

C. MODERNISATION

Meaning of Modernisation

The term modernisation "does not denote any philosophy or movement, but it only symbolises a process of change. In fact, "Modernisation" is understood as a process which indicates the adoption

of the modern ways of life and values". The term was being used previously to refer only "to change in economy and its related effect on social values and practices". It was also described as a process that changed the society, from primarily agricultural to primarily industrial economy. As a result of the change in the economy, the society itself underwent changes in values, beliefs and norms. But, today, the term is given a broader meaning.

Today, the term, 'Modernisation' is understood as an attempt, on the part of the people, particularly those who are custom-bound, to adopt themselves to the present time, conditions, styles, and ways in general. It indicates a change in people's food habits, dress habits, speaking styles, tastes, choices, preferences, ideas, values, recreational facilities and so on. It is also described as "social change involving the elements of science and technology". The scientific and technological inventions have brought about remarkable changes in the whole system of social relationship and installed new ideologies in the place of traditional ones.

M.N. Srinivas, however, criticises the concept of Modernisation. according to him, it is a value-loaded term. He says that "Modernisation is normally used in the sense that it is good. He, therefore, prefer to use the term "Westernisation" which characterises the changes brought about in Indian society and culture as a result of over 150 years of British rule".

Yogendra Singh, on the other hand, defends the concept of modernisation. According to him, it is broader than the two processes of Sanskritisation and Westernisation. It is, indeed a 'cultural universal' and not necessarily confined to any single society. Like science, modernity is not an exclusive possession of any one ethnic or cultural group. It belongs to the humanity as a whole. This does not mean that everywhere it should reveal the same pattern. It need not always take place on the model of England, Germany, France or America. It can take place on the model of Russia, India, Japan, Australia, or any other country for that matter. What is essential to modernisation is this — a commitment to "scientific world view" and a belief in the humanistic and philosophical viewpoint of science on contemporary problems.

Definition of "Modernisation"

1. Daniel Lerner. Daniel Lerner who introduced the term "Modernisation" for the first time in his study of the middle-Eastern societies—uses it to refer to the changes brought about in a non-Western country by contact, direct or indirect with a Western country. To quote his own words : "Modernisation is the current term for an old process of social change whereby less developed societies acquire the characteristics common to more developed societies".

2. Smelser. Modernisation refers to "a complex set of changes that take place almost in every part of society as it attempts to be industrialised. Modernisation involves ongoing change in a society's economy, politics, education, traditions, and religion".

3. Alatas. "Modernisation is a process by which modern scientific knowledge is introduced in the society with the ultimate purpose of achieving a better and a more satisfactory life in the broadest sense of the term as accepted by the society concerned".

4. Rutow and Ward (1964) have said that the basic process in Modernisation is the application of modern science to human affairs.

5. Eisenstadt says that Modernisation refers to both (a) structural aspects of social organisation, and (b) socio-demographic aspects of societies.