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Anthropology short notes

Caste system in India

UPSC Civil Services (Main) Examination · Anthropology GS 2 · Anthropology GS 2 (Paper II)

3.2 Caste system in India-Structure and characteristics, Varna and caste, Theories of origin of caste system, Dominant caste, Caste mobility, Future of caste system, Jajmani system. Tribe-caste continuum.

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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Caste System In India

Definition

1. "Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development"

Thinkers

Kinship Studies in India - Irawati Karve

Definition

Folklore: Oraons linked themselves with Hanuman Ji, their name derived from "O-Ram."

Thinkers

Kinship Studies in India - Irawati Karve Andre Béteille - Studies in Agrarian Social Structure

Definition

Drives cycle of suffering until Moksha is attained.

Example / case study

over-consumption of resources → karma teaches restraint.

Thinkers

Kinship Studies in India - Irawati Karve: "Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development".

Definition

1. "Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development"

Example / case study

even Brahmins of Maharashtra showed diversity, not homogeneity.

Definition

1. "Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development"

Example / case study

Herbert Risley: Racial theory of caste; The People of India. Thurston: Castes & Tribes of Southern India. Beginning: Institutionalisation of anthropology (Dept. of Anthropology, Calcutta University - 1920). Nature: Empirical fieldwork, study of social institutions.

Thinkers

Kinship Studies in India - Irawati Karve

Definition

1. "Castes in India: Their Mechanism, Genesis and Development"

Example / case study

even Brahmins of Maharashtra showed diversity, not homogeneity.

Definition

Shift: From tribal to village studies.

Thinkers

Irawati Karve - Caste, kinship, family.: Analytical Phase (1950-1990). 4. Evaluative Phase (1990-Present) (not Vidyarthi's original) Christophe Jaffrelot - two-step rise of Hindu nationalism: stigmatise an 'other' as a common enemy; then unify Hindus across caste, class and region.

Definition

Lingayat Rajas (till 1830) replaced by British.

Example / case study

Satrol Khap → First to allow inter-caste marriage. Boora Khap → anti-dowry & marriage expenditure minimum. Narwal Khap → helpline vs child marriage, feticide & gender violence. □ Despite liberal steps(women akhadas, fund for athletics), male dominance persists → Khap = tradition + modernity mix.

Thinkers

Yogendra Singh - Sanskritization = cultural camouflage for caste conflict.

Definition

Blend of tradition + modernity.

Example / case study

Satrol Khap → First to allow inter-caste marriage. Boora Khap → anti-dowry & marriage expenditure minimum. Narwal Khap → helpline vs child marriage, feticide & gender violence. □ Despite liberal steps(women akhadas, fund for athletics), male dominance persists → Khap = tradition + modernity mix.

Definition

Traditional social order - authentic & scientific account of trad social order.

Thinkers

B.K. Roy Burman - majority of tribes became landless labourers; caste gave no security. Applied Anthro- Birhor Action Research Project - L.P. Vidyarthi

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