The caste system forms a vital part of the Indian society. It has been understood by various approaches in sociology, one of them being Louis Dumont, which was termed as cultural particularistic by Yogender Singh.

Dumont emphasized on understanding the caste system as an ideology, which is pervasive throughout the entire society across periods of history. He said that the traditional Indian society was quite different from the west and could not be understood concepts of stratification which lay stress on inequality and exploitation. He said the traditional Indian society was based on holiness and the caste system had to understood in its terms.

The principle of hierarchy was all encompassing and could be explained in terms of binary dualism, i.e., opposition of purity and pollution. He used Bouglé's concepts of hierarchy, separation and occupation and explained them using his concept of opposition of purity and pollution.
The pure had to be kept from the impure as the impure could pollute the pure. This led to separation in food habits, social contact or religious life.

Those that were considered pure were higher in the hierarchy as compared to those impure, e.g., a Brahmin was himself arranged hierarchically with respect to each other. The others were ranked with respect to the Brahmins.

Those who had a lower level of purity were supposed to absorb the impurity of those higher up in the hierarchy. E.g., the occupation of a barber was to absorb the impurity of the Brahmin by cutting the hair of the Brahmin.

Thus, relative purity & impurity of a particular caste determined the way of life or status of an individual. And according to Dumont, there was a hierarchical distinction between the status & class of different individuals, e.g., a Brahmin though not as well off as a Kshatriya, should have a higher status.

Dumont has been criticized by other sociologists on many counts. Bartem points out that states
was not independent of class. He cited the example of Gonds who were usually incorporated as untouchables but the wealthy ones became Raj Gonds and acquired the status of kshatriyas.

Similarly Marriot says that there were never instances where a higher class person was given a very low status.

Dumont also drew flak for over emphasising on the distinction between traditional and western societies. Dumont could not explain the current political scenario of vote bank politics. He also did not take into consideration the various lower and backward class movements.

Though vegetarianism has been considered purer than non-vegetarianism, still the Vaidyayas, who are traditionally still the Vaidyayas, who are traditionally vegetarians, are placed lower than the Kshatriyas who are non-vegetarian.

Dumont's theory does not provide an answer to this.

Despite all the criticism Dumont provided us with a point of view to study caste system in India.
Village has always formed an essential part of the social system as most of the population still lives in rural India.

The colonial perspective of the village was that they saw villages as 'little republics'. According to the British sociologists like & anthropologists who studied various villages said that villages in India had a self-sufficient economy. All that was needed was produced in the villages themselves and hence they did not have any ties with the rest of the country.

The colonial anthropologists also said that many kingdoms flourished & perished yet the villages remained unaltered & unaffected by them. They thus saw the Indian villages as closed economic systems.

This view was strongly opposed by Indian sociologists like N. N. Shwemns, E. A. Bailey, Kathleen Gough, etc. They did not believe that Indian villages were cut off from the overall economic system.
They claimed that the colonials were mostly armchair sociologists and not aware of the situations existing on the field.

Sociologists like M.N. Srinivas said that villages always maintained contact with other villages. This is quite evident from the fact that not all the required material was available within the village. So that they had to go to other villages.

Then there were fairs, local markets and pilgrimage which ensured that people did move from one in contact with other village.

The concept of sajmani system by William Muir also throws light on this. The kamins & purhuts were now required to provide their services to the sajmans. Not all the services were available within the same village but had to be made available from nearby villages. Similarly kamins did not have similarly kamins in the same village but in other village.

The artisans in the village even provided their skills to the noble & the kings. Thus they were
impacted by the rise and fall of the various kingdoms.

Indian sociologists conducted various village studies to show the changing patterns of the Indian villages. They even used the data to back their arguments.

Though the villages were almost self-sufficient, but it was vital to establish contact with other villages which was against the colonial perspective.
a) colonial policies led to the maximum exploitation of the natural resources of its colonies, which had far reaching consequences. These policies impacted even the tribal communities, the echoes of which still reverberate.

The British initially exploited the rich resources which were present in the areas usually inhabited by the British tribals.

The first forest policy in 1852 declared forest to be state property and denied the tribals of its means of sustenance. According to Vidyarthi, forests are not just dwelling places for the tribals but have deep symbolic significance for them. Buddhadeb Chaudhary says the introduction of holidays, communication to exploit the natural resources of the forest & the minerals led to de-tribalisation.

M.S.A. Rao also talked about de-tribalisation that how introduction of market economy led them to do manual labor. This also had an adverse impact on their health. Verier Thuni then came up with
The tribal concept of tribal National Parks where the tribals would have an area which would not be allowed to be trespassed by the outsiders. This policy was adopted by the British and only officials & missionaries were granted access.

Srikant says that the conversion of tribes to Christianity led to a deep rooted mistrust among the Christian tribals & their non-tribal caste counterparts. This is quite evident even today.

The isolationist policy of the British led to the isolation of the tribals from the main-stream national politics due to which they could not take part in the freedom struggle, and thus developed a cessationist tendency, which is quite evident even today. Gandhi also accepted this that he unable to get the tribals in the independence freedom struggle.

Even today the tribals are not given their due right to the forest
forest produce.

The British, due to land reforms
look away the land which was
communiately owned by the tribals &
gave it to the tribal heads. This led
to alienation of land. The excise policy
do not interfering of the bush & the presence
of the outsiders as merchants &
moneylenders led to their exploitation
resettlement.

This exploitation continues even
today. Walter Reinander quotes the data
that since 1947 to 2004 60 million people
have been displaced due to development
projects & dam out of which 50%.
are tribals & only 10% have been
resettled.

Sanatadan Rao calls this phase of
tribals of post colonial period of
massive development & displacement.
Those who are displaced & not
settled move to the urban areas where
in squalor & poverty women take to
prostitution. Children are forced into
labour. These are just a few of the
problems which engulf the tribals.

The development policy should
thus ensure that there is sufficient
resettlement. Rehabilitation along
with rehab resettlement
Andre betelle studied Srijan village in Tanjore district in Tamil Nadu to come up with his view on caste system.

Andre betelle adopt the tunitam model of weber to study the stratifications in the village. He considered class, status & power.

He said the village consisted of the brahmins, the non-brahmins & the Adi Braudhidas. He observed that there was separate residential location for all the three. The brahmins lived in Aghram, the Adi Braudhidas in the Cheries & the non brahmins in the place intermediate to both.

He observed that they believed in boundary maintained. The brahmins considered the Adi Braudhidas a polluting whereas the Adi Braudhidas considered a visit by the brahmins in the cheries would bring them bad luck.

Betelle said there was overlap of status, class & power. The Brahmans who were higher in status
were even the rich landowners thus belonging to higher class & since, they were the most educated they wielded power. The adi dravidas on the other hand did not have either power, status or wealth.

Nietzsche observed the change in the caste system with the changes taking place at the economic & political level.

With the introduction of democratic politics the adi dravidas who had numeral strengths gained political power.

With education & better job opportunities, the brahmans moved to the cities selling their land. Thus the non-brahmans came to acquire land.

Brahmans still had wealth but the brahmans still has ritual status.

Thus be observed that with changes in economic political & order, there were changes in the caste system these were changes in the caste system also. The adi dravidas could move as well. The adi dravidas could move to the agraharam eg an agricultural come to the agraharam eg an agricultural worker working in the fields of the landowners would come & report some problem. The brahmans no longer wielded power, and not all brahmans were wealthy landowners.
Seteille captures the change in the caste system which took place due to the introduction of market economy in the agriculture where ritual ties were replaced by contractual ties.

The secular status, Seteille also criticised Dumont's perpetuity on caste system.

His adoption of Weberian concept of status, class & power gave a deep insight into the social system existing.
Q3a) Caste system forms an important part of the Indian social system. There have been various views that explain the origin & current present form of the caste system.

The book view of the caste system comes from the study of the sculpture & the texts which are available today. These views are basically forwarded by the Indologists. The book view talks about the racial theory of the origin of the caste system. That is how the Kshatras who were dark in colour, so there are mentions among Kshatras. & Kshatriya & Kshatriya refers to fair skinned & dark skinned respectively.

Post the Rig Vedic period the caste system came to be known as the four Varnas. Pancham Varna, i.e., the four Varnas & the fifth being the outcaste.

There are a few theories which talk about the origin of the four varnas. How sage Vashista, how the varnas. How sage Vashista, how the four varnas originated from different body parts of the sage. The Brahmin, from the mouth, the Kshatriya from the shoulders, the Vaishyas from the
Although the Shudras from the feet, similarly it talks about the various qualities of the 4 varnas. Brahmins are associated with satvik quality that make them intelligent. Kshatriyas and Vaishyas have kula and Rajas that make them brave and good in business whereas Shudras have tamas qualities which makes them indolent and lazy and unfit to work.

In the Vedic times the varnas were based on qualities of the individuals but after the Mauryan times it became hereditary but it was an open system. Acquisition of power or wealth could help a person change his varna. As stated by Panini that only Kshatriyas were the last Kshatriya and Vaishyas were the last Vaishyas. Later on most of them were kings. Later on most Vaishyas and Shudras who changed after acquiring power.

After the Mauryan empire perished there was de urbanisation. The collapse of international trade led to the rural migration of the urban artisans.
These artisans formed closed endogamous groups and associated themselves to a rama. There emerged several such groups in a village which came to be known as a jati. This led to the formation of multilcaste villages which is the existing reality today. Also known as the contextual view or the field view.

According to M.N. Srinivas there exists several jatis in a village. Vamas exist only as a reference model but jatis define the reality on a field.

The upper limit is set by the Brahmans & the lower by the Shudras & the others lie in between them. According to Srinivas the hierarchical position of the jatis vary from one village region to the other whereas of the Vama is fixed.

In the present situation the jatis are forming an essential basis for political vote bank & not the vamas.

A single rama has several jatis in it. E.g. a brahmin may have several hierarchical jatis in it whose positions
may vary from one region to the other.

The book view has been criticised by many subaltern sociologists as it is the Brahminical view of taste, whereas the field view defines the existing reality.
Government of India adopted land reforms to increase the productivity of agriculture. It also adopted to decrease the class disparities & the class-caste results that existed in rural India.

Land reforms consisted of various components:

i) Abolition of intermediaries in the zamindars.

The zamindars were abolished & their lands were given to the tenants if they were not cultivated of it.

But many zamindars be managed to hold onto the land & just changed their guise to become absentee landlords & exploited the landless labourers & the tenants.

ii) Tenancy reforms

The rent was fixed by the government to 1/5th & could not be increased without its consent. The tenants could not be evicted despite this many tenants were forcefully evicted and were exploited under informal tenancy.
iii) Land ceiling. There was a limit to which a family could own land if it was 10 acres for multicropped irrigated land & 36 acres for single cropped unirrigated land per family.

Through Szemani transactions land was still kept by the landowners. This is quite evident from the following data:

Out of the land owning families:
small 22%.

Out of the land owning families:
64% of the big land holds over 18%.

The middle landowner hold 50% of the land.

And 50% of the rural families are landless.

The land which was redistributed was of poor quality.

iv) Land consolidation. This too benefited the poor rich landowners, who got the rich fertile land & the poor farmers were given the infertile land.
P.C. Seshu talks about the differential benefits which were received by the rich & the poor. It made rich richer & the poor poorer.

Rao said that there was difference in land reforms in Telangana & Coastal Andhra region. Similarly Gadgil studies the difference in Vidarbha & the rest of Maharashtra.

Sumit Sen observes that land reforms benefitted only a few states. West Bengal being one of them as the farmers were well organised & also due to the will of the political class.

There have been changes in the traditional jajmani system. There has been contractual ties instead of traditional relation due to the emergence of the capitalist economy.

The traditional banias who provided various services like water, beams etc have moved to urban areas due to emergence of several technologies like tube wells etc.

But there are various sociologists who point out that the land reforms helped the intermediate castes to
acquire land & various benefits which has become the dominant class in the villages.

Though due to the lack of political will there have not been many changes due to the land reforms.
M.N. Srinivas studied the Indian society using the structural functionalist perspective and contributed to the study of caste systems in India, which he talked about the concept of Sanskritisation. He believed that there are two types of status: the ritual status and the secular status. Sanskritisation is a process where a lower caste emulates the life of a higher caste to move up the ritual status hierarchy. The higher caste of which a lower caste emulates is usually the dominant caste. Dominant caste is another concept of Srinivas. A caste is a concept of Srinivas when it has dominant caste when it has numerical strength, land, and is not high in the caste hierarchy (dvija caste).

Sanskritisation often follows a change in the secular hierarchy either by government policies, education, or by government services, etc. Sanskritisation is easier when the gap between the aspiring class and the dominant class is too less.
Thus the untouchables usually do not go for Sanskritisation instead they go for political mobilisation. Also the Scheduled Castes usually go for secularisation.

Sanskritisation is not an intra-generational process but may take a few generations for time usually a few generations for the ritual status to change and the change of the caste may be not throughout the region or only in a change in position not in the region. E. g. In Varkala, sociologists have criticised Iyengar saying that it is a Brahmanical perspective.

There have been changes in the present society due to political awakening of masses & the policy of positive discrimination due to which people do not want a change in the ritual status as long as it gets benefit in the secular status in terms of reservations.

Though Sanskritisation may be present but it is not present at a scale which comes as mentioned due to changes in politics & economy.

In the pre-colonial period there was mere incorporation & encirclement. The tribals peacefully coexisted with the non-tribals.

The colonial period with ruthless efficient administrative policies, land reforms, excise policy & transport & communications caused massive upheavals in the life of the tribals. The communication & transport led to their territory being accessible to the outsiders. This situation was exploited by the local moneylenders & the merchants who exploited the tribals. They became the diktus by the tribals & became the reason for most of the rebellions.

The Santhal rebellion in the mid 19th century was a massacre. It was a revolt that was led by kamis. It was ruthlessly suppressed by the British.

The Koya rebellion, the Kumpa rebellion were other examples of violent outbreaks which led to
ruthless suppression by the British leading to loss of life & property

The Kolis, Gad, and others in Maharashtra, the Shilis in Rajasthan, etc.

The Munda rebellion has a slightly different cause. It was against the Christian missionaries who were forcing them with the education & providing them with the education and health care facilities. It was spearheaded by Bissa Munda.

The various laws of the British which banned several tribal customs, the press policy which defied the tribes of their livelihood means. The wealth of the tribes was lost due to the new various other reasons for the revolt of the tribes to get their rights for mere sustenance.
Indology is that field of study which used the study of Indian culture, texts, traditions, etc. orientalists were the first group that used anthropological approach. Max Müller was fascinated by the development of Sanskrit language at a time when most of the western sources were quite puny. He studied the ancient texts and came up with his theory of religion and other orientalists like Metcalf, Stephens, also studied the Indian texts and culture.

Indology was used by Ananya in sociology for the first time. He used the Indian texts to give his view on caste system. Though he even used empirical data based on the study of texts he gave the social and theory of origin of caste which was also talked about previously by Keith.

Ananya also came up with various other studies like on gotra and charan, based on his study of the Hindu texts.
Indology has been criticized by various sociologists on various counts. The indologists treat the society to be static & talk about the society based on texts written as early as 1500 years ago. They consider the texts to be normative i.e. they consider the norms of that the texts guided the norms of the society which is not quite true.

Also the indologists tend to the Brahminical culture. This was a major cultural achievement by the subaltern sociologists. Besides the Sanskrit texts, they talk only about the Brahminical culture. This was a major cultural achievement.

Though the indology has been criticized on many counts it was used positively by the nationalists to arouse a sense of pride among the dejected Indians during the British colonial period. It finally led to the end of imperialism.
A. P. Desai being a Marxist studied the Indian nationalism from a Marxist perspective. He basically focused on 3 approaches:

i) The changes brought about due to the British.

ii) The change in economy from the British to the British time.

iii) Emergence of new classes who had a pan-Indian nature in contrast to the British time when they were local.

Also, the new economic classes had interests opposed to the British.

Along with these, there were other changes introduced by the British which led to the change in the economy, which led to the emergence of new classes.

i) Land reform.

ii) The secular scientific education led to the emergence of the middle class which were the initiators of the modernisation which led to the growth of capitalism. Their interest were opposed to the British interest.
Communication & transport led to the rural economy being connected to the Indian & the world economy. The agricultural peasants realised that they could not thrive under the zamindari system & wanted a nationalist goal system. The British policy after 1914 was to expand industries which led to the growth of industrial capitalists & our proletariat who clearly saw their interest in the success of the British from the country.

Thus according to Desai, the nationalist movement was nothing but the emergence of various classes whose interest stood opposed to the British interest.
M.N. Srinivas saw the was a structural functionalist & studied the Indian social structure using this concept. He studied the village of Rampura in the Mysore district & became a proponent of field study.

Srinivas studied the rajman system in India & said the mutual relation between the various castes in the rajman system led to the stability of the system. The castes were interdependent on each other & this interdependence led to strong community ties. Due to the breakup of the ties, the rajman system, the villages have become less peaceful. He also talked about village as a whole unit which consists of various other units like caste, age, family system, kinship system, etc. The village itself provided identity to the individuals who would unite to the individuals who would unite when fighting for the village. Srinivas talked about the caste systems & how there was pollution purity among various caste which defined the rules of their interaction.
He gave the concept of Sanskritisation & dominant caste.

He also talked about the political social structure & how the role of the bank politics is dominated by the dominant class having numerical strength. He also talks up until the concept of 'Azad, Ashir, bhat, gujar & rajput.'

Srinivas, with his concepts like Sanskritisation, dominant caste, caste is equal to the Kuttu. He ranged theory of merit. He is criticised by various sociologists as overemphasizing on caste & making it a sociology of caste.

Though criticised by many, Srinivas gave an empirical methodology to study Indian sociology.
Social reforms were initiated by many Indians right from the time of Ram Mohun Roy. He fought against the practice of Sati and forced the British to pass a law to ban it.

This effort was followed by Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar who fought for widow remarriage. Indian society had become decadent and was still under the dress of various orthodox and traditional clothes. Western education and practices led to the realization of awareness. The presence of these practices and thus changes were initiated by few Indians.

Various religious, social reform movements like Brahmo Samaj, Arya Samaj etc. also worked towards the upliftment of the weak and the downtrodden for the upliftment of the masses. Women's and free education of the masses introduced various laws like the age of marriage was fixed by Sharda Act.

But the Revolt of 1857 changed British attitude towards reform.
movements as that had asked the orthodox Indian who found a major part of the rebel.
The poet 1857 period saw reforms carried out by the Indian nationalists.

Various reform movements in the first half of the 20th century consisted of equal anti Brahminical movements which demanded for rights of the untouchables. Reform movements like SCCP movement etc. were a few examples.

Post independence the social reforms have been aimed at removing poverty, providing health services & mass education for.

Right to education, national rural health mission, MNREGA are various schemes which aim at reforming providing for reaching social reforms.