APPROACHES TO INDIAN SOCIOLOGICAL THOUGHT
Indological /textual perspective

- Understanding Indian society through the study of ancient texts
- Indologists use ancient history, epics, religious manuscripts and texts in the study of Indian institutions.

G.S. Ghurye

Background
- Educated in Sanskrit and sociology
- Academic career in Mumbai
- Interests in Indian civilisation and culture, national movement

Aims
- Ethnographic study of castes, tribes, rural-urbanisation, religious phenomena, social tensions and Indian art.

Assumption
- Analysis of evolution and growth of Indian social institutions

Methodology
- Indological and textual
- Inductive-empirical method
- Historical-comparative method
Theoretical perspective
• Functional approach

Typology
• Classical textual categories
• Literary data

Issues
• Different aspects of Indian society – Indian culture and civilisation
• Race
• Religion
• Caste/kinship
• Tribal studies
• Rural-urbanisation
• Sociology of conflict and integration.
M.N. Srinivas

Structural-functional approach
Borrows from biological sciences
interdependence of various structures
Relies more on field work tradition for understanding social reality

Background
• Educated and training in sociology
• Academic career in Bombay, Delhi, Bangalore and Oxford
• Interest in understanding rural social life

Aim
• Dynamics of caste system in rural settings

Assumption
• Structure and change
• The tradition of basing macro-sociological generalisations on micro-anthropological insights
• Understanding Indian society through field experience.

Approach
• Structural functional approach
• Macro-micro perspective
Methodology
• Anthropological investigation of small scale communities
• Functional unity
• Field investigations
• Descriptive study

Typology
• Dominant caste
• Sanskritisation
• Westernisation
• Secularisation

Issues
• Indian society and culture
• Religion and society
• Village study
• Inter-caste relations
• Social change
D P Mukerji

**Background**
Education and training in economics
Studied in Calcutta and Lucknow
Interest in understanding nature and meaning of Indian social reality rooted in the Indian tradition

**Aim**
The role of tradition to understand social change.

**Assumption**
Development of man is conditioned by social environment
Marxism as a method of analysis rather than political ideology.

**Approach**
He made an attempt to analyze Indian history from the dialectical perspective of Karl Marx, to understand the relationship and conflict between Indian tradition and modernity. For him dialectics and the historically situated human agent were the source of the dynamics of human history. Though he was a Brahmin he had a Marxist view of religion; but he also criticized Marxists for not analyzing why religion was a major social force in India.

**Methodology**
Marxian perspective of dialectical materialism

**Issues**
Indian tradition
Tradition and modernity
Personality
Role of new middle class
Subaltern approach

Views from below
View or understanding from the bottom of the society or flow of knowledge from below.
B R AMBEDKAR

Background
• Educated in Satara and Bombay in Maharashtra; Columbia (USA); London and training in economics and law
• Interest in the study of the depressed classes

Aim
Dalit liberation

Assumption
Felt that depressed classes has no honour in the hindu religion which reflects in his writings and teachings.

Methodology
Subaltern approach

Issues
Untouchables
State and minority
Annihilation of caste system
Phule

Approach:
Phule’s subaltern and anti-caste approach condemned the _chaturvarna_ system (the caste system) and opposed idol worship. He advocated the spread of rational thinking and rejected the need for a Brahman priestly class as educational and religious leaders.

Phule attacked blind faith and what is given in religious books and the so-called god's words.

He criticized patriarchy in shudra and Brahmin families

Phule believed in overthrowing the social system in which man has been deliberately made dependent on others, illiterate, ignorant and poor, with a view to exploiting him. Mere advice, education and alternative ways of living are not enough, unless the economic framework of exploitation comes to an end.