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Anthropology short notes

Religion

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

5. Religion: Anthropological approaches to the study of religion (evolutionary, psychological and functional); monotheism and polytheism; sacred and profane; myths and rituals; forms of religion in tribal and peasant Societies (animism, animatism, fetishism, naturism and totemism); religion, magic and science distinguished; magico-religious functionaries (priest, shaman, medicine man, sorcerer and witch).

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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5. Religion

Definition

- Refers to intensity of religious belief, behaviour, and practice

Anthropological Approaches To The Study Of Religion

Definition

Refers to the practice of alternating between two or more languages or language varieties within a single conversation or discourse.

Thinkers

A.R. Radcliffe-Brown - structural-functionalism: institutions function like organs to maintain social structure. E.B. Tylor - culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom; unilinear evolution and survivals.

Monotheism And Polytheism

Definition

Theological → Metaphysical → Scientific stage

Example / case study

Mana, Bong (Indian Ho and Oraon tribes).

Thinkers

E.B. Tylor - culture is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom; unilinear evolution and survivals.

Sacred And Profane

Definition

Violation leads to ostracism or punishment.

Myths And Rituals

Definition

Theological → Metaphysical → Scientific stage

Thinkers

Bronislaw Malinowski - participant observation; culture exists to satisfy biological and psychological needs.

Forms Of Religion In Tribal And Peasant Societies

Definition

Holistic study of human language in relation to society, culture, and identity

Animism

Definition

No writing tradition, industrial arts, or advanced skills.

Example / case study

Medieval Christianity Bogomils (Devil was seen as fallen angel). Mana, Bong (Indian Ho and Oraon tribes).

Thinkers

Applied Anthro- Birhor Action Research Project - L.P. Vidyarthi (E. B. Tylor)(T: Tiles me bhi soul/sprit hota to so kaam kro mistri sahab) Criticised Tylor for over-intellectualising early humans.