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Anthropology short notes

Mutation.

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

Mutation.

Short notes by official syllabus heading.

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

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Mutation**Definition**

This is a phenomenon where the expression of a gene depends on which parent it was inherited from. Certain genes are "silenced" via DNA methylation during gamete formation.

Example / case study

Phenylketonuria (PKU). A mutation on Chromosome 12 leads to an inability to metabolize phenylalanine, which subsequently causes intellectual disability, skin pigmentation loss, and neurological issues. HLA (Human Leukocyte Antigen) genes. On Chromosome 6, genes A, B, and C are linked and almost always inherited as a single unit. Prader-Willi Syndrome occurs if a specific segment of Chromosome 15 is deleted from the paternal side, while Angelman Syndrome results if the same segment is deleted from the maternal side.

Thinkers

Marriage as Exchange: Lévi-Strauss used the Purum case to argue that kinship is fundamentally a system for the reciprocal exchange of women between groups, which acts as a form of social communication. Challenge to Descent Primacy: While British anthropologists like Radcliffe-Brown emphasized descent groups (lineages/clans) as the primary basis of social structure, the Purum system proved that marriage alliances are equally fundamental.

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