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Anthropology short notes

Kinship

UPSC Civil Services (Main) Examination · Anthropology Paper 1 · Anthropology GS 1 (Paper I)

2.5 Kinship: Consanguinity and Affinity; Principles and types of descent (Unilineal, Double, Bilateral, Ambilineal); Forms of descent groups (lineage, clan, phratry, moiety and kindred); Kinship terminology (descriptive and classificatory); Descent, Filiation and Complimentary Filiation; Descent and Alliance.

Short notes by official syllabus heading.

Revision notes for the Anthropology optional. Confirm thinkers and examples against standard texts and recent papers.

<https://wrapexams.com/upsc/archives/anthropology-notes/paper-1/kinship/>

Kinship

Definition

Clan is the seat of political authority

Thinkers

Kinship Studies in India - Irawati Karve

Consanguinity

Definition

Biological anthropology studies human evolution, heredity, variation and adaptation using scientific methods, while recognising the influence of culture on biology.

Example / case study

Lactase persistence → long-term milk consumption in pastoral populations → selection for lactose tolerance. Thus, biological anthropology connects genetic evolution with culturally created dietary practices. 2. Archaeological Anthropology - Material Science + Human Meaning Helps estimate prevalence of inherited disorders.

Thinkers

Claude Lévi-Strauss: Used genealogical/kinship data to develop Alliance Theory, focusing on marriage and exchange between lineages. India: S.C. Roy documented Oraon genealogies; Irawati Karve used genealogical mapping to study village kinship and exogamy in Maharashtra.

Affinity

Definition

A key feature distinguishing tribes from bands is the presence of pan-tribal sodality (associational organisation).

Thinkers

Radcliffe-Brown (Structural Functionalism): Opposed Kroeber; Argued that terminology and behaviour are closely linked. Kinship Studies in India - Irawati Karve E.B. Tylor - culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom; unilinear evolution and survivals.

Principles And Types Of Descent**Definition**

Principles and types of descent

Thinkers

A.R. Radcliffe-Brown - structural-functionalism: institutions function like organs to maintain social structure. Study by Evans-Pritchard among Nuer (South Sudan)

Unilineal**Definition**

Situating a person's position in the kinship structure

Example / case study

Descent may be traced from either parent

Thinkers

A.R. Radcliffe-Brown - structural-functionalism: institutions function like organs to maintain social structure.

Double**Definition**

Double descent (double unilineal descent) is a kinship system in which individuals inherit rights and group membership through two lines - typically both patrilineal and matrilineal - for different purposes such as land, ritual office or property.

Example / case study

Khairlanji massacre (Maharashtra, 2006). Surinder Jodhka (Ad-Dharmis, Punjab) → As Dalits gained autonomy, they asserted control over women, started teasing and taunting women of U caste. Patriarchal Bargaining (Deniz Kandiyoti) → Upper caste women themselves internalize patriarchy, enforce norms for status. Dalit Women's Double disadvantage (Leela Dube) Gail Omvedt by Gail Omvedt → suffer both caste and gender discrimination. (dalit + women).

Thinkers

A.R. Radcliffe-Brown - analysed descent principles in African kinship systems. Fortes - lineage theory and unilineal descent groups.

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