

Quadrant II –Notes

Programme: Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science

Subject: Geography

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Course Title: Social and Cultural Geography

Unit: III– Races of the World

Module Name: Socio-Cultural Regions in India

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Notes:

Socio-Cultural Region:

A socio-cultural region is a geographical area over which degrees of homogeneity in Socio-Cultural traits are identified. It is a region where people speak the same languages, practice the same religion, observing similar type of work and live in a similar type of community groups. Language, religion, customs, and traditions are some of the important elements of culture.

Characteristics of Socio-Cultural Regions:

- a) A unique combination of Socio-Cultural features should generally pervade the area to be organized as a Socio-Cultural entity.
- b) The Socio-Cultural features must be different from the neighboring area for recognition and demarcation of the boundary.

Various Socio-Cultural realms have been identified on the basis of Cultural types which includes variations in economic activities, Social customs, traditional values, dress patterns, and language .

Socio-Cultural Regions of India:

1. The Ladakhi – Buddhist Cultural Region :

- It has the dominance of Buddhists and the Ladakhi language. There are Gompas and Monasteries in this region. Leh and Dhramshala are the important sacred and cultural centers of this region.

2. The Kashmiri – Muslim Cultural Region:

- It stretches over the valley of Kashmir and northern parts of Jammu (Doda district etc.) and southern parts of Ladakh (Kargil) divisions. It is a predominantly Muslim-dominated region in which Kashmiri is the main language. Hindus and Sikhs though in minority, speak Kashmiri and follow the Kashmiri cultural traditions.

3. The Sikh – Gurumukhi Cultural Region:

- It stretches over the state of Punjab and the Union Territories of Chandigarh, this region has the majority of Sikhs who speak Punjabi language. The Hindus are in minority. This region is characterized by Gurudwaras in almost all the villages and towns. The Golden Temple situated in the city of Amritsar is a sacred place and an important pilgrimage centre for religious people.

4. The Kinnauri – Dev – Bhumi Cultural Region (Himachal Pradesh and Uttarkhand):

- This region sprawls over the mountainous parts of Himachal and Uttarkhand. It is called the Dev – Bhumi in which there are many religious shrines (Kedarnath, Badrinath, Haridwar, etc.). In the region of Himachal, Kinnauri is the dominant language, while in Uttarkhand Hindi is the language of the masses.

5. The Hindu – Hindi Cultural Region:

- This region covers the states of Bihar, Haryana, MP, Rajasthan, southern parts of Uttarkhand, and Uttar Pradesh. It is the Hindi heartland with dominance of the Hindu religion. In the western UP and in urban centres, Muslims constitute a significant minority. Sikhs and Christians are also sprinkled, mainly in the urban areas like Delhi, Kanpur, Lucknow, Varanasi, Meerut, Agra, and Allahabad.

6. The Mixed Cultural Region of North East India:

- It stretches across the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura. It is a region of mixed culture in which there are areas of dominance of Hindus, Christians, Muslims and Tribal religion. There is a great diversity in the languages, religions, customs, folk-dances, music, and folk medicine.

7. The Bengali Cultural Region:

- It spreads over West Bengal and the adjacent regions of Jharkhand and Bihar. This region has the dominance of Bengali speaking people. The main religion of the people is Hinduism, while Muslims constitute a significant minority in isolated pockets.

8. The Tribo – Hindu Cultural Region

- This cultural region spreads over Chhotanagpur Plateau. Most of the people belong to the Hindu religion, while Christians are also significant in number. Most of the people speak the Hindi language.

9. The Dravido Cultural Region

- This region sprawls over Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu. The people belong to the Palaeo – Mediterranean race and speak Dravidian language. The major languages are Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, and Kannada.

10. The Marathi Hindu Cultural Region:

- It stretches over Maharashtra, parts of Gujarat, Goa, and the adjacent regions of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. This region has the dominance of the Marathi language and Hindu population. Concentration of Muslims and Buddhists is in isolated pockets.