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Q1(d)

Write a note on Ghurye's conception of caste in India

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2019 · Sociology GS 2 · 10 marks · Challenges of Social Transformation

Challenges of Social Transformation: Crisis of development: displacement, environmental problems and sustainability; Poverty, deprivation and inequalities; Violence against women; Caste conflicts; Ethnic conflicts, communalism, religious revivalism; Illiteracy and disparities in education.

Core demand of the question

- Write a note on Ghurye's conception of caste in India
- Keep the note to a 10-mark length

Revision summary

Ghurye listed caste's structural features from texts and history.

He rejected a simple racial theory of caste.

Tribe was often a backward Hindu in his integration thesis.

Field sociologists showed living power that books do not fix.

Class and Adivasi politics limit his civilisational whole.

Introduction

G. S. Ghurye conceived caste as a historical Hindu structure with listed features, not as a mere racial leftover. His Indology made caste the spine of Indian society.

Body**Features and history**

- He listed segmental division, hierarchy, restrictions on feeding and marriage, civil and religious disabilities, and lack of unrestricted occupation.
- **Caste and Race in India** rejected a crude racial theory, yet kept Aryan and Brahmanical organisation as historical keys.
- **Endogamy** and commensal rules make caste a closed reproduction of groups.

Society, tribe, and nation

- **For Ghurye, caste is civilisational:** Hindu society is a graded whole. Tribe is often a backward Hindu awaiting integration.
- Cities, sadhus, and family appear in his work, so caste is not only a village custom.

Limit

- M. N. Srinivas's field view showed dominant caste and Sanskritization as observed processes texts do not dictate.
- Andre Beteille split caste, class, and power. A. R. Desai put class first. Adivasi politics refuse **Hinduisation** as destiny.

Flow diagram

Indology history -> Caste features endogamy
Caste features endogamy -> Hinduisation of tribe
Field class Adivasi -> Critique of Ghurye

Conclusion

Ghurye's caste is a historical, feature-rich Hindu structure. It is a necessary archive of disabilities and **endogamy**. It is not a sufficient map of living rank, class, or tribal self-rule.

Facts & figures

Caste and Race in India

Ghurye's major statement on features, history, and race theories of caste.

Endogamy

Closed marriage that reproduces jati as a hereditary group.

Hinduisation

His view that many tribes should be absorbed into Hindu society.

Srinivas contrast

Rampura replaced book features with dominant caste as a field fact.

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