

VI semester honours  
PAPER XIII  
UNIT III  
(RADICAL GEOGRAPHY)

The radical approach in geography developed in 1970s as a reaction to 'quantitative revolution' and positivism which tried to make geography as a spatial science, with great emphasis on locational analysis. Radical geographers rejected traditional concept of geography. This approach was close to Marxism and Harvey and Peet were the two main propounder of radical geography. It criticised locational analysis as a spatial science. The radical geographers introduced the study of topics such as poverty, hunger, health, and crime to human geographers, who had previously very largely ignored them.

**Causes or factors responsible for the origin of radicalism in geography:**

Radical approach originated, in U.S.A. in 1960s, because of some contemporary issues going on that time. These are:

- a) Vietnamese war (i.e. gender discrimination),
- b) Civil right for black Americans (inequality, racism, sexism, crime, delinquency, discrimination against blacks and non-whites) and
- c) Inequalities or discrimination between urban and rural people and areas, social tension

It began as a critique within the contemporary liberal capitalistic society but later coalesced around a belief in the power of Marxian analysis. According to radicalists, inequality is inherent in the capitalist mode of production. Redistribution of income through taxation policies will not solve the problems of poverty, according to Peet, alternative, environment designs, with removal of central bureaucracies and their replacement by anarchistic models of community control are needed, and geographers should work towards their creation.

Journal of radical geography 'antipode' was launched in 1969 at Clark university

The young radical geographers published papers in Antipode dealing with urban poverty, discrimination against women, coloured people and minority groups, unequal access to social amenities, crimes, deprivation, permissiveness and sexism. They also published articles on underdevelopment, poverty, malnutrition, and unemployment and resource misuse in the Third World countries.

**The salient features and objectives of radical geography:**

1. To expose the issues of inequality, deprivation, discrimination, health, exploitation, crime and environmental degradation in the capitalist countries.
2. To highlight the weaknesses of the positivism and quantitative revolution in geography which emphasized on geography as a 'spatial science' with a thrust on locational analysis
3. To bring a cultural revolution to eradicate permissiveness, sexism and discrimination against females.
4. To remove regional inequalities.

5. Radicalists opposed political centralization and economic concentration. Contrary to multinationals, they favoured small- scale self sufficient social units, living in greater harmony with their natural surroundings.

6. They were against imperialism, nationalism, national chauvinism and racism.

7. They opposed the idea of the superiority of the white and the west.

8. According to radicalists the man and environment relationship may be understood through history. In other words, the mode of production in any society determines the economic relation among its people.

9. One of the objectives of the radicalists was to explain not only what is happening but also to prescribe revolutionary changes and solution to the social problems.

10. To develop a more just, equal, tension free, peaceful and enjoyable society.

#### **G. Criticism:**

1. It give more emphasis on time than on space

2. Because of its 'less flexibility' characteristics, this approach could not change with world or time

3. Concepts could not reach communist countries and it lacked of real examples

4. In radicalism, human being became a creator of history than being a product of history.