

Global Environmentalism II

10.1.20

- Relationships with nature.
 - all contextual
 - product of time and space.

Q. What did Founders of Sociology say about Man-Nature relationships?

A. Weber:

→ Durkheim: misses social/economic impacts on nature and vice versa.

Marx and Engels: "Nature" is historically produced
labour in transforming, alienating nature.

Modern Sociology?

Giddens: first sociologist to go beyond "industrialism without capitalism" debate and
says **Capitalism + Industrialism** → env. catastrophes.

Ulrich Beck: - comes up with idea of **Risk Society**.

- influenced by Bhopal disaster and Chernobyl disaster

new risks that are fundamentally new need new institutionalised responses.
requires shift in "organised irresponsibility"

Now looking at the Politics of it - Environmental Movements.

Giddens
Habermas

All social theorists talk about the need to DEMOCRATIZE state-citizen relationships.

- Limitations of representative Democracy.
- theories of pressure groups that aim to influence public perception.
- Habermas: problem with civil society groups → lobbying can be successful, all aspects of discourse are not considered.

idea of "public sphere" for rational discourse, [eg of Indira Gandhi's policy: listening to influential policymakers that were close to her
by this national policy, entire villages could get removed entirely for the parks.]

- Beck: no policy is without politics

- response to "rampant organised irresponsibility"
- ecological democracy.

why did anti-immigrant issues rise only in Assam?

- specificity of geography in the NE and specificity of hill economies.

Most famous work on
Sociology
shortly thinking
about human-nature
relationships
But no theoretical
analysis

Does not give a
full Marxist theory,
but gives some ideas.

Roots of Rise in Global environmentalism

Factors allowing the rise of Western Environmentalism

- Lynn White → places the roots of issue in Christianity.

"God created men in his image" → used to prove inherent superiority of human species over other species. Other species have no soul.

(most religions have this).

Main argument: since Bible makes this distinction clear,
Anthropocentric view of the world.

- John Muir → roots at commercialism.

"America's issue is excessive focus on individual free enterprise". Increasing commercialism is bad.

- Why was it so easy to romanticize nature?

this does not come from tropical regions.

| indian villages near forested areas don't have any such romantic view of env.

temperate climate allows for romanticism.

Ramachandra Guha:

Three strands of Western Environmentalism.

- Agrarianism Gandhi, Jefferson.

Relationship between village and town, organic symbiotic relationships.
TRIBAL bad, INDUSTRIAL bad. as they are extreme ends.
the idea that consumption, mass production is a problem.

Focus ON

STAGE II

- Wilderness / Primitivism.

Focus ON

- ideal civilization is pre-agrarian

STAGE I

- eliminate 90% of the human civilization if necessary.

- very low levels of technology.

- the plough is an agent of evil, decimates mother earth.

Ishmael

Conversation, grills and men.

First middle: Agriculture (soil)

- Scientific Industrialism

- needs to be regulated.
- does not trust the market to self-regulate.
- Taming done by
 - institutions of state.
 - legislations.
 - "leave it to the experts"

Focus ON

STAGE 1/1

These three trends borrow from 3 philosophical foundations.

- golden mean of Stewardship Agrarian
- human submission to nature Wilderness
- conquest of nature, scientifically. Scientific

There are dominant models in different areas.

((slides are good here))

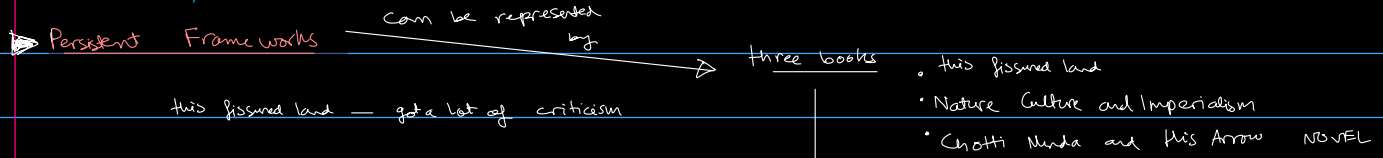
Landmarks in Global Environmentalism

- 1962 Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring" — talks of usage pesticides have caused species to die out.
- 1972 Club of Rome's "Limits to Growth" — Did a modelling of the world
- 1972 UN conf on env in Stockholm — Indira Gandhi goes and says "in India, poverty is the biggest problem"
Brazil says "smoke is the sign of progress"
Thatcher — pollution is a third world problem.
- 1973 Schumacher's "Small is Beautiful" — Buddhist economics, "the middle path"
- 1977 Hirsch "The Social Limits to Growth"
- 1983 formed: Brundtland Commission.
- 1987 Brundtland Commission's book.

Indian Environmentalism must move beyond pretty trees and tigers.

Indian Themes in Environmentalism-1

17.1.20



Common: persistent framework.

→ seeing things in binary

a lot of the reading is "things changed for the worse"

there is some evidence, of course, but

made more interesting by the theory of degeneration in history.

1. Perfect Utopia, human-nonhuman relationship is perfect.
2. Exact opposite, const. struggle

→ writing history as moving from local control to settled, centralised control.

Ram Guha
there is a continuity of peasant unrest against rulers.
"strong a reason"

- persistent enemy in the environmental narrative is the state.

- Both these persistent frameworks lead themselves to a reading of history as Colonialism being an ecological watershed, disrupting human-nature relationships — as it disrupts local control, etc.

Looking at the first book (this fissured land)

- writing a history of resource use in this area
- time span: massive (ancient India → modern times)
- not working with usual categories (bases of communism, capitalism, etc.)

→ tried to come up with patterns etc.

PART I

4 patterns of resource use in India

- hunting-gathering and shifting cultivation.
- nomadic resource use patterns.
- settled agriculture.
- Industrialism.

(not necessarily one after the other).

(all to exist currently in India)

→ each mode brings with it an ideology, way to explain things.

→ comes with a certain kind of technological use.

→ comes with its own economics. (they were criticized for being economic determinists)

Issue with writing ecological history:

figuring out tensions between types of resource use.

example of conflict

The Kishore case as conflict between settled agriculturalists and nomadic pastoralists.
• over time, became a conflict of religion

Book: existing battles between resource usage becomes something else as per shifting political climate

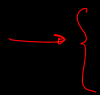
PART II

Shift of large society from hunter-g to settlement society caused massive ecological crisis in the 4th century (hasn't been read as such so far).

— (rise of Jainism and Buddhism) in India happens at a specific ecological environmental crisis

↓
which leads to alternative ways of looking at this.

Interesting point



typical history → rises as a response to Brahmanical tyranny.
Gandhi, Gandhi → " " " " " environmental crisis brought around by settled agriculture.

Rise of village level environmental conservation systems.

PART III

○ "British came, and British destroy"

Black and white perspective. follows the traditional frameworks

• slow and steady destruction of local conservation networks.

PROBLEMS with the book.

— cherry picking case studies.

eg: missing Dams.

— Linear history that does not look at certain evidence.



Edited collection of Articles
Nature Culture & Imperialism

— follows framework (see title)



Novel, originally in Bengali.
Choti Munda and His Arrow

— referring to 1908, Munda.

— British introduce Ernest Dams



Standard Environmental Narrative.
Problems in the Rigid Framework

• serious methodological problems with this study of history

(*) Archana Basak: — Rejects SEN.

— SEN requires a reading of tribes as technologically backward, without trade networks, etc.

— Baigas and Gonds became attracted to them cultivation due to factors:
1. Resistance to centralisation and state

(*) Tigers: — Humans always had boundaries between field and forest.

— What British did was probably not a fundamental reworking of human-nature relationships.

(*) Weak Evidence to suggest SEN is.

Global model of conservation : View the business out of context

FIRST THEME

Agrarian Change / Forest Transformation

• CSE's first Citizen's Report.

• British categorize forests.

— strict rules on mode of control.

• for locals, suddenly forests become inaccessible.

• While the SEN framework is contested, there is evidence of Colonial Rule affecting stuff.

