

Shatarupa Dey • Arun Kumar Singh •
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Editors

DECODING GEOGRAPHY



**Foundation of Practising Geographers
Kolkata**

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CHAPTER 3

MAN, MYTH AND GEOGRAPHY

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INTRODUCTION

Man and myth's relationship evolved during the period of a particular evolutionary process of the Homo Sapiens which has been termed as 'Cognitive Revolution' that started around 70,000 years ago. This revolution shaped the course of man or the history of Homo sapiens on this planet 'earth' (Harari, 2015). What caused it, we are not sure? Most commonly believed theory argue that the accidental genetic mutations changed the inner wiring of the Brain of Sapiens enabling them to think in an unprecedented way and to communicate using an altogether new type of language. The consequences of this change enabled the Sapiens to drive out other species like the Neanderthals and thus conquer the whole world. The other revolutions are Agricultural Revolution that started about 12,000 years ago and lastly, Scientific Revolution which started around 500 years and to which Sapiens are passing through and this revolution is going to be completely different from the other two revolutions.

Thus, it was the Cognitive Revolution that gave Sapiens the ability to learn, remember, to communicate and to acquire more and more knowledge through thought process and experience. During this period, senses also developed by which the Sapiens started understanding different phenomenon which were happening surrounding them. This perception sense helped the Sapiens to explain the various natural events which were occurring or happening and which influenced them. These explanations came with the help of gossips or story telling; legends, myths, gods demons and spirits. These myths gave Sapiens the ability to cooperate among large numbers. So large number of strangers who were not known to each other came together and cooperate successfully by believing in common myths. Sapiens cemented their social order by believing in myths, ghosts and spirits and dance on full moon along the fire place to please them. Another important event happened through the common myths that Sapiens started making a definite sense of the wondrous working of the natural world surrounding them collectively. These myths started flowing from one generation to another orally.