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Anthropology short notes

Culture and personality (Benedict, Mead, Linton, Kardiner and Cora-du Bois)

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

(e) Culture and personality (Benedict, Mead, Linton, Kardiner and Cora-du Bois)

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/mains-answers/anthropology-gs-1/culture-and-personality/>

Culture And Personality

Definition

The discipline has evolved from a "**Science of Man**" focused on the "primitive" to a global, reflexive discipline that addresses contemporary issues like Digital Anthropology, Medical Anthropology, and AI technology. As society changes, anthropology continues to adapt, fulfilling its role as a holistic framework for understanding human diversity and survival.

Thinkers

Bio-cultural Functionalism: Bronislaw Malinowski pioneered Participant Observation, arguing that culture exists solely to satisfy biological and psychological needs. Structural Functionalism: A.R. Radcliffe-Brown applied an "**Organic Analogy**," viewing society as a system where institutions function like organs to maintain the stability of the social structure.: Structural and Psychological Turns. Structuralism: Claude Lévi-Strauss argued that human thought is patterned through binary oppositions (e.g., **Nature vs. Culture**) and that culture, like language, is a mental construct. Culture and Personality: Scholars like Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead explored the relationship between culture and individual psychology, arguing that adult personality is a product of cultural training and socialization.: Mid-20th Century Revivals: Neo-Evolutionism and Materialism. Neo-Evolutionism: Revived evolutionary theory by explaining cultural change through technology and ecology. Leslie White proposed that cultural development is a function of energy harnessed ($C = E \times T$), while Julian Steward introduced Cultural Ecology, focusing on multilinear evolution and environmental adaptation.

Definition

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Thinkers

Ernest Gellner - four steps of national identity: shared formal education; cultural homogenisation; language standardisation; anonymity among members that produces a feeling of sameness. Christophe Jaffrelot - two-step rise of Hindu nationalism: stigmatise an 'other' as a common enemy; then unify Hindus across caste, class and region. Bio-cultural Functionalism: Bronislaw Malinowski pioneered Participant Observation, arguing that culture exists solely to satisfy biological and psychological needs. Structural Functionalism: A.R. Radcliffe-Brown applied an "Organic Analogy," viewing society as a system where institutions function like organs to maintain the stability of the social structure.: Structural and Psychological Turns. Structuralism: Claude Lévi-Strauss argued that human thought is patterned through binary oppositions (e.g., Nature vs. Culture) and that culture, like language, is a mental construct.

Definition

(Added by me: Apatanis are globally recognized by FAO for their indigenous paddy-fish cultivation as a sustainable agricultural heritage system).

Thinkers

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Definition

Ethnocentrism means viewing other cultures through the lens of one's own culture.

Thinkers

Margaret Mead - culture determines personality.

Definition

Child-rearing is the most important mechanism of enculturation.

Thinkers

Margaret Mead - culture determines personality. Bronislaw Malinowski - Trobriand Islands

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Bronislaw Malinowski - Trobriand Islands Margaret Mead - culture determines personality.

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