the working class is relevant even for the present industrial organisation in India.

5.3.2.5 Theory of Values

As noted previously, Radhakamal Mukerjee had a sustained interest in the impact of values on human society. In the middle of the twentieth century, the notion of a value-free social science became dominant in academic circles both in the West and in India. Mukerjee held that a separation between "fact" and "value" was arbitrary. The facts and values could not be separated from each other in human interactions. Even a simple transaction like taking food, wearing dress or greeting others was a value-based or normatively conditioned behaviour. Each society has a distinctive culture and its values and norms guide the behaviour. Therefore, the positivistic tradition of the West which (on the analogy of sciences) wanted to separate facts from values, was not tenable to R.K. Mukerjee, especially in the study of a society like India. In the West, there was a compelling need to free scientific enquiry from the hold of church theology. Hence, it was perhaps necessary to hold that facts and values were separate.

Activity I

Note down at least five types of social behaviour that you perform in your daily life and state the values related with them. Some examples of social behaviour are wearing a sacred thread, going to the mosque, temple or church, touching the feet of elders, and so on.

Do you agree or disagree with Radhakamal Mukerjee's opinion that we cannot separate facts of social behaviour from the values which are associated with them? Write a note of one page about this and compare your note, if possible with those of other students at your Study Centres.

Mukerjee underlined two basic points in relation to values. Firstly, values are not limited only to religion or ethics. Economics, politics and law also give rise to values. In other words, human needs are transformed into social values and are internalised in the minds of members of society. Older civilisations such as India and China were stable. Hence, values were formed and organised into a hierarchy of higher and lower levels. Secondly, values are not a product of subjective or individualistic aspirations. They are objectively grounded in humankind's social aspirations and desires. In other words, values are both general and objective i.e., measurable by empirical methods. In general, the great civilisations of the world have subordinated instrumental or materialistic goals to intrinsic or spiritual goals.

To sum up, there are three salient points in Mukerjee's theory of values. Firstly, values satisfy the basic impulses of men and women in an orderly

fashion. This means that the selfish desires and interests are modified by collective living, wherein people give and take from each other. Secondly, values are generic in scope and include both individual and social responses and attitudes. This means that the values are shared by all through their symbolisation. The national flag, for example, is a common symbol for all individuals and groups who constitute a nation. Thirdly, in spite of diversities of human society, some universal values are discernible. The major religions of humankind are repositories of these universal values and norms. A dynamic approach to society will aim at an adaptation of inherited values to the needs of contemporary times.

5.3.2.5 Indian culture and civilisation

Mukerjee also wrote extensively on Indian art and architecture, history and culture. Mukerjee (1964) believed that Asiatic art aimed at collective developments and wrote, “Art in Asia became the torch-bearer of social and spiritual upheavals for millionsOriental art is most intensely charged with community feeling and is thus chiefly responsible for the historical continuity of Oriental Cultures”. In contrast, such artistic endeavour in the West had been dominated either by individualism or the feeling that art was an end in itself. This was just not conducive to either social solidarity or spiritual development.

Indian art was embedded in social or ethical sphere. R.K. Mukerjee wrote “The myriad temples, stupas and viharas of India bear witness to the link between art and ethics, religious and social values. Art in India is an enduring component of people’s interaction with each other which shows in concrete forms the active relationship between people’s aspirations and their artistic creativity”.

Indian art was constantly associated with religion. In his historical study of India Mukerjee was impressed by the non-aggressive nature of Indian religions such as Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism. The remarkable quality of Indian religions was their insistence on ultimate truth rather than on a particular set of beliefs or rituals. The Indian influences spread to many countries not through war or conquest but through friendship and goodwill. Right from the time of Ashoka, the peaceful “colonisation” of Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Tibet, and other countries of Outer India took place. Indian art and religion enriched the local cultures and by doing so gave rise to a new culture. For example, even today, different styles of Ramayana, the Hindu religious epic, are performed in these countries and several others like Indonesia, Sumatra, Trinidad. Thus, there was the harmony between foreign and indigenous elements. In India itself, the Hindu legal texts such as Dharmasastra are flexible codes to accommodate the ethnic diversities of India. Correctly interpreted, these texts provide a framework of values and norms for the orderly living of diverse groups. Thus, art and religion in India have been tolerant of diverse forms and styles.

5.3.2.6 Mukerjee’s concept of universal civilisation

Mukerjee’s general theory of society sought to explain the values of a universal civilisation. He used the term “civilisation” in an inclusive sense; culture was part of it. He proposed that human civilisation should be studied on three inter-related levels. These are:

i) **Biological evolution**

The biological evolution of human beings has facilitated the rise and development of civilisation. They have the capacity to change the environment as an active agent. The animals can only adapt to an environment; but human beings can mould it in different ways. The human beings, as a biological species, are capable of overcoming competition and conflict and attain cooperation (symbiosis).

ii) **Psycho-social dimension**

There is a psycho-social dimension. In social psychology the people are often depicted within the framework of race, ethnicity or nationhood. Human beings are seen as prisoners of little selves or egos, whose attitude is parochial or ethnocentric. On the contrary, human beings have the potentiality to overcome the narrow feelings and attain **universalisation** that is, to identify oneself with the larger collectivity such as one's nation or even as a member of the universe itself. In the process, common values help to subordinate the particularistic values to universal values. According to Mukerjee, **ethical relativism** which means that values vary from society to society) is not helpful in the present times; there is need for ethical universalism which affirms the unity of the humankind. In the new perspective, men and women become free moral agents who are capable of recognising the common strands binding the humanity. They are no longer dictated by divisiveness or relativity.

iii) **Spiritual dimension**

In Mukerjee's views, the civilisation has a spiritual dimension. Human beings are gradually scaling transcendental heights. That is, they are moving up to the ladder of spirituality by overcoming the constraints of biogenic and existential levels i.e. the physical and material limitations. In this endeavour, art, myth and religion provide the "impulsion" or the force to move upward. As the social sciences have hitherto ignored these cultural elements, they are incapable of providing a spiritual perspective. Incidentally, a similar observation was made by Karl Mannheim, a German sociologist, who wrote on sociology of culture. Mannheim noted that the Western social sciences had neglected cultural dimensions (arts, myths, symbols, etc.) under the rigid code of positivism or structural functionalism. This resulted in a lopsided view of social reality. According to Mukerjee, humankind's search for unity, wholeness and transcendence highlight the spirituality of civilisation. In this respect, he commended the Indian and Chinese civilisations which had endured as stable entities since sixth century B.C. Their strength is derived from their universal myths and values which foster spiritual quest.

Mukerjee noted with satisfaction that the search for universality was embodied in the Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations Organisation (U.N.O.) in the twentieth century. These rights upheld liberty and dignity of people, in whichever country they might be living. Mukerjee's emphasis on spirituality was not an escapist dream. He stated that human progress (in the ultimate sense) was possible only if glaring

disparities of wealth and power between countries were reduced. So long as poverty persisted or political oppression continued, further integral evolution of mankind was not a practical proposition. The persisting human awareness of misery in the world had stimulated the search for universal values and norms.

5.3.3 Important Works

Some of Radhakamal Mukerjee's important works in sociology are

- i) *The Regional Balance of Man* (1938)
- ii) *Indian Working Class* (1940)
- iii) *The Social Structure of Values* (1955)
- iv) *Philosophy of Social Sciences* (1960)
- v) *Flowering of Indian Art* (1964)

Check Your Progress 1

- i) Fill in the blanks in the following sentences:
 - a) Radhakamal Mukerjee was a pioneer in the areas such as social interdisciplinary research and the social structure of values.
 - b) He was against the of social sciences.
 - c) In his writings he combined sociology and history.

ii) Describe in about two lines what is meant by an ecological zone.
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iii) What is the regional sociology, according to Radhakamal Mukerjee? Describe in about ten lines.
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- iv) Discuss in about five lines Radhakamal Mukerjee's opinion about "facts" and "values".

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5.4 DHURJATI PRASAD MUKERJI (1894-1962)

D.P. Mukerji (1894-1962) was a Marxist who analysed Indian history in terms of a dialectical process. Tradition and modernity, colonialism and nationalism, individualism and collectivism could be seen as dialectically interacting with each other. In the next sub-section (5.4.0) we will give you a biographical sketch of D.P. Mukerji. This will help you to understand his central ideas in their proper perspective.

5.4.1 Biographical Sketch

Dhurjati Prasad Mukerji was popularly known as "D.P.". He was born in 1894 in a middle class Brahmin family of Bengal. It was during this period that the literary influence of Rabindranath Tagore, Bankim Chandra and Sarat Chandra Chatterjee was at its peak. There was renaissance of Bengali literature at this time.

D.P. Mukerji did his graduation from Bangbasi College, Bengal. First he was a student of history which included economics at that time, then he took a degree in economics. He was a man of letters in Bengali and wrote some fiction also but he did not pursue this line for long. He did not confine to the boundaries of a particular discipline. It was perhaps for this reason that he became a sociologist, as Sociology is the most comprehensive social science. He attained not only national but international fame as a sociologist.

In 1922 he joined the Lucknow University as a lecturer in Economics and Sociology. He was in his own words a Marxologist. His roots in middle class Brahmin family led him instinctively to blend Marxism with Indian tradition. D.P. Mukerji always thought that ideas of Karl Marx were relevant in India when adapted to conditions of Indian history and tradition. He, therefore, always emphasised the study of social processes and social movements.

He was born in the golden age of criticism and reflected this age in true senses in his own work. To every subject he brought critical criteria from as many fields as possible. He had the faculty of looking at every problem from a new angle. He was an art critic, music critic, a drama critic and a critic of life. In him we find a blend of Anglo-Bengalee culture.

D.P. Mukerji was a man of aesthetic sensibilities. He was interested in style, even in the style of his dress. He was a slim man who disliked gaining even an extra pound of weight. In thinking also he hated padding or writing

anything superfluous or irrelevant. His style of writing was sharp, spare and incisive. He was a sophisticated man who rarely revealed his emotions. For him, emotions should not be exhibited but should be fused with the intellectual process.

He loved to be a teacher and was very popular amongst his students. He encouraged dialogue and interchange of ideas with his students. Thus, he was co-student, a co-enquirer who never stopped learning. He was such an influence on his students that he lived in the minds of his students even after his death.

For sometimes D.P. Mukerji became the Director of Information when the Congress assumed office in U.P. His influence brought the spirit of an intellectual approach to public relations. He was also part of the foundation of the Bureau of Economics and Statistics. He returned in 1939 to the Lucknow University when Congress relinquished office on the war issue at the beginning of the Second World War. In 1947 he was appointed as a member of U.P. Labour Inquiry Committee. It was in 1951 that he was made a professor. This was a late recognition but D.P. never felt bitter about it.

A year before his retirement at Lucknow, in 1953, he was invited to head the Department of Economics at Aligarh. He stayed there for five years. He went to the Hague as a visiting professor of sociology at the International Institute of Social Studies. He was a founder member of the Indian Sociological Association and one of the members of its Managing Committee and its Editorial Board. He also represented the association at the International Sociological Association of which he became the Vice President.

He wrote several books and articles in diverse fields. After Independence he watched political movements with great interest but was not a politician in any sense. He was influenced by two national leaders, Rafi Ahmad Kidwai and Jawaharlal Nehru. He used to correspond with Nehru. As an intellectual he did not have a cloistered mind. He brought refinement to his subject. He was influenced by many but till the end he remained a scholar who influenced many others. He died of throat cancer in 1962. But as stated earlier, he survives through his students.

5.4.2 Central Ideas

Marxism, according to D.P. Mukerji, helped one to understand the historical developments well but it could not offer a satisfactory solution to human problems. That solution was to be found in the regeneration and reinterpretation of India's national culture. He was opposed to the positivism of modern social sciences which reduced individuals into biological or psychological units. The industrial culture of the West had turned individuals into self-seeking agents; the society in the West had become ethnocentric. By emphasising individuation (i.e., recognition of the roles and rights of the individual) positivism had uprooted the social anchors of humanity.

5.4.2.1 Role of tradition in Indian society

Mukerji held that tradition was the mainspring of culture. The individuals drew their nourishment from the tradition. They did not lose a sense of

purposes or direction. But tradition often became a deadweight, as in India. Also, people made fetish of it, that is, they idealised it and worshipped it. Cultural stagnation was bound to result on account of the people's uncritical attitude towards it. Therefore, individuation must also be encouraged. The individuals can recreate culture by infusing it with new vigour. The individual is to be neither totally free nor unfree. For the evolution of a healthy personality, there must be a balance between individuation and sociation. Sociation is the bond of the individual with society. Individual's freedom must not be anarchy but a creative expression of the tradition.

5.4.2.2 Integrated development of personality

Mukerji did not commend to Indians the positivistic construction of personality. The Western personality made a fetish of achievement. Science and technology had been harnessed to great improvements in the living conditions of masses. The capacity of human beings to control nature and use it to their advantage were the notable achievements of the modern age. However, the Western approach could not lead to an integrated development. For an integrated development of personality there was need for a balance between technological development and human freedom. Even a socialist society such as Soviet Russia had failed to evolve a balanced personality. There, the individuals had been dominated by the state or the political party.

D.P. Mukerji's dialecticism was rooted in humanism which cut across narrow ethnic or national consideration. In the West, the individuals had become either aggressive or docile. The Western progress was devoid of humanism. The Renaissance and Industrial Revolution had freed individuals from the grip of stagnant medieval tradition but at the same time reduced the humanist content of progress. The modern nationalism is essentially nurtured in the positivistic aspects of the West. It could not be an appropriate model for India. Besides, India's middle classes were a product of Western impact on India. They were uprooted from their own indigenous tradition. They had lost contact with the masses. India could become a modern nation if the middle classes reestablished their links with the masses. Only then a genuine development was possible. For D.P. Mukerji growth was a mere quantitative achievement, development was a qualitative term denoting value-based progress.

5.4.2.3 D.P. Mukerji's views on Unity in Diversity

D.P. Mukerji was involved in depicting Hindu-Muslim relations. His search for truth led him to discover humanistic and spiritual unity in the diversities of Indian culture. He was examining many of the areas within the broad framework of Hindu-Muslim interaction. There were three areas of interaction which were worthy of note. i) Politically, the Islamic kings ruled over the Hindu subjects from eleventh to seventeenth centuries A.D. in North India. At the same time, there were established alliances between Muslim rulers and Hindu rajas. Hence, there was a sense of partnership between Muslim rulers and Hindu subjects; this was more evident during the Mughal rule. ii) In economic relations, during the Islamic rule while the jagirdars (military chiefs) were Muslims, most of the zamindars were Hindus. These two groups shared many interests in common. Thus, together

these two classes formed an alliance. iii) Culturally, in literature, music, costumes, cultivation of fine arts, etc., there were reciprocal influences. Both Sufism and Bhaktism in the north encouraged mutual interactions. However, the Muslims and Hindus differed in their world view.

Mukerji noted that the Hindu mind thought in terms of cycles: the good and the bad succeeded each other. The Hindus had a fatalistic view. Further, the Hindu world view was the product of a distinctive territory, a subcontinent. Islam by contrast was a multi-ethnic, multi-national religion. Hindu approach to nationhood was idealistic, Islamic approach was pragmatic. For the Hindu freedom was a “birth right”; for the Muslim it was an opportunity. The Muslim view was non-cyclic and non-fatalistic. Hence the Muslim view favoured direct action to make the best use of a political crisis or opportunity.

5.4.2.4 D.P. Mukerji as an economist

D.P. Mukerji was by training an economist. His approach to economics was, however, distinct from that of other economists. He viewed the economic development in India in terms of historical and cultural specificities. The economic forces in India were influenced by social values. During ancient times, the king and the members of royal court did not own the lands. The powers conferred on the king were limited to fiscal obligations; that is to say, the tillers of land had to give a portion of their produce to the treasury as tax or revenue in return for the royal protection. The ownership of the land was mainly vested in the village councils. During the heyday of Buddhism, the Sangha (monastic organisation) often managed extensive lands, which were granted to them by kings. Although the individual monks (Bhikshus) could not possess or own property, the Sangha owned properties. One-sixth of the agricultural produce called as tax by the Sangha was utilised for the cultivation of learning and pursuit of ethical and spiritual goals.

Just as village lands were controlled by kin and caste groups, which were internally autonomous, even trade and banking in India were managed by kinship and caste networks in pre-modern times. The guilds which carried on regional trade were usually based on castes. Commercial banking was also controlled by castes. There were important money-lending Hindu families on the West coast whose influence was widespread especially during Mughal rule. Mukerji did not treat the merchants as mere parasites; on the contrary, he regarded them as those who established trade networks between urban centres and rural hinterland. But during the colonial rule they began exploiting as they shed their earlier cultural constraints. The Indian merchant princes often travelled to foreign countries to display their wares; thereby they linked India to the outside world not only through trade but through the spread of culture.

The British rule in India brought about widespread changes in Indian economy. The urban-industrial economy introduced by the British set aside not only the older institutional networks but also the traditional classes. This called for a new social adaptation. In the new set-up the educated middle classes of India's urban centres became the focal point of society. However, these middle classes were dominated by Western life styles and

thinking. The future of India would be secure if the middle classes reached out to the masses and established an active partnership with them in nation-building.

5.4.3 Important Works

Some of the important sociological works of D.P. Mukerji are:

- i) *Basic Concepts in Sociology* (1932)
- ii) *Personality and the Social Sciences* (1924)
- iii) *Modern Indian Culture* (1942)
- iv) *Problems of Indian Youths* (1946)
- v) *Diversities* (1958)

Out of these books, *Modern Indian Culture* (1942) and *Diversities* (1958) are his best known works. His versatility can be seen from his other contributions too, such as, his books,

- i) *Tagore: A Study* (1943)
- ii) *On Indian History* (1943)
- iii) *Introduction to Indian Music* (1943)

Check Your Progress 2

- i) Describe D.P. Mukerji's sociology in about six lines.
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- ii) Give the names of the two of D.P. Mukerji's major works in sociology.
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5.5 GOVIND SADASHIV GHURYE (1893-1984)

G.S. Ghurye, as you know, taught in the Department of Sociology, Bombay University. He was an ethnographer who studied tribes and castes of India using historical, Indological and statistical data. Let us first learn the biographical details about him. Then we will examine his central ideas and important works in sociology.

5.5.1 Biographical Sketch

In this sub-section we have described the biography of G.S. Ghurye based on his own book (1973) *I and Other Explorations*. Govind Sadashiv Ghurye was born on 12th Dec. 1893 in a small town called Malvan on the west coast of India. Malvan is some two-hundred miles away from Mumbai. He belonged to a fairly prosperous Brahmin family, which owned shops and other property. He was named after his grandfather who died the same year when he was born. His family was very religious and well known in that region for piety.

Due to loss in business and the death of his grandfather G.S. Ghurye's father had to take up a job. His job proved to be very lucky for the family. Ghurye was one of four children of his parents. He had an elder brother whom he admired very much, another brother and a sister.

He joined school in Malvan. In 1905 his "thread ceremony" was performed. At this time he had completed his fifth standard examination and joined an English school. His mother tongue was Marathi and his early schooling was also in Marathi. But knowledge of Sanskrit was there in the family. His grandfather knew Sanskrit. He too, started learning Sanskrit. The religious atmosphere of the family and its reputation for piety and learning had a deep influence on G.S. Ghurye. He grew up learning English and received modern education but his roots in Hindu culture and tradition were very deep.

He was sent by his mother to complete his matriculation from Junagad in Gujarat. Here his eldest brother was already studying. He became a student of the Bahauddin College in 1912. Here he became very proficient in Sanskrit. He joined Bombay university which used to have an entrance exam then. He cleared this examination with twenty other boys. There were no girls at that time but later a Christian girl joined their class. He had obtained first position in his college. In the university he secured fourth position. His brother was teaching physics at the university when Sadashiva joined it. G.S. Ghurye was a very hard working student and in spite of the short phases of illness he managed to do very well in his studies.

In 1916 when G.S. Ghurye had completed his B.A. examination and stood first in it, he was married to a girl of a fairly rich family of Vengurla (Maharashtra), of his own sub-caste. His parents named his wife Rukmini after the marriage as per the practice amongst the Maharashtrians. But Ghurye reverted back to calling her Sajubai, which was her original name when they established their own household in 1923. He was against the practice of changing the personal name of a girl after marriage. He was also against the traditional practice of tattooing the skin because he considered it barbaric. For his B.A. result he received the Bhau Daji Prize, named after the great Indologist Bhau Daji Lad who was one of the first physicians of Mumbai, trained in the western system of medicine. G.S. Ghurye had secured seventy four per cent marks in Sanskrit in his college.

Sadashiv was appointed a Fellow of the college and completed his M.A. degree. The languages he chose in his M.A. course were English, Sanskrit and later he took Pali. He also did a course which was newly introduced in the university on comparative philology. He got first class in M.A. also.

He was awarded the Chancellor's Gold Medal, a top most honour in the whole university. His success was unique in the history of the university because nobody before him had ever got first class in M.A. with Sanskrit.

He later applied for a scholarship to go abroad for studies in sociology, which the Bombay university had advertised earlier. He was asked to meet Prof. Patrick Geddes of sociology in Bombay university. During his interactions with Prof. Geddes he wrote an essay on "Bombay as an Urban Centre" which was highly appreciated by Geddes. This enabled Ghurye to get the foreign study scholarship.

Ghurye went to England by ship. He became a student of L.T. Hobhouse. Besides many other people, he met Dr. A.C. Haddon who was the world famous ethnologist studying preliterate cultures. It was Haddon who introduced Ghurye to Dr. W.H.R. Rivers whose influence on Ghurye was considerable. Rivers was at the pinnacle of his intellectual glory and was founder of the Cambridge School of Psychology. Rivers later came to India and studied a polyandrous tribe called the Todas of the Nilgiri Hills.

Ghurye wrote several articles in sociology at this time and got them published in the *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* and in the journal, *Anthropos*. He wrote his most important work, *Caste and Race in India*, during the 1930s. He was awarded the degree of Ph.D. from Cambridge university. He came back to India after W.H.R. Rivers' death.

He worked in Calcutta for 7 months on a scholarship which he received from Bombay University. Then he and K.P. Chattopadhyaya of Calcutta University got appointments as Readers in Sociology at Bombay university, in 1924. He got this appointment due to the great respect and recognition given to him by the late Dr. W.H.R. Rivers. G.S. Ghurye joined the Bombay Asiatic Society as a member in the same year. He guided several students under him. Some of his students are now famous sociologists. They made significant contributions to the growth of sociology and social anthropology in India.

G.S. Ghurye was made a Professor of Sociology in 1934, ten years after he joined the Bombay university as a Reader and the Head of the Department of Sociology. He was elected the President of the anthropological section of the Indian Science Congress in 1934. In the same year he was elected as the nominee of the Royal Asiatic Society by the Managing Committee of its Bombay branch. In 1942 he became the President of the Bombay Anthropological Society and continued to hold this position till 1948. He wrote several books and articles and his knowledge of Sanskrit enabled him to study the religious scriptures in the context of Indian society. He studied castes and tribes, rural-urbanisation, about the Indian Sadhus, about Indian costumes and so on. During his life time he won several top honours accorded to any intellectual in India. He became not only a nationally but internationally known sociologist of India. He died in the year 1984.

5.5.2 Central Ideas

G.S. Ghurye's contributions to Indian sociology were mainly in the areas of ethnography of castes and tribes, rural-urbanisation, religious phenomena,

social tensions and Indian art. Let discuss his ideas in the following sub-sub-section.

5.5.2.1 Caste and Kinship in India

In the early 1930s, G.S. Ghurye published a book, *Caste and Race in India* which still is an important source book on Indian castes. In this work, he examined the caste system from historical, comparative and integrative perspectives. Later, he made a comparative study of kinship in Indo-European cultures. In his studies of kinship and caste, Ghurye emphasised two points: (a) the kin and caste networks of India had parallels in some other countries also; and (b) the kinship and caste in India served as integrative framework. The evolution of Indian society was based on the integration of diverse racial or ethnic groups through these networks.

The gotra and charana were kin-categories of Indo-European languages which systematised the rank and status of the people. These categories were derived from names of the sages of the past. These sages were the real or eponymous founders of the gotra and charana. In India descent has not always been traced to the blood tie; the lineages were often based on spiritual descent from sages of the past. Outside the kinship we might notice the guru-shishya relationship, which is also based on spiritual descent; the disciple is proud to trace his descent from a master. Likewise, caste and sub-caste integrated people into a ranked order based on norms of purity-pollution. The rules of endogamy and commensality which marked off castes from each other, were in fact integrative instruments to organise them into a totality or collectivity. The Hindu religion provided the conceptual and ritualistic guidelines for this integration. The Brahmins in India played a key role in legitimising the caste ranks and orders through their interpretation of Dharmashastras, which were the compendia of sacred codes.

5.5.2.2 New Roles of Caste in India

Ghurye's work on caste contained some interesting speculations, which have been proved to be correct. Firstly, he noted that the Indian castes had fostered voluntary association for furtherance of education and reformist aims. The Nadars, Reddys and Kammas of South India, Saraswat Brahmins of Maharashtra and Vaisyas, and Kayasthas of North India, to mention only a few, founded caste associations. Ghurye presumed that in the future they would give rise to a political consciousness based on caste ties. In the post-Independent India, the caste associations have been quite vocal about getting political concessions to their members. In the later decades of twentieth century, Rajni Kothari, a political analyst, extensively analysed the caste associations. Unlike Ghurye, Kothari recognised the positive roles of these caste associations such as taking up welfare activities, etc. According to Ghurye, they have served to mainly articulate the people's political aspirations in a democratic framework. Secondly, Ghurye referred to the various agitations of the backward classes for better privileges. These struggles seemed to be undermining the integrity of the Indian society. Thus, the caste system was becoming "pluralist" in the sense that each caste was in competition or conflict with the other for bigger share of the nation's wealth. Hence, according to Ghurye this scramble for privileges was damaging the unity of society.

5.5.2.3 Study of tribes in India

Ghurye's works on the tribes were general as well as specific. He wrote a general work on scheduled tribes in which he dwelt with the historical, administrative and social dimensions of Indian tribes. He also wrote on specific tribes such as the Kolis of Maharashtra. Ghurye was of the view that the Indian tribes were like "backward Hindus". Their backwardness was due to their imperfect integration into Hindu society. The Santhals, Bhils, Gonds, etc. who live in South-Central India are examples of it. Ghurye (1963) wrote, "While sections of these tribes are properly integrated in the Hindu society, very large sections, in fact the bulk of them are rather loosely integrated..... Under the circumstances, the only proper description of these peoples is that they are the imperfectly integrated classes of Hindu society".

For Ghurye, the incorporation of Hindu values and norms into tribal life was a positive development. With increasing contact with the Hindu social groups the tribes had slowly absorbed certain Hindu values and style of life and came to be considered part of the Hindu caste society. The tribes gave up liquor-drinking, received education and improved their agriculture under Hindu influence. In this respect, Hindu voluntary organisations such as Ramakrishna Mission and Arya Samaj played a constructive role. In his later works on north-eastern tribes, Ghurye documented secessionist trends. He felt that unless these were held in check, the political unity of the country would be damaged.

5.5.2.4 Rural-urbanisation in India

Ghurye was interested in the process of rural-urbanisation. He held the view that the urbanisation in India was not a simple function of industrial growth. In India, the process of urbanisation, at least till 1980s, started from within the rural area itself. Ghurye quoted Sanskrit texts and documents to illustrate the growth of urban centres from the need for markets felt in rural hinterland. In other words, owing to the expansion of agriculture, more and more markets were needed to exchange the surplus in food grains. Hence, in many rural regions, one part of a big village was converted into a market; in turn, this led to a township which developed administrative, judicial and other institutions. We may add here that urban centres were also based on feudal **patronage**. In the past, demand of royal courts for silk cloth, weapons, jewellery, metal artifacts led to the growth of urban centres such as Varanasi, Kanchipuram, Jaipur, Moradabad etc.

In sum, Ghurye's approach to "rural-urbanisation" showed the indigenous source of urbanism. The growth of metropolitan centres during colonial times altered the Indian urban life. The towns and cities were no longer the outlets for agricultural produce and handicrafts; but they became the major manufacturing centres, which used rural hinterland for producing raw-materials and turned it into a market for selling industrial products. Thus, metropolis came to dominate the village economy. In contrast to previous pattern, now the urbanisation has started making inroads into the rural hinterland.

Ghurye made the study of a village in Pune district of Maharashtra to highlight the continuity of the social structure. This village named Lonikand

had been studied by a British officer in 1819. He described its general layout, economic infrastructure, caste composition, market transactions and political and religious dispositions. The re-survey of the village made by Ghurye in 1957 did not reveal any far-reaching differences in the demographic, economic and social dimensions of the village. Besides, he found that the layout of the village corresponded to the pattern laid down in a text of antiquity. He also noted that the village did not have a very well-knit social structure; there were loose strands in its social fabric. In spite of it the village had survived as a viable unit.

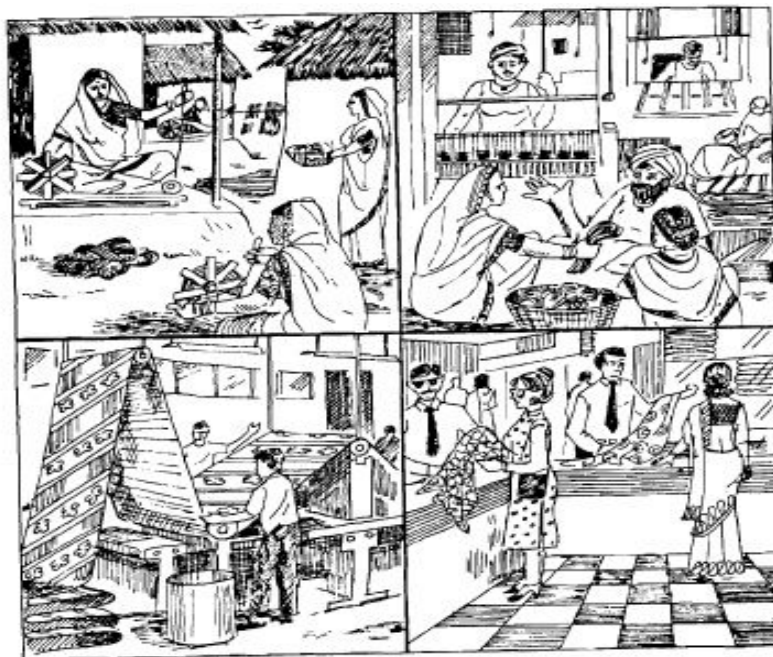


Figure 5.1: RURAL - URBANISATION

Activity 2

Read carefully the paragraphs in sub-section 5.5.2 on central ideas of G.S. Ghurye on rural-urbanisation in India. Discuss with two elders about the kind of changes they have seen taking place in their city, town or village after the colonial period. Ask them about the changes in the layout of the village, that is, how it has been planned, where the market is situated, where the residential areas are situated and so on.

Write a note of about a page on the – “Rural-Urban growth in My City or Town or Village”. Compare your note, if possible, with notes of other students at your Study Centre.

5.5.2.4 Religious Beliefs and Practices in India

Ghurye made original contributions to the study of Indian religious beliefs and practices. He wrote three books on this in the period between 1950 and 1965. He argued that the religious consciousness in ancient India, Egypt and Babylonia was centered around the temples. There were also similarities between Indian and Egyptian patterns of worship and temple architecture. In his work on the role of Gods in Indian religion, Ghurye traced the rise of major deities such as Shiva, Vishnu and Durga to the need to integrate local or sub-regional beliefs into a macro-level system of worship. The diverse ethnic groups in India were integrated into a religious complex around these deities. Political or public patronage was often the basis for the spread of popular cults in India. The Ganesha festival in

Maharashtra and Durga festival in Bengal gained popularity due to the efforts of nationalists such as B.G. Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal who were using religious idiom for the propagations of political ideas during the freedom struggle. Even in the beginning of the twenty first century, these festivals have retained some political overtones.

5.5.2.5 Role of the Sadhu in Indian tradition

In his work, *Indian Sadhus*, Ghurye (1953) examined the paradoxical nature of renunciation in India. In Indian culture, the Sadhu or Sannyasin is supposed to be detached from all caste norms, social conventions, etc. In fact, he is outside “the pale of society”. It is the usual practice among Shaivites to conduct a “mock funeral” of one who is entering the path of renunciation. It means that he is “dead” to society but is “reborn” in spiritual terms. Yet, interestingly enough since the time of Shankara, the eighth century reformer, Hindu society has been more or less guided by the Sadhus. These Sadhus are not individual hermits. Most of them are organised into monastic orders which have distinctive traditions. The monastic organisation in India was a product of Buddhism and Jainism. Shankara introduced it into Hinduism.

Indian renouncers have acted as the arbiters of religious disputes, patronised learning of scriptures and even defended religion against external attacks. So, renunciation has been a constructive force in Hindu society. Ghurye considered in detail the different groups of Sadhus. Important among them were the Shaivite Dashnamis (literal meaning: ten orders) and Vaishnavite Bairagis. Both these groups had the Naga (militant naked ascetics) contingents which were ready to fight off those who threatened the Hindu religion. Incidentally, Bankim Chandra Chatterjee’s Bengali novel, *Anand Math* recounts the story of a group of Shaivite monks who put up an armed struggle against the British forces in the nineteenth century. They were no doubt defeated by the British but they thereby revealed their staunch commitment to Hinduism. These Sadhus who assembled on a large scale at Kumbh Mela were the very microcosm of India; they came from diverse regions, spoke different languages but belonged to common religious orders. Asceticism, according to Ghurye, was not a relic of the past but a vital aspect of the current practices of Hinduism. The well-known ascetics of the recent times, Vivekanand, Dayanand Saraswati and Sri Aurobindo worked for the betterment of Hinduism.

5.5.2.6 Indian art and architecture

Ghurye was also keenly interested in Indian art. According to him, the Hindu, Jain and Buddhist artistic monuments shared common elements. By contrast, Hindu and Muslim monuments were grounded in diverse value systems. The Indian temples were indigenous in inspiration. The Veda, epics and Purana provided them with popular themes. But Muslim art was Persian or Arabic and had no roots in this soil. He did not agree with the view that the Muslim monuments in India represented a synthesis. The Hindu elements remained decorative in Muslim buildings. By contrast, the Rajput architecture retained its commitment to Hindu ideals, in spite of political control of Rajasthan by Muslim rulers. Ghurye traced the costumes in India from the ancient to the present time. He drew upon Hindu, Buddhist

and Jain artistic works (architecture and sculpture) to illustrate the variations in costume over the ages.

Radhakamal Mukerjee, as noted earlier, wrote on Indian art. There was, however, a difference in his approach to art. Mukerjee viewed it as a vehicle of values, norms and ideals of a civilisation which had thrived through centuries. Ghurye, by contrast, was looking at art as a specifically Hindu configuration. Ghurye wrote that Rajput architecture was the assertion of Hindu faith in its own destiny. Mukerjee looked at the same phenomenon of artistic activity somewhat differently. He held that the Rajputs were fervently engaged in building monuments which they believed would outlast them as their artistic heritage. Thus, in spite of their continuous battles with Muslim overlords, they used their resources to patronise art.

5.5.2.7 Hindu-Muslim relationships

Ghurye's works often discussed Hindu-Muslim relationships. He regarded Hindus and Muslims as separate groups, with little possibility of mutual give and take.

The pro-Hindu stance of Ghurye was based on the conflicts engendered by nearly seven centuries of Islamic rule in India. The forced conversions, destruction of places of worship, etc. no doubt damaged the Hindu psyche. Looking critically at Ghurye's views, it is necessary to add here that the predatory acts of Muslim rulers find no sanction in Koran. Islam does not advocate violence. What happened was that political expediency rather than commitment to faith made the Muslim rulers use force against their subjects. Besides, Hindu-Muslim interactions have been culturally productive and socially beneficial. Sufism stimulated Bhakti movement in India; the growth of Urdu literature, Hindustani classical music and shared patterns of life style showed that Islamic rule had a positive side. Communal tensions were in fact mainly a product of colonial rule. It was a political strategy of the British to divide the Indian society, especially the Hindus and the Muslims, after the 1857 Mutiny so that they could not fight them as a united force. Communalism also received a fillip by the expansion of urbanism due to conflict of interest. Mostly, the communal riots have almost always taken place in India's urban centres due to political and economic reasons under the garb of religion. Ghurye's works have focused on the disturbances during his life-time. In reality, in pre-British times there was good cooperation between the two communities.

5.5.3 Important Works

Some of the important works of Ghurye in sociology are

- i) *Indian Sadhus* (1953)
- ii) *Family and Kin in Indo-European Culture* (1961)
- iii) *Gods and Men* (1962)
- iv) *Anatomy of a Rururban Community* (1962)
- v) *Scheduled Tribes* (1963)
- vi) *Caste and Race in India* (1969, Fifth Edition)

Some of his other works which show us the range of his interests are

- i) *Bharatnatyam and its Costume* (1958)
- ii) *Cities and civilisation* (1962)
- iii) *Indian costume* (1962, 2nd Edn.)

Check Your Progress 3

- i) Name the British anthropologist who influenced G.S. Ghurye very much. Use about one line.

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- ii) What was the approach of Ghurye in studying caste in Indian society? Describe using about two lines.

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- iii) Give in about three lines the opinion of Ghurye regarding tribes in India.

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- iv) Describe Ghurye's approach to the study of urban growth in India. Use about six lines.

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5.6 LET US SUM UP

In this unit you have learnt about the three pioneers of Indian Sociology, namely Radhakamal Mukerjee (1889-1968), Dhurjati Prasad Mukerji (1894-1962), and Govind Sadashiv Ghurye (1893-1984).

You learnt about the biographical details of the three thinkers. We have described some of their major ideas in the field of sociology. All three thinkers have dealt with the study of society in their own ways. These thinkers have also studied Indian cultural tradition, art and civilisation. Finally, we have listed some of the important works of the three thinkers.

5.7 KEY WORDS

Ameliorative	A measure which leads to the welfare or betterment of a social group
Canonical	The laws, rules or general principles of a religion
Compartmentalisation	To divide anything into separate sections. In the unit, it refers to the limits put to the boundary of a social science like history, economics, political science or sociology.
Ecological	The study of plants, animals people or institutions related with the environment
Ethical Relativism	Variation of values from one culture to another is called ethical relativism.
Mono-cultivation	The cultivation of one cash crop year after year which depletes the soil of its nutrients making it infertile
Patronage	The protection and encouragement given to certain arts, crafts and architecture by a ruler, landlord or a rich and powerful person
Renaissance	It means a rebirth or revival in a literal sense but it also refers to the great revival of art, literature and learning in Europe in the fourteenth, fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries.
Universalisation	The process in which culture specific values become part of the value system of a larger society, such as a nation or the universe.

5.8 FURTHER READING

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5.9 SPECIMEN ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

i) a) ecology

- b) compartmentalisation
 - c) economics
- ii) An ecological zone is a result of the combination of a certain kind of geological, geographical and biological factors.
- iii) Radhakamal Mukerjee's interest in social ecology led him to the study of regions in India. He called this study regional sociology. According to Mukerjee, if the regions in modern India were developed to the extent that they became self-sufficient then India will benefit as a whole. But if some regions lag behind they will be dominated by the developed regions and this will result in a lop-sided development of India.
- iv) Radhakamal Mukerjee was against the Western trend of separating "facts" from "values" as done by the positivists in sociology. According to him "facts" and "values" are inseparable elements of human interaction and such behaviour as taking or giving food, wearing a dress, etc. are value-based and normatively determined by the society.

Check Your Progress 2

- i) D.P. Mukerji was keenly interested in social processes taking place in a rapidly changing society like India. He was a Professor of sociology at Lucknow University which he had joined in 1922. He was trained in both economics and history and he too like Radhakamal Mukerjee combined sociology with economics and history. He called himself a Marxologist due to his belief that Marx's ideas were very relevant when adapted to Indian history and civilisation.
- ii) Two of his important works are
- a) *Modern Indian Culture* (1942)
 - b) *Diversities* (1958)
- iii) a) uprooted
- b) Marxist
 - c) spiritual

Check Your Progress 3

- i) The British anthropologist, who influenced G.S. Ghurye deeply, was Dr. W.H.R. Rivers.
- ii) Ghurye studied the historical, comparative and integrative aspects of caste system in India. His approach was ethnographic, using historical, Indological and statistical data.
- iii) According to G.S. Ghurye, the various tribes such as Bhils, Gonds, Santhals, etc. in India are like "backward Hindus". The backwardness of these tribes is a result of their imperfect integration in the Hindu society.

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- iv) The process of urbanisation in India, according to Ghurye, is unique since it is not as a result of industrial growth. In India urbanisation process began from the rural areas because of the need for exchanging surplus food grains. Markets developed in the rural areas slowly and became centres of small towns with their own administrative, judicial machinery and other institutions. These urban centres were also sometimes dependent on feudal patronage, some examples of such towns are Varanasi, Kanchipuram, Jaipur, Moradabad, etc.

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