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Q5(e)

Anthropological interpretation of ethnic and political movements.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2016 · Anthropology GS 2 · 10 marks · Contributions of anthropology to the understanding of regionalism, communalism and ethnic and political movements.

9.3 Contributions of anthropology to the understanding of regionalism, communalism and ethnic and political movements.

Core demand of the question

- Write a note on anthropological interpretation of ethnic and political movements
- Keep the note to a 10-mark length of about 150 words

Revision summary

Anthropology treats movements as organised identity plus grievance.

Village faction, tribe, and language are Indian building blocks.

Elwin and Haimendorf tied tribal politics to land.

Communalism is a religious ethnicisation of the same process.

The task is to analyse leadership and resource, not to bless the slogan.

Introduction

Anthropology reads ethnic and political movements as organised identity, not as sudden madness. In India they draw on tribe, language, caste, and region.

Body**How anthropologists read them**

- **Bailey** and **Srinivas** showed village factions becoming party and ethnic blocs.
- Tribal movements are often land and forest claims dressed as peoplehood, as **Elwin** and **Haimendorf** documented.
- Language movements that made states in 1956 are ethnic politics with a Grierson map.

Interpretation, not apology

- Movements can be democratic autonomy or exclusionary sons-of-the-soil.
- **Communalism** is the religious form of the same ethnicisation of the roll.
- The method is to track leadership, myth, and resource, not to take the slogan as history.

Flow diagram

Movements -> Identity myth

Movements -> Land language jobs

Anthropology -> Movements

Conclusion

Anthropological interpretation treats ethnic and political movements as social organisation of identity and grievance. In India the usual fuels are land, language, and rank.

Facts & figures

F. G. Bailey

Political anthropology of caste teams that scale into movements.

States Reorganisation 1956

Language ethnicity housed as federal states.

Verrier Elwin

Read tribal political feeling as defence of forest life.

Sixth Schedule

Institutional outcome of some ethnic-political demands.

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