

BA/BSc 4th SEMESTER (MAJOR)
PAPER 402: HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

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UNIT 5: MAJOR RACES

ORIGIN AND DIFFUSION OF MAJOR RACIAL GROUPS OF THE WORLD

A human race is defined as a group of people with certain common inherited features that distinguish them from other groups of people. All men of whatever race are currently classified by the anthropologist or biologist as belonging to the one species, *Homo sapiens*. Most anthropologists recognize 3 or 4 basic races of man in existence today. These races can be further subdivided into as many as 30 subgroups (The Australoid or Australian Aborigine is sometimes regarded as a sub-group of the Caucasoid as they have many features in common with this group despite their dark skin. The American Indian is usually classed with the Mongoloid division).

Origin: All men are descendants of the first created man Adam, and the line of all human ancestry passes through Noah. Only Noah, his sons, and their wives survived the flood which destroyed all other men living at that time, and radically altered the world environs. All races therefore have developed from this one family since the end of the flood in Noah's day. The Australian Aborigine, the Chinese, and the European have come into existence only in recent times. The culture (technology and religions, etc.) of each racial group in the world started at a common point-Noah-with full knowledge of God and a sophisticated ocean liner technology. The current states of culture of the races, which varies from space age to stone age, from animal worship and spirit worship to Christianity, is not a result of innocent, ignorant people searching for improvement. It is a direct consequence of whether the ancestors of any race worshipped the living God or deliberately rejected Him. There are several significant factors which can be considered in attempting to account for the origin of the physical difference between races. The first of these is the origin of different languages; the second is the splitting into groups which this produced; and the third is the environment into which each of these groups moved.

Diffusion: Perhaps the first categorization of the population of the world was based on the skin colour. They were referred as White race, Black race and Yellow race. The White race was that particular group of individuals whose skin colour was light or close to white. The black race was the people whose skin colour were either black, dark brown or any other variant of dark brown. The Yellow race was the one which did not fit in the first or the second category of the white and the black races and who were referred to slightly pale or off white skin colour. Perhaps this was the first criteria being taken to discriminate the people based on their skin colour and they were termed as The Three Great Races of the World. Different classifications have been set forth using different characteristic features, to their distribution and the people who are migrating from one place to another and how they are being fitted in the frame work of the three major races of the world.

Columbus when set forth to discover India by default went to the coast of America and found the original inhabitant of that particular part with slightly reddish skin colour and identified them as the Red Indians because he thought that the land he found was India. The Red Indians were the tribal people of America and for quite some time they were known as the Red Indians. Later, Red

Indians were later on renamed as American Indians. They had features like the Mongoloids but the only difference was their skin color, which was not exactly the same as that of the Mongoloids.

The Mughals invaded India and it was under Mughal Empire. They brought Islam to India and ruled India for pretty long till the Britishers invaded. They also observed different groups of people in India with variable skin colour, facial features with different kinds of head shape, nose shape, eye form, facial contour, stature and other criteria. They were identified as a mixed group of individuals, because Indians did not fall into any of the three racial groups of the world, i.e. the Negroid, the Caucasoid and the Mongoloid.

The Europeans who were more enterprising spread out to different parts of the world. The Britishers had spread out to various places around the globe. The French who invaded a number of places and ruled followed them. The Spanish people also went to different parts of the world and ruled them like Britishers and French. They intermixed with the local people and settled there. Migration of these groups caused racial intermixture that caused genetic admixture thereby formulating mixed racial groups and that was the cause of the formation of the new races. These new races were subsequently termed as sub-categories under the three major races because the Caucasoid have numbers of divisions, which are present at the European continent, Alpines, Dinaric, Nordics, and Mediterranean and their different sub-groups living in the different European countries.

Europeans ventured to discover India through alternative sea route, like Vasco-De –Gama, who came to India from Portugal and settled at Goa. Along with him, certain African slaves also came and they settled on the Gujarat coast, especially close to Dwarika and Jamnagar.

In America, there are a number of American blacks, whose origin is from Africa, from where they migrated generations back and settled there for quite a few centuries. Now they became original population of America. The American blacks have contributed immensely to the development of the country. The Americans are divided into two main categories; American White and the American Black. America has other categories also like the Spanish, the Red Indians etc. So they have all the three major races of the world living within the same continent as original inhabitants for a pretty long time.

European continent is primarily dominated by the Caucasoids, while the Negros and the Mongoloids inhabiting the European countries are the migrant people, they are either students or the businesspersons who migrated a few decades back and have settled in those areas.

Coming to the Middle East Region, where we find Negros and Caucasoids as predominant groups. Their dark skin color, relatively tall stature coupled with frizzy and peppercorn type or the spiral type of hair identifies Negros population. They have prognathous face, which is like that of Pithecanthropus or Homo-Erectus. It could be perhaps said that the origin of man took place from Africa. After originating there, man migrated to other parts of the world, spread out, and developed into different races in those regions. Therefore, this is one place where we find plenty of Negros.

Chinese, on the other hand, have very soft features with yellowish/ pale skin colour, short to medium in stature with very small nose, round/broad heads, flat cheeks and straight and black hair. They are distributed almost in the entire China, Mongolia, Taiwan, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Thailand,

Singapore, Hong Kong, etc. The Mongoloids dominate all these places to the extent that the upper region of the Indian sub continent i.e. the north-eastern region, where people hailing from Nagaland, Mizoram and Manipur etc. show typical Mongoloid features. The typical epicanthic fold, relatively small sized nose coupled with broad face, flat cheeks are the typical features of the Mongoloids. Rests of the Indian subcontinent is dominated by the variants of the Caucasoid and Negroid.

Going across to Australia, and New Zealand, we can see the mixed races. Primarily the Caucasoid dominates them, because they are the migrants from America and Great Britain. Australian Aborigines, who have very rough feature, also co-inhabit the same geographical boundaries with Caucasoid. They do not fall under the specific category of the major three races of the world. They are considered as the mixed variants. They have been identified based on their skin colour, stature, facial features, nose form, eye form and the facial out line.

Note:

- 1. Notes on characteristics and distribution of major racial groups already given as a whole.**
- 2. Individual description is required (check for assignments)**