Modernization is a process that brings changes to the exiting life style of people and to his place. Its dimensions may be categorized into a number of quarters and so it can be an economic modernization, political modernization, social modernization and technological modernization, which are having a major impact on the traditional India and its culture. According to Gore (1982), “modernization is a process of change, which can change a society from primarily agricultural to primarily industrial economy”. As a consequence of this change in economy, the society simultaneously underwent changes in values, belief and norms. But today, the term, “modernization”, means a, “social change” involving the elements of science and technology. So it brings changes concerning rationality and other expectations of human life. Alata (1972) said, “Modernization is a process by which modern scientific knowledge is introduced in a society with the ultimate purpose of achieving a better and more satisfactory life”. But the people should understand the scientific knowledge and values where such knowledge is introduced.

On the other hand it is historically obvious that modernization connects a process of change in respect of social, economic and political systems. Impact of modernization is greatly reflected in different traditional societies in different parts of the world. According to Eisenstadt (1969), “Modernization is the most overwhelming
feature of the contemporary scene, in the sense that most nations are now a days caught in its web”. Eisenstadt also said, “modernization means both structural aspects of social organization and socio-demographic aspects of societies.” These two are generally applicable to all societies. Since social change according to Moore (1967) is the, “significant alternation of social structures that is patterns of social action and interaction, including consequences and manifestations of such structure embodied in norms, rules of conduct, values and cultural products and symbols”. Such an comprehensive idea of cultural and social change raises several other connected aspects like factors and forms of change and direction of change and whether such changes are “induced” or “automatic”. The relationship between the various social groups within a society is interrelated. As social structure is an important part of culture, so any change into the social structure also means the change of culture. R. Brown (1930) had rightly said, “Social structure is a network of system of social relations including persistent social group and different social classes and social rules”. It also refers how a particular type of social structure function in a society. It may be said that each structural system is a functional unity in which all the components contribute in a harmonious way to its existence and continuity. So, to know all these social phenomenon, moral, law, etiquette, religion, government, economy and education need to study with their direct or indirect relations to social structure. This helps to understand the social relationship between persons and group of persons. So, culture helps us to understand the social relationship and its various forms, as culture is the way of life. Modernization can bring some changes in the social structure and also in the culture of a particular community. Owing to the impact of modern technologies, the traditional societies could experience numerous
advancements in social and economic aspects of its life, where modern technologies are implemented in agricultural production, or in establishing the modern industries, there results in greater social, economic, spatial mobility. The introduction of modern improved techniques has changed the way of life of man in traditional societies. Urbanization, organized agriculture, breaking of joint family systems and clan ties, greater exposure to the external world, increased occupational diversifications, are the features usually found in those societies where modern technologies and modernizations are affecting on. Modernization can also change the systems of production and consumption patterns. It also brings considerable change in agricultural sectors that include new implements and new cropping systems with modern breads of cereals.

According to Eisenstadt (1966), “in a traditional system people manage with the simple occupations where the natural resource are exploited for direct use of man, while with twist towards modernization these are enormously supplemented and supported by occupations of manufacturing and skilled services”

Impact of modern education is well known. Modernization expands schooling amenities and children are receiving better education. Formal education with skill is needed for the economic development. Industrialization needs modern machine power and modern technology in production sector. The persistent application of scientific knowledge to improve production and work organization comprises male workers to be more highly educated. Industrialization involves labour mobility, extensive educational expansion and rationalization of economic production.

A transition in society from traditional form to modern shape needs change in institutional character. It involves shift from structural changes in social
organization as well as a qualitative change in behaviour. Tradition to modernity is a gradual change. But it is difficult to specify exact point to indicate a clear departure or a clear entry into a new system. Every change finds its roof in tradition and it thrives in modernized sphere. The tradition gives birth to form and design to change. But a sort of confrontation between tradition and modernity is always seen in any social system. Jethly (1977) has noted, “In a hierarchical arrangement of social system, the pattern of behaviour are governed by family and caste which also regulate the native and extent of communication with members of other groups”. Because the traditionally predominant social system is characterized by socially allocated status into which one is born, where rewards, social sanctions and prestige are related with the works done by one person on economic callings is attached with it. But owing to constitutional provision for free education, co-education, caste-free education and removal of discrimination, political and economic opportunities result in as an impact of modernization. Modernization also operators for greater migration, inter-regional and intra-regional, inter-occupational and even inter religion conversions. Improved means of communication, increase in political and economic activities, greater right consciousness are affecting the traditional pattern of social system.

Durkheim (1893) remarked, “the traditional societies are held together by mechanical solidarity. Because these societies are small and in these societies every one does more the same work, the members are all socialized in the same pattern, share the same experiences, and hold common values. In traditional society there is little individuality as collective consciousness plays an important role in these societies.” But modern societies are large and in these societies, people do or engage themselves in a variety of economic activities. As a result, member has quite different
experiences, hold different values and socialize them in varying patterns. So in modern societies people think themselves as individuals first and as members of kinship or wider social group second. The essential problem of modern society is that the division of labour leads inevitably to feelings of individualism. The result is anomic where a state of formlessness is created in both the society and the individual.

Modernization brings industrial development and as a result of this people have change their occupations. In the early stages of industrialism most workers were employed in primary sector of production depending on natural resources. In the later industrial development or secondary stage becomes the dominant sector as more and more economic activities are devoted to the production of manufactured goods. In more advanced stages of modernization or industrialism tertiary industry becomes dominant, where the bulk of the work force becoming involved in service occupation.

Modernization has two forces to change, one is exogenous force, which are imitation or transferred advanced technology and complex political, social and economic change in organization. The other one is endogenous force of modernization, which is related with increased attentiveness, rearrangements, reinterpretations and elaborations. So, in a society modernization effects change in both the ways. By the impact of modernization the structure of an institution may remain the same but its meaning may change, sometimes its meaning and structure may change together. According to Gusfield (1967), "A society may have modern values in certain respects and traditional values may prevail in other respects. The modern may become traditional in course of time and a traditional may become modern in course of time". He also stated that modernization does not stand as an
opposite pole of tradition, nor does it follow that tradition and modernity are found in a form of synthesis. These are continually generating renewing and renovating parts of the same process of change. As such, modernization becomes both an instrumental value an articulate device for change in the existing economic, social, political and cultural structures.

According to Chauhan (1980), “By the impact of modernization and by dint of modern education an individual or a group might bear a style of life which is quite different from the rest of the members of their parent caste”. So a single caste may contain more than one status group or more than that.

In a traditional Hindu society, the son inherits the occupation of the father. But emergence of new occupations as result of modern industrialization there arises a drift from traditional occupations towards new occupation. The transition from barter economy to monetary economy, the importance of traditional occupations is gradually decreasing. Traditionally there was a greater coincidence between rituals and economic status. Those who were economically well off were also ritually superior. But at present caste and economic status do not overlap.

At present the main economic status of the Hiras of Barpeta bases on an income from the traditional occupations and income from other occupations, which they have taken by the impact of modernization. Formerly the Hiras were self-sufficient. The income from their traditional occupation of pottery-making and pottery selling was enough to maintain their families, but at present though they have increased their production still they have economic hardship. Another factor that is responsible for bringing change in this occupation is the modern machine made utensils. With the introduction of this machine made utensils their customer people
gradually become accustomed with modern articles, which are made from aluminum, brass, glass and plastic. So the handmade earthenware cannot complete with machine made products. This is one of the main causes for the Hiras to switch over to other occupations, which are at present more alluring for them. Moreover impact of modernization and modern education has made the Hiras at present to be more tempting for them. It has also attracted them to have education and those who are educated are employed in government, semi-government, private farms and institutions and those who are not educated are engaged in different trades and business of secondary and tertiary orders and the number of persons engaged in primary sector are gradually decreasing. (Tables 5.5 and 5.6).

The Hira potteries are sold in markets and also through barter and exchange trade. Hiras living in the environs of Barpeta Town do not get proper marketing facilities to sell their home made products. Except some months of the year they almost dependant on the local markets for selling their earthenware. The nature of new occupations in which they are engaged at present also hampering this pottery making and selling occupation because the types of modern occupations do not allow them to go to far off weekly markets and also on barter and exchange trade that they had in the past. Moreover, the traditional pottery making occupations cannot fulfill their day-to-day needs. On the other hand, the impact of modernization in their social and economic life they are pulling them towards the modern life. Their demands are gradually increasing and consequently tendency of the number of families adhering to this occupation are gradually found to minimize. Lack of proper marketing facility and competition between the hand made and machine made utensils they are facing a
severe economic backwardness in this occupation. It is also observed that the male persons have no attraction towards this occupation.

It is also a obvious fact that they do not always get proper value or exact price of their products and as such they sometimes have to sell their products at low prices, which fails them get back money they spent at the time of making the earthenware. For this reason, they are not in favour of expanding this industry. The techniques, which are applied in making the pottery, are age-old ones. The time, money and labour spent by them in pottery-making also not yielding good results. Another factor affecting them to leave this occupation is they are not organized in this occupation. The unorganized nature and lack of organized marketing system also compel them to leave this age-old heritage occupation. If there were organized market systems then they could sell their products in proper way and at an appropriate price. Unorganized system has given rise the middlemen in this trade is a recent phenomenon and a major portion of their pottery selling is done by these middlemen. Though modern communication and transport facilities has shortened the geographical distance between localities to locality and between near and far-off places still the Hiras are not able to go distant places to sell their products. That is why they sell their utensils via these middlemen who regularly visit their villages. These middlemen are mostly the immigrant Muslims. Sometimes their women also come to the Hira village to purchase pottery.

The functional importance of Hira pottery is gradually loosing credibility. At present its importance is mainly centered in the Sattars and among the low-income group of people. The immigrant Muslims is their regular customer and user. They use Hira pottery in their domestic purposes and it becomes an integral part
of their socio-economic life. Those traders carried it on small country boats to far-flung areas, which the Hiras could go in the past but not now.

The traditional customs, hierarchical ascriptive occupations are prevalent among the Hiras. But modernization is gradually changing them. Spread of education made the Hira people to change their attitude towards ascriptive nature of occupation. Education has helped them to acquire other type of occupation. Though the pace of changing trends is very slow, the modern Hira society has specific economy, changing nature in political and cultural character. At present the cultural value of their traditional occupation is eroded by the impact of modernization. Their social commitments no longer stand on their way in opting to have a comfortable living then with their traditional livelihood. So they are always looking for some alternative occupation. This is one of the main causes for shifting from their traditional occupation to other new occupation.

It is also found that though modern technology with its systematic application, knowledge, and growing specialization in occupation is increasing, the Hiras traditional occupation also diversifies. Modernity has given birth to scopes and complexity of works, markets for goods, labour and money. So as a pull from tradition to modernity, there arises some conflicts between traditionalism and modernity. Modernity can change the way of life of a particular group of people. According Pande (1991), “greater standard consciousness, breaking trends of joint families, greater urbanization, spread of education, urban culture in rural settings, family limitation tendency and choosing of legislators by free and fair elections are the tendencies leading to modernizations from tradition”. He also stated that the new demands for national efforts and larger social interest, rationality in every sphere of
life, achievement criteria for determination of social prestige, higher aspirations, greater materials approach and functional specialty constitute the main sphere of growing conflicts with traditional system due to modernization. The Hiras also pay high prestige to their occupations whether it is traditional or modern. According to Talcott and Rose (1961), “Occupational system forces many workers to move from locality to locality for work, it is essential that their families should be able to move with them. Thus, the family form most suited to a mobile society is an isolated conjugal family”. Thus the joint families are breaking due to modernization. Formerly the Hiras prefer to live in joint family. Because in a joint family a person gets more help from other family members, as pottery-making requires more and more persons. Breaking of joint family system among the Hiras is also affecting their age-old occupation of pottery-making. The urbanization, the increasing economic pressure, the opening of new occupational avenues and quick means of transport and communication have given pressure on the institution of joint family. So a conflict between joint family and nuclear family is seen among the Hiras that results in economic hardship. Because they do not have all the modern luxurious household goods nor they are capable to acquire them with their low income, there arises a conflict between traditionalism to modernity. At present the Hiras prefer to do any type of occupations for the betterment of their living standard except begging and serving as domestic servants/workers. Because they are very conscious about the prestige related with their occupation. Modernity also brings some chaos in their society, because of modernity brings some petty crimes to their midst. Though the nature of crimes is not big one still it has polluted their social life as most of the crimes are happening due to addiction to alcohol.
Application of scientific technology in production sector of pottery is totally absent among the Hiras. The method use by them for the preparation of pottery is crude and unscientific. Their traditional norms and values come from a sacred origin and therefore there arises conflicts between traditional and modern norms and values.

The changes that occur with the transition from a traditional to a modern society, according to James O’ Conell (1965) are:

1. Occupations become more skilled and specialized.
2. Numbers of people engage in primary occupations reduces while that of people engaged in secondary and tertiary occupations increases.
3. Barter system is replaced by money system.
4. The process of urbanization increase.
5. Age-old agricultural implements and methods give way to use of tractors, fertilizers.
6. Ascriptive status gives way to achieved status.
7. Geographical distances are shortened with the use of modern transport and communication.
8. An interdependence comes into being between communities that previously were separated from and independent of one another.
9. With better medical care and improved health, the longevity of life or survival rate increases.
10. Hereditary leadership gives way to elected leadership.
James O' Conell’s classification has some resemblance among the Hiras of Barpeta District. Among the Hiras modern occupations has compelled them to engage themselves in tertiary occupations and their concentration in primary and secondary sector is gradually decreasing. Modern occupations need skilled and specialized workers. Among the Hiras who are living in the urban areas are at present engage themselves in some specialized and skilled works, by receiving technological education. But among the Hiras who are living in the rural areas do not have any technical training. So barter system is still prevalent among the Hiras; so improvement regarding to this aspect is meaningless. By imparting education and by achieving better economic pursuits some people of this caste grow their standard. Better communication also enabled them to near and far off places every day in search of works; so impact of modernity have changed the way of life of the Hiras of Barpeta district. As traditional society is bound to change under the technological impact. Technology, like trade has the inherent power, which brings mobility. The technological advancement and industrial change affect all aspects of society in due progression. It improved the economic standards and helped in economic development. At present the traditional society like the Hiras accepted the change brings by industrialization and modernity.