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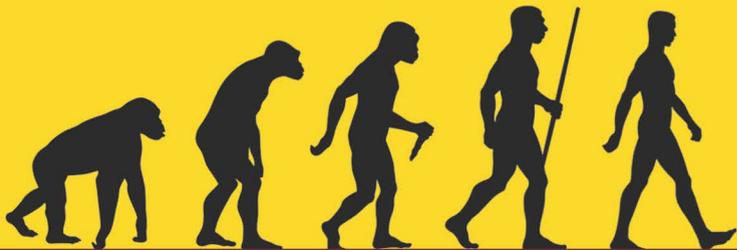
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ANTHROPOLOGY

IAS Mains Q & A



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CHRONICLE

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ABOUT THIS BOOK

Anthropology - IAS Mains Q & A - revised and updated edition (2023) covers topic-wise solutions to previous 10 years' papers (2013-2022) as per the latest syllabus.

Ideally, going through last 10-15 years papers is enough for an aspirant to get a taste of the pattern of questions being asked and how their answers should be. So, keeping this in view, without compromising on quality of answers, we have provided last ten years' answers. Further, this has been done to cap the price as well as number of pages i.e. to prevent the book getting bulkier.

Answer writing in this Book: We have put forth answers to each question as per the demand of the question. We have adopted an elaborate approach while writing these answers to arm you with relevant knowledge related to all aspects of a particular topic. In most of the answers, we have provided additional information, not necessarily adhering to the prescribed word limit but covering all dimensions to that question. This will enrich you with in-depth knowledge on that topic and help in writing better answers in future.

How to use this Book: This book will assist you in answer writing practice in two ways - use this book as a source of reference for the topics and write answers in your own unique way or alternatively, you may write previous years' answers and compare them with the standard answers provided in this book.

Importance of Anthropology as an Optional: Anthropology is considered as one of the scoring subjects in CSE Mains examination. Further, it is easy to grasp, has a short syllabus, and over the time, there have been direct and repeating questions. Rather than scoring, it also have certain benefits in other G.S. papers - overlapping with GS - Society, Social issues, Tribal issues, Governance, Essay and Ethics. Preparation of Anthropology helps in preparation of society and social justice (GS I, II) and welfare of weaker section of society (GS II) under Tribal Development topic; in the Essay Paper, tribal dimensions can be quoted in a better way; in Ethics' case studies, tribal issues can be better handled; and in GS III, Internal Security issue can be better understood. Also, a good portion of biotechnology and biology will also be covered.

Optional subjects have become the deciding factor in getting an interview call. Though UPSC has introduced four GS papers to give a level playing field to all, the dynamic and unpredictable questions of GS papers defeated the purpose and made Optional paper the magic wand. The toppers' score also tells it loudly that optional subjects play a defining role in determining the selection of the candidates.

So, overall this book is an ideal companion for you going to appear for the Mains examination. To help the aspirants to get acclaimed with the pattern and trend of the exam, this book is a valuable gift to our readers.

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2 ■ ANTHROPOLOGY Q & A

Q. "Anthropology is the systematic, objective and holistic study of human kind in all times and places." Elaborate the argument. (CSE 2022)

Ans: Anthropology is the systematic study of humanity, with the goal of understanding our evolutionary origins, our distinctiveness as a species, and the great diversity in our forms of social existence across the world and through time. The focus of Anthropology is on understanding both our shared humanity and diversity, and engaging with diverse ways of being in the world.

Scope of Anthropology

- ♦ The scope of Anthropology is universal because it strives to understand humankind in its totality. In this context, it not only describes and analyses but also synthesises the biological, cultural and social aspect of humankind at all levels of its development in all places at all times, in order to understand the totality in the parts and the parts in relation to totality and to make certain generalisations about the social biological and cultural universe of the whole human kind.
- ♦ It does not restrict to any one group of people. It studies people at whatever level of development they are. It does not restrict to any one particular time period or portion of earth; it studies people wherever they live and at whatever time they exist. The boundaries of the scope of anthropology are thus coterminous with the boundaries of the genus homo in space and time.

Physical Anthropology

- ♦ When the scope of anthropology covers the biology of humankind, it examines human as an organism and explains human origin, human evolution, human differentiation and human variation as influenced by heredity and environment. This becomes the subject matter of physical anthropology.

Scope of Anthropology is explained based on sub-fields. The subfields are:

Socio-cultural Anthropology

Socio-cultural anthropologists interpret the content of particular culture; explain variation among cultures, and study processes of cultural change and social transformation.

Sub fields of socio-cultural anthropology are explained below:

- ♦ **Economic Anthropology:** Production, consumption distribution and exchange are the basic structures of economic transactions and its processes. Economic Anthropologists concentrate mainly in non-literate

and peasant societies. They focus on the modes of exchanges including ceremonial exchanges.

- ♦ **Political Anthropology:** It concentrates on the ubiquity of political process and the functions of legitimate authority, law, justice and sanctions in simple societies. It focuses on the Anthropological point of view in the formulation of the typology of political structures based on differences and similarities observed among the societies of the world and its political processes emerging among nations and complex societies. Moreover, it also studies political culture and the nation building processes.
- ♦ **Psychological Anthropology:** It is the study of cross cultural variations in psychological traits. It studies psychological, behavioural and personal approaches of man. It is developed as an interdisciplinary approach between psychology and socio-cultural anthropology. Modern Psychological Anthropologists are very much interested in the process by which culture is transmitted from one generation to the next.
- ♦ **Ecological Anthropology:** It deals with the relationship between human beings and their environments. It is the use of the concept of environment in the explanation of both the origin of different cultural elements and also the diversity of cultural groups. It also attempts to understand of cultural groups. It also attempts to understand the relative influence of environment on human society and how it is used by different societies.
- ♦ **Anthropology of Religion:** There are many theories regarding the origin of religion among people. Some of the major theories are Animism, Animatism, Manaism and Primitive monotheism. The beliefs in natural forces and super-natural forces, and/or being are investigated. The practices which fall within the domain of religion such as taboo and totemism are also examined. The differences between magic, religion and science are discussed and debated. Witch craft and Sorcery are examined as important aspects of non-literate magic. Above all, the social and Psychological functions of magic and religion are emphasized.

Physiological/ Biological Anthropology

- ♦ Biological anthropologists study a variety of aspects of human evolutionary biology.
- ♦ Some examine fossils and apply their observations to understanding human evolution; others compare morphological, biochemical genetic and physiological adaptations of living humans to their environments; still others observe behavior of human and nonhuman primates (monkeys and apes) to understand the roots of human behavior.

CHAPTER

2

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- 2.2 **The Nature of Society:** Concept of Society; Society and Culture; Social Institution; Social groups; and Social stratification.
- 2.3 **Marriage:** Definition and universality; Laws of marriage (endogamy, exogamy, hypergamy, hypogamy, incest taboo); Type of marriage (monogamy, polygamy, polyandry, group marriage). Functions of marriage; Marriage regulations (preferential, prescriptive and proscriptive); Marriage payments (bride wealth and dowry).
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Q. Write notes on Radcliffe-Brown's ideas on status, role and institution. (CSE 2022)

Ans: Radcliffe-Brown was a British social anthropologist of the 20th century who developed a systematic framework of concepts and generalizations relating to the social structures of pre-industrial societies and their functions. He is widely known for his theory of functionalism and his role in the founding of British social anthropology.

He believed that the goal of anthropology was to carefully compare different societies and formulate general social laws based on the conclusions of fieldwork. His desire was to understand how societies work, and to identify the significant constituent parts, and the ways that these parts function together. Rather than studying different cultural traits and their diffusion between cultures, he aimed at studying general laws of the cultures.

Instead of explaining social phenomena in historical or psychological terms, which he believed to be impossible, Radcliffe-Brown proposed to explain them as persistent systems of adaptation, coaptation, and integration. His main working hypothesis was that the life of a society can be conceived of as a

dynamic fiduciary system of interdependent elements, functionally consistent with one another. He had used the notion of "social structure" as early as 1914.

He opposed the historical particularism of Franz Boas and his followers, who claimed that to understand a culture one needed to understand the history of that culture. He saw that approach as too speculative. Instead, he favored cross-cultural comparisons. He was interested, for example, in how very similar social structures could develop in cultures that were geographically separated and distinct.

Brown's Contribution to Anthropology

Status and Role: Status and role are the basic building blocks of social structure. A status is a position an individual holds within a society. At any time, individuals simultaneously hold multiple statuses. Some common social statues include student, employee, daughter, son, and friend. A social role is a behavior associated with a social status. Whereas a status is a social position a person occupies, a role is something that a person does.

The various parts or components that make up the structure of a living organism have a definite role to play in maintaining it, in keeping it alive and healthy.

CHAPTER

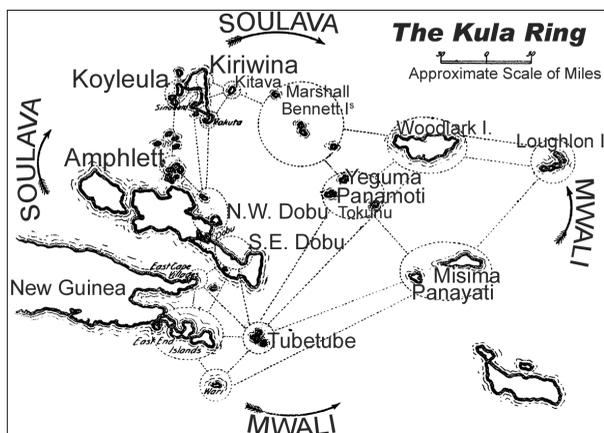
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Economic Organization: Meaning, scope and relevance of economic anthropology; Formalist and Substantivist debate; Principles governing production, distribution and exchange (reciprocity, redistribution and market), in communities, subsisting on hunting and gathering, fishing, swiddening, pastoralism, horticulture, and agriculture; globalization and indigenous economic systems.

Q. Critically examine various anthropological interpretations about Kula Ring. (CSE 2022)

Ans: Kula, also known as the Kula exchange or Kula ring, is a ceremonial exchange system conducted in the Milne Bay Province of Papua New Guinea between 18 groups. It involves a complex system of visits and exchanges and was first described in the West by anthropologist Bronislaw Malinowski in 1922.

It includes thousands of people who ride hundreds of miles by canoe often, with the only intention being to trade valuables for Kula. 'The valuables traded to the north (circling the ring in a clockwise direction) are red shell-disc necklaces known as 'veigun' or 'soulava', while white shell armbands or 'mwali' are those traded to the south (circling counter-clockwise).



Every detail of the transaction was regulated by traditional rules and conventions, and some acts were accompanied by rituals and ceremonies. A limited number of men could take part in the kula, each man keeping an article for a relatively short period before passing it on to one of his partners from whom he received the opposite item in exchange.

In the system, each participant is linked to two partners. One partner trades a necklace in return for an armband of equivalent value. The other makes a reverse exchange of an armband for a necklace. While

each Kula partner is tied to only two other partners, each contact has an additional connection on either end of the distribution chain. This eventually forms the Kula Ring and this links more than a dozen islands over hundreds of miles of ocean.

Malinowski reasoned that the expense and preoccupation with Kula trade must be functional in nature and most and most likely served to solve fundamental spatial problems in the Islander's lives. He argued that Kula Ring served three functions in Trobriand society.

First, it serves to establish friendly relations among the inhabitants of different islands and maintain a pattern of peaceful contact and communication over great distances with trading partners who might or might not speak the same language. It provides the occasion for the inter-island exchange of utilitarian items. These utilitarian items are shipped back and forth in the course of Kula expeditions. Finally, they reinforce status, since the hereditary chiefs own the most important shell valuables and it is their responsibility for directing ocean voyages.

The objects exchanged in Kula are not particularly valuable in themselves, but rather serve to help forge social connections which are depended upon at various times throughout an individual's life. The study of this practice has helped to show that many indigenous peoples have traditions that serve many purposes beyond basic survival functions, enabling sometimes distant social groups to have harmonious relationships that benefit all.

The gift-exchange cycle entails obligations to give, to receive, and to return. Sanctions may exist to induce people to give, disapproval or loss of prestige resulting from a failure to do so. Refusal to accept a gift may be seen as refusal of social relations and may lead to enmity. The reciprocity of the cycle rests in the obligation to return the gift; the prestige associated with the appearance of generosity dictates that the value of the return be approximately equal to or greater than the value of the original gift.

Political Organization and Social Control: Band, tribe, chiefdom, kingdom and state; concepts of power, authority and legitimacy; social control, law and justice in simple Societies.

Q. Discuss different forms of primate social organization. (CSE 2022)

Ans: Social organizations or institutions arise out of social needs and situations of members. These organizations are the means through which individuals adjust their behaviour to environmental conditions.

Social organisations are of two broad types, namely, those which grow out of kinship and those that result from the free and voluntary association of members.

Family: It is the earliest and the most universal of all social institutions. It is also the most natural, simplest and permanent form of social organization. In society, individuals are primarily organized into separate families and households. It may be defined as a group of persons, united either by the ties of marriage or blood relationship, having a common household, a common tradition or culture.

The form and features of family may be different from place to place and country to country but family as a social group exists everywhere. It performs a variety of functions like biological, emotional, economic, educational and cultural.

Band: A band society is the simplest form of human society. It was generally consisted of a small kinship group, often not much larger than an extended family. They tend to have very informal leadership, the older members of the band generally were looked to for guidance and advice, but there are no written laws and law enforcement like that seen in complex societies. They may not be permanent. In fact, a band can cease to exist if only a small group walks out. Band customs are transmitted orally.

Clan: The members of a clan are supposed to be the descendants of common ancestors. They usually bear common surname. They are usually found among primitive people and members act through the guidance of a chieftain. They are associated through common social, religious and cultural ceremonies. Members practice exogamy; they do not marry a person belonging to the same clan. All members worship a totem or a symbolic object like cow, bull, bird, etc.

Tribe: A tribe is a wider social organization than clan and has been defined as “a social group of a simple kind, and members of which speak a common dialect, have a common government and act together for such common purpose as welfare.” Tribe is usually formed after a stronger clan subordinates a weaker one.

Tribe has a government with a tribal chief as its head. It is organized for military purposes and has a common dialect and language. Though devoid of blood relationship, a tribe maintains solidarity among its members.

Community: One way of organizing individuals on secular lines is through formation of communities and associations. A community is defined as “the total organisation of social life within a limited area.” A community is a self-sufficient group based on common life. The area of a community may range from narrow to very broad (even global) limits.

Association: MacIver defines, “An association as a group organized for the pursuit of an interest or group of interests in common.” Associations may be of various types including kinship, religious, cultural, recreational, philanthropic, vocational, political groups. Primarily political associations like the state and its coercive agency, the government are part of society.

Q. Write notes on household and domestic group. (CSE 2022)

Ans: A household includes all the people who occupy a housing unit. A housing unit is a house, an apartment, a mobile home, a group of rooms, or a single room that is occupied (or if vacant, is intended for occupancy) as separate living quarters.

Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live separately from any other people in the building and which have direct access from the outside of the building or through a common hall. The occupants may be a single family, one person living alone, two or more families living together, or any other group of related or unrelated people who share living arrangements.