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Q1(a)

Write a note on G.S.Ghurye's Indological perspective of understanding Indian society.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2018 · Sociology GS 2 · 10 marks · Perspectives on the study of Indian society

Perspectives on the study of Indian society: Indology (G.S. Ghurye); Structural functionalism (M.N. Srinivas); Marxist sociology (A.R. Desai).

Core demand of the question

- Write a note on G.S. Ghurye's Indological perspective of understanding Indian society
- Keep the note to a 10-mark length

Revision summary

Ghurye's Indological perspective reads India through texts and **Hindu civilisation**.

Caste and Race listed structural features and rejected a crude race theory.

Tribe was treated as a backward Hindu awaiting assimilation.

Field sociologists showed living rank and power that books do not fix.

Class and minority self-rule further limit the method.

Introduction

G. S. Ghurye read Indian society through Sanskrit texts, historical reconstruction, and a civilisational Hindu frame. His Indological perspective made caste a long structure rather than a colonial snapshot. It also risked treating living groups as footnotes to the book.

Body**What the perspective is**

- Indology here means using textual and historical materials as the main map of social order.
- **Caste and Race in India** listed segmentation, hierarchy, feeding and marriage rules, disabilities, and restricted occupation.
- Tribe was often a backward Hindu; integration meant **Hinduisation**.

What it gave sociology

- A professional Indian voice against a crude racial theory of caste.
- A grid that law and census could recognise, which reformers also needed.

Limits

- M. N. Srinivas's **Rampura** field view showed dominant caste and Sanskritization as interaction, not as shastric command.
- Andre Beteille's Sripuram split caste, class, and power.
- A. R. Desai put class and the colonial path first.

- Muslim, Christian, and Adivasi self-definitions sit badly inside a Hindu civilisational whole.

Flow diagram

Indology texts history -> Ghurye caste features
Ghurye caste features -> Hinduisation of tribe
Srinivas Beteille field -> Critique
Desai class -> Critique

Conclusion

Ghurye's Indology is a historical and textual method for caste and civilisation. Use it as an archive. Do not let it replace field relations, class, or constitutional plurality.

Facts & figures

Caste and Race in India

Ghurye's major book on caste features, history, and anti-racial argument.

Hinduisation

His thesis that many tribes are backward Hindus to be integrated into Hindu society.

Rampura

Srinivas's field correction: dominant caste as observed power.

Six features

Ghurye's teaching list of caste as a structural system.