

## 18BGE43C - HUMAN GEOGRAPHY

[Syllabus, UNIT – II: The Indigenous People: The Pygmies of Congo basin – The Badawins of Arabian desert – Eskimos of Arctic region – The Kirghiz of Central Asia – The Bushmen of Kalahari desert – Aborigines of Australia.]

### Pygmies

- The African Pygmies (or Congo Pygmies, variously also "Central African foragers", "African rainforest hunter-gatherers" (RHG) or "Forest People of Central Africa") are a group of ethnicities.
- Native of Central Africa, mostly the Congo Basin, traditionally subsisting on a forager and hunter-gatherer lifestyle- suggesting a diminutive height.

#### **They are divided into three roughly geographic groups**

- the western Bambenga, or Mbenga (Cameroon, Gabon, Republic of the Congo, Central African Republic),
- the eastern Bambuti, or Mbuti, of the Congo basin (DRC)
- the central and southern Batwa, or Twa (Rwanda, Burundi, DRC, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Angola and Namibia).

A total number of about 900,000 Pygmies were estimated to be living in the central African forests in 2016, about 60% of this number in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

- African Pygmies are often assumed to be the direct descendants of the Middle Stone Age hunter-gatherer peoples of the central African rainforest.
- The lineage of African Pygmies is strongly associated with mitochondrial (maternal line) haplogroup L1, with a divergence time between 170,000 and 100,000 years ago.
- They were partially absorbed or displaced by later immigration of agricultural peoples of the Central Sudanic and Ubangian phyla beginning after about 5,500 years ago,
- Short people known as pygmies are scattered across equatorial Africa, where they speak various languages,
- Three Pygmy languages are obviously different from any other language spoken by farmers, that is to say that they are languages and not dialects: Aka (CAR-Congo, Bantu), Baka (Cameroon, Ubangian), and Asua (CDR, Central Sudanic).
- inhabit different types of forests and hunt and gather food in diverse ways.

#### **History**

- A new study shows that the pygmies of Western Central Africa descended from an ancestral population that survived intact until 2800 years ago when farmers invaded the pygmies' territory and split them apart.
- The Pygmies have been in central Africa long before other groups migrated into that region. The ancient Egyptians left records of contacts with the Pygmies. They

are a distinct race of human beings with their own culture and languages, and not just small people.

### **Location and Climate**

- Tropical forests in central Africa and also in the Malay Peninsula (the Senang people), the Philippine Islands (the Aeta and other tribes), central New Guinea (several tribes), and the Andaman Islands of India.
- The Congo cultural area is centered on the Congo river basin where the climate is tropical. Because the land is low and the temperature and humidity is high, tsetse flies are found in great numbers in this area.

### **Resources**

- All Pygmy groups have close ties to neighboring farming villagers, and work for them or exchange forest produce for crops and other goods. At its best this is a fair exchange, but it can involve exploitation of the Pygmies, especially where they have lost control of the forest and its resources.
- Most African forest people spend much of the year near a village where they trade bush meat and honey for manioc, produce, and other goods.

### **Economic Lifestyle**

- The 'Pygmy' peoples are forest dwellers, and know the forest, its plants and its animals intimately. They live by hunting animals such as antelopes, pigs and monkeys, fishing, and gathering honey, wild yams, berries and other plants.
- hunter-gatherers who live in small, seminomadic bands with patrilineal or bilateral descent

### **Migration Of Culture**

- African Pygmies are the direct descendants of the late stone age hunter-gatherer peoples of the central African rainforest, who were partially absorbed or displaced by later immigration of agricultural peoples, and adopted their Central Suddanic, Ubangian, and Bantu languages.

### **Government**

- They are routinely deprived of their rights by governments, which do not see these forest-dwellers as equal citizens.
- Neglect by governmental authorities is made worse by pygmy communities inheriting political weakness, which stems from their dispersion, imbalance of power and the discrimination they suffer from their co-nationals.
- The traditional power structure of representative institutions is entirely foreign to pygmy society, as hierarchy is not necessarily a dominant feature of pygmy clans. Executive power over the clan often stems from elders' collegial decisions.

### **Relationships**

- This close personal relationship is inherited on each side of the father to son. Since other Congo Negroes look down on Pygmies to some extent, they seldom intermarry. When they do marry, however, the Negro takes the Pygmy woman to live in his village.

- They pygmies and their Negro neighbors who live along the Congo river basin have close trading relations that are tied up with the family unit. Each Negro family has it's own Pygmy trading partner. This close personal relationship is inherited on each side of the father to son.

### **Culture**

- Relatively short people scattered across equatorial Africa.
- They speak various languages, Despite their cultural variety, a new study shows that the pygmies of Western Central Africa descended from an ancestral population that survived intact until 2800 years ago when farmers invaded the pygmies' territory and split them apart.

### **Religion/Belief System**

- The pygmies have taboos against eating certain animals. Members of the clan can't eat their totem, the animal representing the clan, believing that any one who does must die. They also believe that animals once were like people and could talk. Therefore, pygmies tell many adventure stories about talking animals.
- In general the pygmies tend to fear storms and are afraid of the spirits who live in the streams. Magic is very important to them and work charms to prevent rain, otherwise control weather, and help hunting.
- They have one god and believe that the souls of good people live with him. This god looks like human being and is named Mungu. The Congo Negroes have four categories of living being.

## **Kyrgyz, Kirgiz or Kirghiz**

- Turkic-speaking people of Central Asia, most of whom live in Kyrgyzstan. Small numbers reside in Afghanistan, in western China, and in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkey.
- The Kyrgyz language belongs to the Northwestern, or Kipchak, group of the Turkic languages, a subfamily of Altaic languages. The people are largely Sunni Muslim in religion.
- Turkic kyrk + yz, "the forty clans,"
- Like other Central Asian peoples, the Kyrgyz were traditionally nomadic and pastoral. During the second half of the 19th century, Kirgiziya (the country's Russian name) became a major area of Russian colonization, and much of the best land was given to Russian settlers.

### **LOCATION**

- The majority of the modern Kyrgyz (about 2 million) live in Kyrgyzstan.
- Well-adapted to living in the higher elevations, some Kyrgyz fled to Afghanistan, Pakistan, and eastern China during various land disputes among the Russians, Chinese, and Afghans over the regulation of pasturage.

- More so than their Soviet counterparts, the Kyrgyz diaspora still practices nomadic pastoralism.

## **DEMOGRAPHY**

- Kyrgyzstan's population of 4.5 million is 52.4 percent Kyrgyz.
- Approximately 83% of the population of Kyrgyzstan live in the rural regions around Lake Issyk Kul, the Fergana Valley, Naryn River valley, and the low-lying areas of the Tianshan and the Pamir-Altai Mountains.
- The other 17 percent live in Biskek, the capital city, or Osh, which is on the former Silk Road and is one of the oldest cities of Central Asia.

## **LANGUAGE**

- Kyrgyz was not a written language until the late nineteenth century.
- Kyrgyz was first written using the Arabic alphabet, and in 1924, the Arabic alphabet was modified for writing Kyrgyz.
- In 1928 Arabic was dropped and the Latin alphabet substituted.
- In 1940, under Soviet influence, the Kyrgyz adopted the Cyrillic alphabet.
- Rural population has maintained Kyrgyz as the primary language.
- Urban dwellers know Russian because it was the language of instruction in the Soviet educational system.

## **CULTURE**

- Kyrgyzstan was first inhabited by humans about 300,000 years ago, during the Lower Paleolithic period.
- The Kyrgyz were not originally from the area that is now Kyrgyzstan.
- Cultural origin is traced to the region around the Yenisei River in southern Siberia.
- Similar cultural elements, including the practice of animism, certain burial customs, and animal husbandry suggest common roots with other nomadic peoples of Siberia.
- Sixteenth century as the time when the Kyrgyz tribe migrated in large numbers into the area now known as Kyrgyzstan.

## **SETTLEMENTS**

- Most Kyrgyz living on kolkhozy and sovkhozy were only partially settled.
- Until recent decades, the Kyrgyz were nomadic.
- The Soviet government has both encouraged and forced settlement, first into kyshtaks, villages intended to be transitional, and then into permanent Soviet-style settlements in cities and towns and on collective and state farms.

## **ECONOMY**

- The Kyrgyz have long been transhumant nomadic pastoralists who raise primarily sheep, but also horses, goats, cattle, Bactrian camels, and yaks; in some areas swine are important.
- Horses provide not only transportation, but also meat and milk.

- In the warm months the higher meadows are grazed, and in the colder months the people and their animals move to lower elevations.
- Their production efforts were collectivized and controlled by the central Communist party in Moscow, and the products they made went to other republics and to foreign markets.
- The Kyrgyz also became dependent on foreign manufactured goods, especially medical supplies, which they do not manufacture themselves and which, over the last several years, they have been unable to afford.

## **TRADE**

- The traditional nomadic life-style made the Kyrgyz self-sufficient. They were isolated by mountains, which made trade less viable.
- Under Soviet rule the Kyrgyz became enmeshed within the great Soviet interdependent trade network as producers and consumers.
- Prior to the 1917 Revolution, the Kyrgyz were primarily illiterate. The institutionalization of Soviet education throughout the rural and urban areas of Kirghizia in the 1920s and 1930s rapidly brought literacy to the country.

## **Eskimo**

- “Eskimo” was commonly used up until the 1990’s, the moment in which the word “Inuit” became more common.
- Both names refer to the indigenous people of the Northern circumpolar region – which embraces parts of Alaska in the US, Siberia in Russia, Canada, and Greenland.
- Now: in some contexts, the word “Eskimo” may not be specific enough, as it refers to different groups of people of this region of the world such as the “Inuit” and the “Yupik”.
- On top of the misnomer, “Eskimo” has been considered a derogatory term as it was thought to mean “eater of raw meat” while “Inuit” translates to “the people”. The latter being a more acceptable term.
- Eskimo, any member of a group of peoples who, with the closely related Aleuts, constitute the chief element in the indigenous population of the Arctic and subarctic regions of Greenland, Canada, the United States, and far eastern Russia (Siberia).
- Early 21st-century population estimates indicated more than 135,000 individuals of Eskimo descent, with some 85,000 living in North America, 50,000 in Greenland, and the remainder in Siberia.
- Eskimo peoples vary with their languages and dialects; They include such names as Inuit, Inupiat, Yupik, and Alutiit, each of which is a regional variant meaning “the people” or “the real people.”
- the name Eskimo—widely used in Alaska.

- In Canada and Greenland the name Inuit is preferred for all indigenous peoples there.
- However, the indigenous peoples of Alaska include the Yupik and the Aleuts, both of whom are distinct from the Inuit.
- Other proposed names for the inhabitants of Alaska present different problems; Alaska Natives, for example, includes Athabaskan and other unrelated Native Americans.
- One of the oldest known Eskimo archaeological sites was found on Saglek Bay, Labrador, and dates to approximately 3,800 years ago.
- Another was found on Umnak Island in the Aleutians, for which an age of approximately 3,000 years was recorded.
- Culturally, traditional Eskimo life was totally adapted to an extremely cold, snow- and icebound environment in which vegetable foods were almost non-existent, trees were scarce, and caribou, seal, walrus, and whale meat, whale blubber, and fish were the major food sources.
- Eskimo people used harpoons to kill seals, which they hunted either on the ice or from kayaks, skin-covered, one-person canoes.
- Whales were hunted by using larger boats called umiaks.
- In the summer most Eskimo families hunted caribou and other land animals with bows and arrows. Dog sleds were the basic means of transport on land.
- Eskimo clothing was fashioned of caribou furs, which provided protection against the extreme cold. Most Eskimo wintered in either snow-block houses called igloos or semisubterranean houses built of stone or sod over wooden or whalebone frameworks.
- In summer many Eskimo lived in animal-skin tents. Their basic social and economic unit was the nuclear family, and their religion was animistic.
- Eskimo life has changed greatly because of increased contact with societies to the south. Snowmobiles have generally replaced dogs for land transport, and rifles have replaced harpoons for hunting purposes. Outboard motors, store-bought clothing, and numerous other manufactured items have entered the culture, and money, unknown in the traditional Eskimo economy, has become a necessity.
- Many Eskimo have abandoned nomadic hunting and now live in northern towns and cities, often working in mines and oil fields. Others, particularly in Canada, have formed cooperatives to market their handicrafts, fish catches, and tourism ventures. The creation of Nunavut, a new Canadian territory, in 1999 helped to support a revitalization of traditional indigenous culture in North America.

## **Badawins/ Bedouins**

The Bedouins are Arab nomads that roam the Arab deserts and North Africa. The Bedouins are Arab nomads that roam the Arab deserts and North Africa and engaged in search for water and pasture for their flocks of dromedaries, camels, and engaged in search for water and pasture for their flocks of dromedaries, camels, goats and sheep. They are originate from the Arabic peninsula but in the VII century, with the conquests of Islam, spread throughout Northern Africa.

### **Location of Bedouins**

The Bedouins live in the Arabian Peninsula (Asia) from which they originate and in northern Africa.

Countries of the Arabian peninsula: Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Israel, Syria, Iraq, Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain.

Countries in North Africa: Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Morocco, Mali, Mauritania, Western Sahara, Sudan.

The Bedouins live in a desert climate. And the desert climates are located in the hot zones (between the Tropics).

There is very little precipitation in hot deserts. During the day, temperatures very high (until 50°C); at night fall sharply, sometimes to below 0°C.

The lack of water makes the vegetation and animal life scarce. Date palms grow.

The lack of water makes the vegetation and animal life scarce. Date palms grow near oases.

The Bedouins roam the deserts of Asia and Africa:

**ASIA**- Arab Deserts like the desert of Rub Al-Jal (Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Jordan, Qatar, Yemen, UAE, Oman and Kuwait).- Syrian Desert (Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Iraq and Syria)- Negev Desert (southern Israel)

**AFRICA**- Sahara Desert.- Desert of Libya.- Desert of Syria.

### **Main features of Bedouins.**

Main features of Bedouins  
A.A. Physical features of bedouins  
Physical features of bedouins:  
The bedouins have physical features very typical:  
The bedouins have physical features very typical:

- medium height
- elongated skull
- white face skin, but not too clear  
• dark eyes and hair
- the nose has a special form (profile, similar to a six)

## Life and customs

There are two types of bedouins:  
There are two types of bedouins:

- The real bedouins: looking for pasture and water in the desert  
The real bedouins: looking for pasture and water in the desert- The fellahin:- The fellahin: In winter, travel in caravans and engaged in trade. In winter, travel in caravans and engaged in trade. In summer, living on the edge of the desert and is engaged in  
In summer, living on the edge of the desert and is engaged in agriculture.
- They speak Badawi
- The family is small, several families form a clan and several clans form a tribe.
- They live in made shops of skin of hair of camel or goat: the men and guests live in a part and the women and children in other one
- They are Muslims sunnitas very religious, but continue believe in their spirits Jinnis.
- Every group possess a territory definite well and known by other groups, for them the borders of the countries do not exist.
- They have very old laws to govern their social behavior, ownership of livestock and the use of natural resources.
- They feed of lacteal products, bread of wheat, dates and dried fruits.
- best-known foods made up of rice with meat and yogurt.
- Women are responsible for:- Cooking- Sewing and assembling tents- Collect firewood for cooking- Care for children and elderly
- Some of their customs are the Bedouin trial, camel race, tracking footprints, hospitality, the bedouin wedding, revenge, the duel, it is shameful to work for a salary.

## Historical lifestyle evolution

- In the late XIX century, many Bedouins, under British Government, began to transit to a seminomadic life.
- In the 1950s and 1960s, large numbers of Bedouin of Asia started to leave the nomadic life to settle in cities of Midwest Asia. For example, in Syria a big drought from 1958 to 1961 forced many Bedouin to change for standard jobs.
- Oil production in the Persian Gulf, and a improves Desire for their standards of living, forced most Bedouin to become settled citizens.



- The governments of Egypt and Israel want to buy their land in exchange for:  
Housing in cities, Work in exchange for a salary, Studies for their children, Health

**Currently**, the Bedouin are a less numerous clan but continue to maintain this lifestyle:–

- They are semi-nomadic: they move with their livestock and farmers on the edge of the desert.
- They live in tents, but with many technical advances.
- Continue eating what they collect.
- Maintain their customs and traditions such as dance, music and poetry.
- Maintain the laws governing their social behaviour, ownership of livestock and the use of natural resources.

## Bushmen

- Bushmen also called San, are the oldest Inhabitants of southern Africa.
- Initially they roamed in the whole of southern Africa
- Presently they are confined to arid Kalahari desert Bushmen in Kalahari Desert.

### **Location**

- The Kalahari Desert- is 1000 metres above the sea level, has extremely hot summers and very cold winters.,
- Is described as a ‘Thirstland’ because of the absence of permanent surface water.

### **Lifestyle**

- Live in a group of 5 to 15 families.
- Lead nomadic lives.
- Live within fixed territories.
- Are not politically organised.
  
- Bushman are short statured
- have yellow and grey skin
- have very curly hair □ have wrinkled faces
  
- They have their own language including about five types of ‘clicking’ sound.
- Bushmen Habitat is that they live in scherms.
- While hunting... aim at animals like Antelopes using bows and poisoned arrows.
  
- No part of the animal butchered is wasted.
- Flesh is dried for food.
- Blood is collected for drinking. □ Hide is used for making clothes.
- Men wear loin Women wear kaross
- Women and children gather food from plants. Bushmen suck water from under the ground with long straws. They store water in the ostrich egg shells.

- Dead bodies are covered with Kaross, They are buried in sitting position, Grave is covered with thorny branches.

## Australian Aboriginal peoples

- 'Aboriginal person', 'Aboriginal' or 'Torres Strait Islander'.
- The word means “original inhabitant” in Latin.
- 'Aboriginal person', 'Aboriginal' or 'Torres Strait Islander'.
- Torres Strait Islander peoples, one of Australia’s two distinct Indigenous cultural groups, the other being the Aboriginal peoples.
- Australia is the only continent where the entire Indigenous population maintained a single kind of adaptation—hunting and gathering—into modern times.
- Australian Aboriginal peoples originally came from Asia via insular Southeast Asia (now Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, East Timor, Indonesia, and the Philippines) and have been in Australia for at least 45,000–50,000 years.
- Aborigines are Australia's indigenous people. Recent government statistics counted approximately 400,000 aboriginal people, or about 2% of Australia's total population.
- Aboriginal people became economically marginalized and were exposed to new diseases. The consequence was massive depopulation and extinction for some aboriginal tribes.
- Aborigines lived in small groups.
- They were larger in the coastal areas and smaller in the interior.
- There were strict rules on how groups interacted.
- However, there was no specific leader in the group. All members were equal.
- There may have been about 500 groups of Aborigines and more than 200 languages. Aborigines were hunter-gathers.
- What they ate depended on where they lived.
- Different food was available on different parts of the island.
- Aborigines never grew their own food.
- Instead, they survived on whatever grew naturally by understanding how to live in different natural environments.
- In trade, Australian Aborigines also traded with one another. □Trade diversifies the type of goods available. Trade also kept different groups of Aborigines connected to one another.
- This contact helped keep the culture of different groups similar.
- Belief System, “Dreamtime” is at the center of the Aborigines belief system and describes the mystical time when the Aboriginal people established their world.
- “Dreamtime” explains the origins of the people and of the land. Dreamtime includes a story of how things have happened, how the universe came to be, how humans were created, and how the Creator intended for humans to function in this world

- Shelter, Aboriginal people built simple shelters that changed season to season. □ Trees were chosen as a primary resource because they could provide natural windbreaks and shade. The trunks also provided sturdy material. □ Walls of the shelters were often decorated by finger painting.
- History- European Settlement Captain James Cook discovered Australia in 1770. He was sent to discover the huge land that many people believed was south of the equator. He landed south of present day Sydney in New South Wales. He claimed this part of the land for the King of England.

---

Subject Name: Human geography

Subject Code : 18BGE43C

Faculty : K Sumesh