



# **FACULTY OF JURIDICAL SCIENCES**

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# Lecture-4



## Assimilation in Sociology:

Definitions and Aids to Assimilation! Assimilation is the process whereby persons and groups acquire the culture of other group in which they come to live, by adopting its attitudes and values, its patterns of thinking and behaving—in short, its way of life. Some of the definitions of assimilation are the following: (i) “Assimilation is a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, attitudes of other persons or groups and by sharing their experiences and history are incorporated with them in a cultural life”... -Park and Burgess (ii) “Assimilation is a process whereby altitudes of many persons are united, and thus develop into a united group.” -Bogarcus (iii) Assimilation is the “social process whereby individuals or groups come to share the same sentiments and goals.” -Biesaru (iv) “Assimilation is the process whereby individuals or groups once dissimilar become similar, and identified in their interest and outlook.” -Nimkoft (v) “Assimilation is a word used to designate a process of mutual adjustment through which culturally different groups gradually obliterate their differences to the point where they are not longer regarded as socially significant or observable.” –Lundberg (vi) “Assimilation is the fusion or blending of two previously distinct groups into one. Obviously, assimilation requires more fundamental changes than ant agonistic co-operation, which are called accommodation.” -Mack and young (vii) “The process of mutual cultural diffusion through which persons and groups come to share a common culture is called assimilation.” -Horton and Hunt The process as pointed out by Fairchild, involves both nationalisation and renationalisation. It results in the modification of social attitudes. When different cultures come into contact, originally it is the sentiment of mutual conflict that is most prominent but they gradually assimilate elements from each other. Under assimilation the two distinct groups do not just compromise or otherwise agree to get along with each other, they become so much like each other that they are no longer distinguishable as separate groups. Like socialisation, it too, is a process of learning but it starts when the individual comes into contact with other cultures. Assimilation is a social and psychological process. Hayes, however, holds that assimilation is a ‘result’ rather than a process of interaction. Assimilation is not limited to single field only: The best example of assimilation is that of the foreigners being assimilated in the host culture i.e., their abandoning their own culture and taking on that of the host country. But it would be wrong to limit die process of assimilation to this single field. Assimilation takes place in other cases also. For instance, children are gradually assimilated into adult society as they grow up and learn how to behave. Fostered children take in the new ways of their foster-parents sometimes so completely that the traces of earlier home-influence are effaced. Husbands and wives, starting marriage with dissimilar back-grounds often develop a surprising unity of interest and purpose. In the religious field, members of one church may be brought into the field of other by conversion. Since assimilation is a social process, it is a characteristic of group life in general, and is not limited to particular kinds of groups