

UNIT – II: Human races: Types and Distribution – Occupations - Important Tribes: Eskimo, Pygmy, Bushman, Gond and Irula - Their adaptation to the environment - Social and Economic activities

## 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, storebought 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.

## **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 (CARCongo, 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 huntergatherer 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. Relationship

- s• 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 its 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. 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
- • 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.
- 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.

## GONDS

Introduction The Gonds are among the largest tribal groups in South Asia and perhaps the world. The term Gond refers to tribal peoples who live all over India's Deccan Peninsula. Most describe themselves as Gonds (hill people) or as Koi or Koitur. Scholars believe Gonds settled in Gondwana, now known as eastern Madhya Pradesh, between the ninth and thirteenth centuries AD . Muslim writers describe a rise of Gond states after the fourteenth century. Gond dynasties ruled in four kingdoms (Garha-Mandla, Deogarh, Chanda, and Kherla) in central India between the sixteenth and mid-eighteenth centuries. Maratha power swept into Gond land in the 1740s. They overthrew Gond rajas (princes) and seized most of their territory. Some Gond zamindaris (estates) survived until recently. However, Gonds are

similar to many tribal groups today in that they face severe economic hardships. Although some

Gond groups own a great deal of land, others are classified as Scheduled Tribes, which means they need special social and economic help. LocationGonds live all over central India, and in the states of Maharashtra and Orissa. As "hill people," they traditionally have been associated with hills and uplands in the Deccan Peninsula. Many Gonds live around the Satpura Hills, Maikala Range and Son-Deogarh uplands, and on the Bastar plateau. Many Gond tribes also live in the Garhjat Hills of northern Orissa. The upland areas generally lie between 2,000 to 3,000 feet (600 to 900 meters), with isolated peaks occasionally exceeding approximately 4,000 feet (1,200 meters). The region is drained by the head-waters of many of India's major rivers (such as the Narmada, Tapti, Son, Mahanadi, and Godavari). Forest cover is dense in places, and communications are generally difficult. February sees the start of the hot season, with temperatures rising to over 40° C (104° F) in early June. The summer brings the monsoon rains, with precipitation amounts varying from 47 inches (120 centimeters) to over 63 inches (160 centimeters) in the more southeasterly locations. Late September marks the return of the cool, dry weather of winter.

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#### FOLKROLE

Hereditary bards and professional storytellers called Pardhans tell stories about Gond legends and myths. This makes for a rich oral tradition. In these stories, it is said that when Gond gods were born, their mother abandoned them. The goddess Parvati rescued them, but her consort Sri Shambhu Mahadeo (Shiva) kept them captive in a cave. Pahandi Kapar Lingal, a Gond hero, who received help from the goddess Jangu Bai, rescued them from the cave. They came out of the cave in four groups, thus laying the foundations of the basic fourfold division of Gond society. Lingal also is responsible for creating a Gond kinship system and establishing a group of great Gond gods

## RELIGION

Persa Pen is the most distinctive feature of Gond religion. Like many other tribes, Gonds worship a high god known as Baradeo, whose alternate names are Bhagavan, Sri Shambu Mahadeo, and Persa Pen. Baradeo oversees activities of lesser gods. He is respected but he does not receive fervent devotion, which is shown only to clan deities. Each Gond clan has its Persa Pen, who protects all clan members. The Persa Pen is essentially good but can be dangerous and violent. Many Gonds believe that when a Pardhan (bard) plays his fiddle, the deity's fierce powers can be controlled. Each village has its Village-Guardian and Village-Mother who are worshipped when villagers celebrate regular festivities

. Gonds also worship family and household gods, gods of the field, and gods of cattle. Deities such as Shitala Mata, goddess of smallpox, help ward off disease. Spirits are also believed to inhabit hills, rivers, lakes and trees. Village priests (devari), perform sacrifices and rituals for village festivals. The head of a household typically carries out family ceremonies. Clan priests (katora) tend the shrine and ritual objects of the clan's Persa Pen. These priests also guard the sacred spear point and organize annual festivals. Most aspects of Gond life, from the greatest festivals to the building of a new cattle shed, are accompanied by sacrifice. Certain deities, especially female ones, demand chickens, goats, and sometimes male buffaloes. Every nine or twelve years, Gonds sacrifice a pig to the god Narayan Deo in an important ceremony known as the Laru Kaj (Pig's Wedding). Other rituals also involve offerings of fruits, coconuts, flowers, colored powder, and strings. Gonds believe evil spirits and the gods' displeasure cause most diseases and misfortunes. They ask soothsayers and diviners to find out the cause of problems and to suggest remedies. Sometimes, magicians and shamans (healers) can provide this advice. Magicians use special formulas to control the



actions of a deity or spirit that is causing a particular affliction. Shamans fall into a trance and give voice to the demands of an offended god or spirit.

## MAJOR HOLIDAYS

Many Gond festivals are connected to agriculture. Pola, a cattle festival, and Nagpanchami, the snake festival, are very popular. Dasahara is an important Gond holiday. A Gond custom is stick dancing undertaken by young people. Bands of young people travel from village to village, dancing and singing. The dancing is a religious duty. It is also an occasion for fun.

## RITES OF PASSAGE

Gonds protect pregnant women against spells and evil influences, and perform several rituals after a baby is born. A mother's brother generally names a baby boy, while the father's sister names a girl. Children grow up as part of a family, clan, and phratry (one of the four main divisions of Gond society), and gradually learn the ways of their people. Both boys and girls help guard family crops from birds and monkeys. Males undergo a ritual shaving of the beard, mustache, and eyebrows as a sign of adulthood. Girls are considered full-grown at their first menstruation. Gonds cremate or bury their dead. Children, unmarried persons, and individuals dying an inauspicious death (for instance, in an epidemic) are buried without much ceremony. Gonds believe humans have a life force and a spirit. On death, the life force is reincarnated into another earthly existence, but the spirit remains in the other world. Gonds perform death rituals to help the spirit move into the other world and to ease its acceptance by other clan spirits. This rite, known as karun , must be done to fulfill an obligation to the deceased. Memorial pillars honor the dead. Gonds believe ancestral spirits watch over the living, punish offenders, and guard Gond communities.

## RELATIONSHIP

Gonds welcome visitors with dried tobacco leaves, fruits, or other small gifts. Many villages have guest huts

## . LIVING CONDITIONS

Each Gond village has a headman (known by local names such as mukhia, mahji, or patel ) and a village council (panchayat) chosen by the villagers. The council consists of the headman, priest, village watchman, and four or five elders. It helps keep the village running smoothly and upholds Gond customs. Villages also have service castes such as Ahir

(cowherds), Agaria (blacksmiths), Dhulia (drummers), and Pardhan (bards and singers). A typical Gond village has several hamlets. Each consists of homesteads that house extended families. Houses are usually built of mud and thatch. They consist of a living room, kitchen, veranda, a special room for women to use while menstruating, and a shrine for clan gods.

## FAMILY LIFE

Gond society is divided into four groups known as phratries or sagas in Gondi. Each saga traces its descent to one of the four groups of gods who emerged from the cave after their release by the hero Lingal. The saga is divided into several clans (pari). A clan consists of a group of people who believe they share a common ancestor. Generally, it is good to marry outside the clan. Kinship and marriage customs among Gonds reflect broader regional patterns. The norm is crosscousin marriage (for example, marrying one's mother's brother's daughter), which is typical in southern India. Gond groups that have been influenced by northern peoples such as Marathas, however, follow northern customs in determining marriage partners. Similarly, northern Gonds allow widows to remarry a brother of the deceased husband. Gonds typically choose their marriage mates, and a tribal council approves the matches. The father of a groom pays a bride price. Gond weddings include many significant ceremonies. The main part of the wedding occurs when the bride and groom walk seven times around a wedding post. Newlyweds live with the groom's family until it is possible for them to move into a house of their own. Sometimes, Gond matches are made when a groom and bride elope. These marriages must be approved later by relatives and the village council. The council also can approve divorces

## FOOD

The staples of the Gond diet are two millets known as kodo and kutki. These are either boiled to a broth or cooked to a dry cereal. Broth is preferred for the first two meals of the day and the dry cereal is eaten at night, often with vegetables. Vegetables are either grown in gardens or collected from forests along with roots and tubers. Honey is also gathered from forests. Rice is a luxury item that Gonds enjoy during feasts and festivals. Most Gonds like meat. Animals sacrificed at ceremonies are eagerly consumed, and animals hunted in the forest supplement the diet. Gonds must abstain from the flesh of animals that are their clan totems. Gonds grow tobacco for smoking and for celebrations make liquor from the mahua tree

## . IRULA

the Irula tribals of Tamil Nadu. Consequently, the tribals who specialised in catching snakes, rats and termites and in collecting medicinal herbs, took up agricultural labour and road laying -- jobs that could not sustain them through the year. In 1991-92, total earnings were Rs 1,79,000 and the net profit Rs 74,064, compared to Rs 5,680 and Rs 2,159 respectively in 1982-83. In Chingleput district, where the Irulas live, the ISCICS also implemented a trial rodent control project in which the tribals caught rats with their bare hands. With about 100 members, the society began raising mixed forests in 400 ha of panchayat land in 1987, supported by a Rs 30-lakh grant from the National Wastelands Development Board. Says Whitaker, "The women were keen on keeping the men out of this, except when digging the deep bunds." The tribals' knowledge of medicinal plants is also being studied. Recently, with funds from an individual donor, ITWWS brought a 3.25-ha plot on which it will grow certain commercially valuable plants. Last year, ITWWS began a non-formal education programme, funded by Oxfam and run on the pattern of the National Literacy Mission