

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. These shapes are primarily located on the left and right sides of the frame, leaving a large white central area for text.

Indological Discourse
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Indological Discourse

- ▶ Meaning of Indology _
- ▶ Study of Indian society and culture on the basis of accounts of travelers, religious literature and scriptures written in Sanskrit, Persian, Arabic languages
- ▶ Adopted a Historical and Comparative Approach
- ▶ First hand observation of Indian society and Secondary Analysis of Sanskrit texts
- ▶ Accounts of Megasthenes, Al-Biruni, Abul Fazl Allami, European adventurers
- ▶ Systematic accounts only from late Eighteenth century/early nineteenth century

Basic Assumption of Indologists

- ▶ India had a glorious past as described in sacred books written in ancient times. Contain Indian cultural and philosophical traditions
- ▶ These ancient books reveal the real ideas of the Indian culture and society. One must understand these books to chart out the future development of India.
- ▶ India is one. Its unity lies in ideas and values and therefore not easy to define.

Influence of Indological Perspective

- ▶ With the growing knowledge of Persian, Sanskrit and regional languages a comprehensive analysis of the society and culture of India was possible. European scholars like William Jones, Thomas Colebrooke and Max Muller were followers of Indology.
- ▶ Founding fathers of Indian Sociology like G. S. Gurye, Louis Dumont, S.V. Ketkar etc. were also influenced. They turned to classical texts for understanding phenomena like caste, family, kinship, culture, social relationships etc.
- ▶ Writings of other Indian scholars like A. K. Coomarswamy, Radhakamal Mukherji and D. P. Mukherji also reflect the Indological perspective
- ▶ Louis Dumont's work Homo Hierarchicus reflects the influence of Indology. It emphasizes the view of the varna system as ubiquitous in the Indian society. It was based on hierarchy as against European society which was based on equality.

Critique

- ▶ The Indologists focused on the texts to study Indian society and paid little attention on experienced reality. The real life and experiences of the people was ignored.
- ▶ They highlighted the spirituality and mythical beliefs of Indian civilization and did not study the material culture.
- ▶ Categories of caste, tribe, ritual, custom, law, occupation were seen as fixed, with no transformation with the passage of time.
- ▶ A. R. Desai criticized this perspective because Indian society was viewed from the lens of culture and ignored the real India with its inequalities, diversities and exploitations.

- ▶ Material used in these slides is based on :

- ▶ 1. Cohn, Bernard. 1990. An Anthropologist among the Historians and Other Essays, OUP Delhi
- ▶ 2. Dumont, L and Pocock, D. 1957. For a Sociology of India, contributions to Indian Sociology, 1, pp 7-22
- ▶ 3. Inden, Ronald. 1990 Imagining India, Indiana University Press, Bloomington
- ▶ 4. <https://www.egyankosh.ac.in>