# BSOE 142: INDIAN SOCIOLOGICAL TRADITIONS

## Tutor Marked Assignment

**Course Code: BSOE 142**
**Assignment Code: BSOE-142/ASST/TMA/2026-27**
**Total Marks: 100**

There are three Sections in the Assignment. You have to answer all the questions.

### Section I

**Answer the following Descriptive Category questions in about 500 words each.**

1. Compare the sociological perspectives of D.P. Mukerji and A.R. Desai on understanding Indian society. 20

2. Discuss social antecendents of Indian Sociological thought with reference to the contribution of Benoy Kumar Sarkar. 20

### Section II

**Answer the following Middle Category questions in about 250 words each.**

3. Explain the process of social change with reference to M.N. Srinivas's ideas of Sanskritization and Westernization. 10

4. Discuss the contribution of feminist sociologists to the development of Indian sociological traditions. 10

5. Explain A R Desai’s approach to the understanding of nationalism in India. 10

### Section III

**Answer the following Short Category questions in about 100 words each.**

6. What is the Indological approach in Indian sociology? 06

7. Write a short note on the Bombay School of Sociology. 06

8. What were G.S. Ghurye's views on tribes in India? 06

9. Outline the distinguishing feature of Ramakrishna Mukherjee mean by, ‘sociology of Indian Sociology’? 06

10. In what way does caste influence kinship organization? Explain with reference to the viewpoint of Irawati Karwe. 06

## 1. Compare the sociological perspectives of D.P. Mukerji and A.R. Desai on understanding Indian society. 20

### Answer

Indian society has a long history of caste, village communities, religious traditions, colonial intervention and modern economic change. D.P. Mukerji and A.R. Desai were major Indian sociologists who tried to understand this society without mechanically copying Western theories. Both paid serious attention to history and to the changes brought by British rule and modernity. Yet their theoretical starting points, understanding of tradition and explanation of social transformation were significantly different.

### D.P. Mukerji: tradition and historical experience

Dhurjati Prasad Mukerji argued that the study of Indian society must begin with its own historical and cultural traditions. For him, tradition did not mean an unchanging collection of customs. It included inherited values, institutions, practices and modes of collective life that were continually reinterpreted through interaction and conflict. Indian modernity could therefore not be understood as a simple replacement of tradition by Western civilization.

Mukerji preferred an interpretative and historically sensitive sociology. He stressed the importance of understanding the meanings that people attach to social institutions. India's social structure, in his view, developed through the encounter of different traditions, including Hindu, Buddhist, Islamic and Western influences. These encounters produced tensions but also forms of accommodation and synthesis. The sociologist must study both the continuity of inherited cultural patterns and their modification through changing circumstances.

Mukerji was interested in the Indian middle class, the intelligentsia, nationalism and the consequences of colonial modernity. He considered the middle class important because its members had received Western education while remaining connected to Indian social life. However, he also criticised its tendency to imitate Western values without sufficiently understanding the experiences of ordinary people. A meaningful modernization required critical engagement with indigenous traditions and collective needs.

His approach is often called a dialectical understanding of tradition and change. Social development comes from tensions within traditions and between inherited institutions and new circumstances. This account allows us to examine caste reforms, religious movements, education and nationalism as connected historical processes rather than as isolated phenomena.