

CUET · SOCIOLOGY · CLASS XII · CODE 326

Structural Change

CUET unit: Social Change and Development in India — Structural Change (colonialism, industrialisation, urbanisation)

By UniDrill · NCERT-grounded study material

WWW.UNIDRILL.IN

The logo for UniDrill, featuring the word "UniDrill" in a sans-serif font. "Uni" is in a light blue color, "Drill" is in a light orange color, and the "i" in "Drill" has a dot. The logo is centered on a white background.

Snapshot

- Establishes that India's modern social structure was decisively shaped by the **paradoxical experience of British colonialism** — liberal ideas arrived alongside the denial of liberty.
- Defines and distinguishes **colonialism, capitalism, nation-state and nationalism** as a linked conceptual cluster (NCERT §1.1).
- Focuses on two structural changes — **industrialisation and urbanisation** — and shows that in colonial India they followed a pattern **opposite** to Britain's (de-industrialisation, decline of old centres, rise of port cities, reverse migration into agriculture).
- Uses the **tea plantations of Assam** as a case of coercive colonial industry, and contrasts it with **state-led industrialisation in independent India** (Bhilai, Bokaro, Rourkela, Durgapur).
- High-yield for CUET because of dense datable facts (Census 1911, 1951, 2011), named cities, named Acts, and named sociologists (M.S.A. Rao, Sumit Sarkar, Anthony Giddens, Louis Wirth).

Detailed Notes

2.1 Core concepts

- Understanding modern India requires grasping its colonial past, because modern ideas and institutions reached India through a colonial framework that was simultaneously liberal in rhetoric and authoritarian in practice. The colonial encounter brought democratic rhetoric, civil-service rules and modern law alongside racial discrimination, expropriation of land and suppression of dissent — a contradiction that shaped every Indian institution from the bureaucracy to the university (NCERT Introduction, p. 2).
- The English language exemplifies colonialism's paradox — it is both a privilege that excludes the majority and, for Dalits and other traditionally excluded groups, a door to opportunities formerly closed by Sanskrit/Persianate gatekeeping (NCERT p. 3).
- **Colonialism** = the establishment of rule by one country over another; modern western colonialism had the greatest global impact because it was driven by industrial capitalism and a world-market (NCERT §1.1, p. 4).

- Unlike pre-capitalist conquerors who merely extracted tribute without disturbing the economic base, **capitalist British colonialism directly interfered** with land laws (Permanent Settlement, Ryotwari, Mahalwari), choice of crops (indigo, cotton, opium for the China trade), manufacturing, distribution, and even forests (Forest Acts that displaced pastoralists and shifting cultivators) — citing Alavi and Shanin 1982 (NCERT §1.1, p. 4).
- Colonialism caused **large-scale movement of people** — e.g., tribal labour from Jharkhand to the Assam tea plantations; middle-class professionals from Bengal and Madras Presidencies to other regions; indentured labourers to Mauritius, the Caribbean, Fiji, East Africa, Malaya and South Africa (today's "people of Indian origin" / NRI diaspora) (NCERT §1.1, p. 5; Box 1.1).
- Box 1.1: From 1834 till 1920, ships left Indian ports carrying labourers (across religions, gender, classes, castes) to work for a minimum of five years on Mauritius plantations; main recruiting districts in Bihar — Patna, Gaya, Arrah, Saran, Tirhoot, Champaran, Munger, Bhagalpur, Purnea (NCERT Box 1.1, p. 5).
- Some colonial changes were **deliberate**, others **unintended** — e.g., western education was meant to produce loyal English-speaking administrators (Macaulay's Minute, 1835) but instead nurtured nationalist and anti-colonial consciousness in figures like Gokhale, Tilak, Gandhi and Nehru (NCERT §1.1, p. 5).
- **Capitalism** is defined as an economic system in which the means of production are privately owned and organised to accumulate profits within a market system; its defining features are dynamism, innovation, and a **global character** — it cannot operate within a single country (NCERT §1.1, p. 5).
- **Nation-state**: a state with sovereign power within a defined territory whose people are citizens of a single nation; closely linked to **nationalism**, which holds that any people have the right to be free and exercise sovereign power — making colonialism and nationalism inherently contradictory ideologies (NCERT §1.1, pp. 5–6).
- **Industrialisation** = emergence of machine production based on inanimate power sources (steam, electricity, later oil and electricity). In industrial societies a large majority work in factories, offices or shops, not agriculture; over 90% of people in the west live in towns and cities (NCERT §1.2, p. 6).
- **Urbanisation** = growth of towns and cities, the shift of population from rural to urban settlements. Urbanisation and industrialisation usually go together but **not always**. Britain (Giddens 2001): in 1800 under 20% lived in towns above 10,000; by 1900, 74% did; **London grew from 1.1 million (1800) to over 7 million (1900)** — the largest city ever seen at the time (NCERT §1.2, p. 6).
- In India the same British industrialisation **de-industrialised** local production: Indian cotton and silk exports collapsed before Manchester competition; Surat and Masulipatnam declined while Bombay and Madras grew; Thanjavur, Dhaka and Murshidabad lost their courts, artisans and gentry as Mughal/Nawabi power crumbled (NCERT §1.2, p. 7).

- Sarkar (1983): urban luxury manufactures of Dacca and Murshidabad collapsed first; village crafts in the interior survived longer and were hit seriously only with the spread of railways (NCERT p. 7).
- **Reverse migration**: unlike Britain where industrialisation pulled people to cities, Indian industrialisation initially pushed more people **into agriculture** (Census of India Report 1911, Vol. 1, p. 408 — Box 1.2): cheap European piecegoods and factories destroyed many village industries; high prices of agricultural produce led village artisans to abandon hereditary crafts for agriculture (NCERT Box 1.2, p. 7). The result was an over-crowded rural sector and a thinning artisan class.
- Box 1.3 (Mukherjee 1979): British substitutes — **land ownership** (zamindari) and **English education** — were inadequate because the first was unconnected with agricultural productivity (zamindars merely collected rent) and the second with mainstream Indian cultural traditions; result — zamindars became "**parasites in land**" and English-educated graduates became "**job hunters**" (NCERT Box 1.3, p. 8).
- **Coastal/port cities** Mumbai, Kolkata and Chennai were favoured as the prime link between Britain (the economic core) and colonised India (the periphery) — concrete expressions of global capitalism. Inland Mughal cities (Delhi, Agra, Lahore, Hyderabad) declined relatively as the export-import axis shifted to the coast (NCERT §1.2, p. 8).
- Specific exports: by 1900 over three-quarters of India's raw cotton was shipped through **Bombay; Calcutta** exported jute to Dundee; **Madras** sent coffee, sugar, indigo dyes and cotton to Britain (NCERT §1.2, p. 8).
- **Kolkata's origin**: in 1690 the English merchant **Job Charnock** leased three villages (**Kolikata, Gobindapur, Sutanuti**) by the river Hugli; **Fort William was built in 1698**, and the cleared open area around it became the **Maidan** — core of the emerging city (NCERT §1.2, p. 8).
- Box 1.4 (Dutt 1993) — model of the South Asian colonial city: a **European town** with spacious bungalows, planned streets, clubs, race and golf courses, with water, electricity and sewage links — and a separate "**native town**" with restricted access to these facilities. This dual urban form survives today as the cantonment/civil-lines vs old-city divide (NCERT Box 1.4, p. 8).
- **Tea plantations (Assam)**: tea industry began in India in **1851**; by **1903** it employed **4,79,000 permanent and 93,000 temporary** workers. Because Assam was sparsely populated, labour had to be imported; planters used **fraud and coercion** under the **Transport of Native Labourers Act (No. III) of 1863** of Bengal (amended 1865, 1870, 1873). Colonial administrators acknowledged that laws in a colony did not need to follow democratic norms of Britain (NCERT Box 1.5, p. 9).
- Box 1.6 (Phukun 2005): British planters in Parbatpuri lived in luxury — sprawling bungalows on wooden stilts, lawns, armies of malis, bawarchis and bearers,

imported goods (cast-iron bathtubs, Nottingham lace) brought up by steamer — a microcosm of the racial economy (NCERT Box 1.6, p. 10).

- **Industrialisation in independent India:** nationalists treated economic exploitation as a central issue; the **Swadeshi movement** built loyalty to the national economy; rapid industrialisation was viewed as the path to growth + social equity, with stress on heavy and machine-making industries, expansion of the **public sector**, and a large **cooperative sector** — the Nehru-Mahalanobis model embodied in the Second Five-Year Plan (NCERT §1.2, p. 10).
- New industrial towns post-Independence: **Bokaro, Bhilai, Rourkela, Durgapur** — public-sector steel and power townships set up with Soviet, German and British collaboration (NCERT Activity 1.3, p. 10).
- **Urbanisation in independent India — M.S.A. Rao (1974)** identifies **three patterns of urban impact on villages** (Box 1.7, p. 11): (i) villages from which people migrate to far-off cities like Bombay/Calcutta (Madhopur example: 77 of 298 households have migrants, ~75% remit regularly); (ii) villages near industrial towns like Bhilai — some are uprooted, others have land partly acquired and receive immigrant workers; (iii) villages surrounding metropolitan cities — some fully absorbed, others have land used for urban development (NCERT Box 1.7, p. 11).
- **Urban statistics:** 1951 — **17.29%** urban (62.44 million people in 2,843 towns); 2011 — **31.16%** urban (377.10 million in 7,935 towns). Decennial growth rate of urban population was **41.42%** in 1951 and **31.80%** in 2011; the rate declined during 1981–2001 and marginally increased in 2011. For the first time since Independence, the **absolute increase** in population is more in urban than in rural areas (NCERT §1.2, p. 13).
- Conclusion: industrialisation and urbanisation imply changes not just in production systems and density of settlement but also in **"a way of life"** — Louis **Wirth, 1938** (NCERT Conclusion, p. 13). Urbanism — anonymity, secondary relations, the cash nexus, rationalisation of time — is therefore a cultural fact, not just a demographic one.

2.2 Definitions to memorise

Term	Definition	Page
Colonialism	Rule by one country over another; capitalist colonialism interfered with the economic base	4
Capitalism	Private-ownership economic system organised for profit accumulation in a market	5
Nation-state	State with sovereign power over a defined territory whose people are citizens of one nation	5–6
Nationalism	Principle that any people has the right to be free and exercise sovereign power	6

Term	Definition	Page
Industrialisation	Machine production based on inanimate power sources (steam, electricity)	6
Urbanisation	Movement of population to towns/cities and the growth of urban settlements	6
De-industrialisation	Decline of indigenous manufacturing under colonial trade pressure	7
Urbanism (Wirth, 1938)	Urban "way of life" — anonymity, secondary ties, cash nexus	13
Pre-capitalist conquest	Tribute extraction without disturbance of the economic base	4
Public sector	State-owned industrial enterprises central to post-Independence planning	10
Swadeshi	Movement promoting indigenous goods and economic self-reliance	10
Indentured labour	Bonded migrant labour exported from India 1834–1920 (Mauritius, Caribbean, Fiji)	5
Permanent Settlement (implied)	Zamindari land system creating "parasites in land" (Mukherjee 1979)	8
Reverse migration	Shift of population into agriculture caused by colonial industrial pressure	7
Maidan	Cleared open ground around Fort William, Calcutta, after 1698	8
Coolie / kangani	Recruitment systems for indentured plantation labour	5, 9
Cantonment	British military-residential zone of a colonial city	8
Princely state (implied)	Indirectly-ruled native kingdoms under British paramountcy	2
Plantation	Capitalist agricultural enterprise (tea, coffee, indigo) using imported labour	9
Cooperative sector	Non-state, non-private collective enterprises encouraged by Nehruvian planning	10
Census of India 1911	Primary source for the "reverse migration" thesis	7
Megalopolis (implied)	Very large urban agglomeration (e.g. London 1900, Mumbai today)	6
Periphery (world-system)	Region producing primary goods for the industrial core	8
Urbanisation Rate vs Urban Share	Two different ratios — distinguish them carefully	13
Cash crop		4, 8

Term	Definition	Page
	Crop grown primarily for export markets (cotton, indigo, jute, tea)	

2.3 Diagrams / processes to remember

- The opening visual on "**Different dimensions of modernity**" (p. 2) — sets up the paradox-of-modernity frame.
- Photographs of **Jaipur, Chennai and Mumbai** (pp. 6–7) — illustrating contrasts between pre-colonial princely-state and colonial port cities.
- The **tea plantation imagery** and the woman plucking tea leaves (p. 9) — visual anchor for the Assam tea-labour discussion.
- **Box 1.4: Model of the South Asian colonial city** (Dutt 1993, p. 8) — European town vs. native town spatial dualism, with infrastructural asymmetry baked in.
- **Two charts on p. 12:** (i) Urban Population & No. of UA/Towns 1951–2011 growing steadily from 62 m / 2,843 → 377 m / 7,935; (ii) Per cent and Decennial Growth Rate of Urban Population 1951–2011 — % share rising but decennial growth rate showing an overall declining trend with a marginal 2011 uptick.
- **Indentured-migration map (implicit, Box 1.1)** — Mauritius, Caribbean, Fiji, South Africa, East Africa, Malaya as destinations.
- **Map of post-Independence industrial townships (implicit)** — Bhilai (MP), Bokaro (Jharkhand), Rourkela (Odisha), Durgapur (West Bengal).

2.4 Common confusions / NTA trap points

- Students assume **urbanisation always follows industrialisation** — but "they often do occur together but not always so" (Britain yes; colonial India initially reverse — push into agriculture). NTA loves this inversion.
- Confusing **Job Charnock's three villages** (Kolikata, Gobindapur, Sutanuti) with later names; the city is Kolkata/Calcutta, not Bombay.
- **Tea industry start year = 1851** (not 1863; 1863 is the Transport of Native Labourers Act).
- **1951 urban share = 17.29%, 2011 = 31.16%**. Decennial growth rate in 1951 was **41.42%**, in 2011 only **31.80%** — the share grew but the **rate** slowed; distractor questions flip these.
- Pre-capitalist conquerors **did not interfere with the economic base** (they only took tribute) — opposite of capitalist colonialism. Easy trap to invert.
- "**Urbanism as a way of life**" is **Louis Wirth, 1938**, not Giddens, Sarkar or Rao.
- The **three Rao (1974) types** of urban impact are about **villages affected by cities**, not types of cities themselves.

- **Indentured labour migration** ran from **1834 to 1920** — neither 1858 (Crown Rule) nor 1947 (Independence).
- **Mukherjee 1979** speaks of zamindars as "**parasites in land**" — not "parasites in labour".
- **Fort William** built in 1698, not 1690; 1690 is the lease year of the three villages.
- **Capitalism's defining trait is global character**, not just private property — pre-modern systems also had private holdings but lacked the global market.

2.5 Thinkers / Theories

Thinker / Source	Key Contribution	Page
Alavi & Shanin (1982)	Distinction between pre-capitalist tribute extraction and capitalist interference with the economic base	§1.1, p. 4
Sumit Sarkar (1983)	Urban luxury manufactures of Dacca/ Murshidabad collapsed first; village crafts hit hardest by railways	§1.2, p. 7
Census of India Report 1911 (Vol. 1)	Documented the reverse migration into agriculture in colonial India	Box 1.2, p. 7
Ramkrishna Mukherjee (1979)	Land + English education as inadequate British substitutes; zamindars as 'parasites in land'	Box 1.3, p. 8
Ashok K. Dutt (1993)	Model of the South Asian colonial city — European town + native town dualism	Box 1.4, p. 8
Job Charnock (1690)	Leased Kolikata, Gobindapur and Sutanuti — origin of Calcutta	§1.2, p. 8
Phukun (2005)	Ethnographic recovery of British planters' lifestyle in Parbatpuri (Assam)	Box 1.6, p. 10
M.S.A. Rao (1974)	Three patterns of urban impact on Indian villages	Box 1.7, p. 11
Anthony Giddens (2001)	Supplied the Britain urbanisation data — under 20% (1800) to 74% (1900)	§1.2, p. 6
Louis Wirth (1938)	'Urbanism as a Way of Life' — urbanisation is also cultural change	Conclusion, p. 13
Swadeshi nationalism	Built loyalty to the national economy; antecedent of post-1947 import-substitution	§1.2, p. 10
Nehru-Mahalanobis Model (implied)	Public-sector-led heavy industrialisation; Bhilai, Bokaro, Rourkela, Durgapur	§1.2, p. 10
Transport of Native Labourers Act 1863 (Bengal)	Legal cover for fraudulent recruitment of Assam tea labour	Box 1.5, p. 9

Thinker / Source	Key Contribution	Page
Macaulay's Minute on Education 1835 (implied)	Source of English education that backfired into nationalist consciousness	§1.1, p. 5
Indentured-labour migration 1834–1920	Origin of the Indian diaspora in Mauritius, Caribbean, Fiji, South Africa	Box 1.1, p. 5

Practice MCQs

PYQ Alignment

This chapter is a perennial CUET favourite — Structural Change usually contributes 1–2 direct MCQs each year, typically on definitions (industrialisation, capitalism, nation-state), the colonial city dualism, the Assam tea industry / 1863 Act, M.S.A. Rao's three village-types, and the 1951 vs 2011 urbanisation statistics. Expect at least one statement-based "which of the following is correct" item and one matching-cities-with-exports question in the pattern used since CUET 2023.

CUET 2025 — Actual PYQs from this chapter

Q.1 (CUET 2025) Which of the following is a structural change that happened in the Indian economy due to British rule?

- A) Modernisation of thought B) Sanskritisation of lower castes C) Dependency on British industrialisation D) Westernisation of mass media
- Tests:** Colonial restructuring — India's economic dependence on British industry. **Answer:** Not in extracted key

Q.10 (CUET 2025) Who gave the three aspects to the modern framework of change in colonial India?

- A) Satish Sabharwal B) M. N. Srinivas C) Radhakamal Mukerjee D) Vishnu Shastri
- Tests:** Sociologist of the colonial framework of modern change in India. **Answer:** Not in extracted key

CUET 2024 — Actual PYQs from this chapter

Q.36 (CUET 2024) Which of the following best describes urbanisation?

- A) Growth of agricultural sector B) Increase in urban population and expansion of cities C) Decline of industries D) Decrease in migration
- Tests:** Urbanisation as growth of urban population and cities. **Answer:** Not in extracted key

Q.50 (CUET 2024) Which of the following best describes development in sociology?

- A) Only economic growth B) Increase in GDP C) Improvement in quality of life and social well-being D) Industrial production only **Tests:** Sociological view of development beyond GDP. **Answer:** Not in extracted key

CUET 2023 — Actual PYQs from this chapter

Q.24 (CUET 2023) Which statement is incorrect regarding British capitalist colonialism in India?

- A) Strengthened and expanded British capitalism B) Changed land laws C) Did not interfere with economic base D) Interfered with manufacturing sector **Tests:** Reach of British colonial capitalism into India's economic base. **Answer:** Not in extracted key

