

Tutorial letter 202/1/2016

The Anthropological Study of Culture in a Multicultural Context

APY1501

Semester 1

Department of Anthropology and Archaeology

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

This tutorial letter contains the comments on Assignment 01 and important information about the examination.

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Dear Student

This tutorial letter includes comments on Assignment 02 and general matters regarding the examination.

1 COMMENTS ON ASSIGNMENT 02

In this assignment we tested your knowledge of and insight into concepts relating to culture, identity, ethnicity, kinship and religion. Study the comments on the questions and options thoroughly: not only will this exercise supplement and expand your theoretical and ethnographic knowledge of the work to which the comments relate, but it will help you with your revision for the coming examination. Note that all **SG-references** in this tutorial letter refer to the Only Study Guide for APY1501.

QUESTION 1

Option 1 is correct. Consult SG:61 and 67-68 in this regard. Option 2 is incorrect. Culture is not biologically inherited, but is acquired by people as members of a social group, i.e., people learn particular ways or styles of life in the context of a social group. Option 3 is incorrect because culture is not static but dynamic, and changes continuously (see SG:73). Option 4 is also incorrect. Culture is not confined to the ideas of people (see Option 4), but includes much more, such as values, norms, behaviour and technology (see SG:62 and 66-67 in this regard).

QUESTION 2

Option 1 is correct. Consult SG:62 and 66 in this regard. Option 2 is incorrect. The process by means of which the accumulated knowledge, rules of behaviour and values of a society are transmitted from one generation to the next is referred to as socialisation or enculturation (see SG:67-68), and is not equivalent to the concept of culture. Option 3 is incorrect. While phenomena such as opera, sculpture, literature and other creative achievements are indeed part of the culture of people, there is much, much more to consider. All people are cultured, “have culture” – and certainly not just those with an education in the fine arts. Option 4 is also incorrect because these processes are only a part of the culture of societies and therefore do not describe the concept of culture in its totality.

QUESTION 3

Option 1 is correct. Consult SG:83 in this regard. Option 2 is incorrect. The increasing focus on male bodies is not a shift in the sociocultural ideal of beauty from women to men, but rather that they are made into objects of desire, and hence the use of male bodies in advertisements (see SG:52). Option 3 is incorrect. Comparison between communities reveals that there are wide variations in ideas about how many genders exist, and how these are composed, whether by genital anatomy (as in most Western communities), by density of flesh and bone (as in Nepal) or by inclination and behaviour (as in communities where gender categories are more fluid). Option 4 is incorrect. Moore (1994:14) suggests that this is not a satisfactory explanation, but that “gender differences are internal to all bodies and are part of the process through which bodies are sexed”.

QUESTION 4

In this question you have to identify which of the four items are correct and then choose the correct combination under the options. Item a is incorrect. Since their origin as a species humans have been exposed to physical and sociocultural environmental changes to which they have to adapt to survive. Although individual action and initiative always play a role in people’s **adaptation to environmental changes, i.e., in people’s reaction to physical and sociocultural changes**, these factors do not necessarily play a role in the changes themselves

which occur in the physical environment (see SG:73). For example, the tsunami which in 2004 created havoc across the world and led to the death of approximately 230 000 people, was the result of an earthquake in the Indian ocean, and not the result of individual action and initiative. Item b is incorrect. The opposite is true, revitalisation movements do constitute an example of human agency (see SG:75). Item c is correct. People are not passive beings who act blindly. They interpret and manipulate the rules of systems to meet their needs (see SG:74). Item d is correct. Consult SG:75 in this regard. **Option 3, which includes Items c and d, is therefore the correct answer.**

QUESTION 5

In a matrilineal descent system, EGO traces **his descent from direct female relatives in the ascending generation, in other words, Mo, MoMo, MoMoMo**, etcetera. Please note that a matrilineal descent system has male and female members, although only the female members can pass on membership of the matrilineage to their children (see SG:103).

Option 4 is correct because EGO traces his descent through his mother (36) to his mother's mother (27). Option 1 is incorrect because EGO cannot trace his matrilineal descent through a male person (28) to 26. Option 2 is incorrect because it includes some of EGO's patrilineal relatives (18 and 10) and an affinal relative (9). Option 3 is incorrect because 29 is an affinal relative of EGO and not a matrilineal kinsman.

QUESTION 6

To answer this question and Question 8, you have to thoroughly study patrilineal descent systems (SG:102, 103-104).

From an analysis of the diagram it is clear that the apical ancestor of 22 is traced through 17 and 10 to 1. **Option 4 is therefore the correct answer.** Option 1 is incorrect. The apical ancestor of 22 in a patrilineal system cannot be 7, because in such a system one traces one's descent through males only. Patrilineal descent can therefore never be traced through a female - in this case 16 in the diagram. Option 2 is incorrect. Although 10 is an ancestor of 22, he is not the apical ancestor. Option 3 is incorrect. 2 is a female and in a patrilineage a female cannot be an apical ancestor.

QUESTION 7

To answer this question, you have to study the verbal symbols which are used in kinship studies to indicate kinship relations. From a thorough analysis of the genealogical connection between 38 and 24 it is clear that 38 is 24's mother's brother's wife (i.e., MoBrWi). **Option 4 is therefore the correct answer.**

QUESTION 8

In a patrilineal descent system, the line of descent is traced through the Fa, the FaFa, the FaFaFa, etcetera. Irrespective of their sex, the children of all men who are patrilineal kinsmen form part of the patrilineage. However, the children of a female do not belong to her patrilineage because they belong to their father's descent group (see SG:103).

Based on the above definition of a patrilineal system, **Option 1 is correct** because EGO, 10 and 19 all belong to the same patrilineage, namely the patrilineage of 1. Option 2 is incorrect because 14 derives his descent in a patrilineal descent system through his father (5) and not through his mother (6). Although his mother (6) and 12 belong to the same patrilineage because they are descendants of the same apical ancestor (1), this is not true of 14 because his father (5) is not linked through genealogical descent to the patrilineage of 12 (or the apical ancestor 1).

Please note that no direct connecting line exists between 5 and the patrilineage of 12. 5 is related to 12 by his marriage to 6 and he is thus an affinal relative of 12.

Option 3 is incorrect because 3 is the mother of 12 and is therefore not his patrilineal kinsman like his father (4). In the case of 20, she is not genealogically linked to 12's patrilineage through male kinsmen, but through two female kinsmen (6) and (8). Option 4 is also incorrect because 13 cannot trace her descent in a patrilineal descent system through her mother (6). Like her brother (14), she belongs to the patrilineal descent system of her father (5).

QUESTION 9

The answering of this and the next question requires a close study of SG:119-120. **Option 1 is correct.** 32 is married to two **brothers** (30 and 31), a practice which in anthropology is known as fraternal polyandry.

Option 2 is incorrect because it represents an example of heterogeneous polyandry, i.e., where a woman (41) is married to two unrelated men (39 and 40). Option 3 is incorrect. 28 is married to two non-related women (27 and 29). He is therefore not practising fraternal polyandry, but ordinary polygyny. Option 4 is incorrect because 33 is married to two **sisters** (34 and 35), a practice which in anthropology is known as sororal polygyny.

QUESTION 10

Option 2 is correct because 33 is practising sororal polygyny (see the comments on Option 4 of Question 9 above). Option 1 is incorrect. 32 is not practicing sororal polygyny, but fraternal polyandry (see the comments on Option 1 of Question 9 above). Option 3 is incorrect because it represents an example of heterogeneous polyandry (see the comments on Option 2 of Question 9 above). Option 4 is incorrect because it represents an example of ordinary polygyny (see the comments on Option 3 of Question 9 above).

QUESTION 11

In this question you were required to match theories that have been proposed to explain the origin of religion with the theorists who formulated the respective theories. A thorough study of the tutorial matter on the origin of religion reveals that **Option 4 is the correct answer.** Edward Tylor argued that religion originated in people's speculation about dreams, trances and death; Bronislaw Malinowski maintained that religion is born from the universal need to find comfort in time of crises; Sigmund Freud suggested that religion is a form of reversal to an infantile need for security and certainty, and Emile Durkheim contended that religion originates from society and serves social, rather than psychological, needs. Consult SG:131-132 in this regard.

QUESTION 12

Option 1 is incorrect. Anthropologists generally reject unidirectional evolutionary explanations of the development of cultural aspects from inferior to superior phenomena. Options 2 and 3 are incorrect because it is not the task of the anthropologist to factually evaluate people and their religious views or to establish whether a particular religious system is 'true' or 'false'. Anthropologists merely attempt to gain a better understanding of a religion within the context of the culture of a society. Anthropologists attempt, in particular, to find out what a religious system means to its adherents (Option 4), otherwise their research results would be seen as subjective rather than objective, as is required of scientists. **Option 4 is therefore correct.**

QUESTION 13

Option 2 is correct. Consult SG:142. Options 1 and 3 are incorrect. *Malopo* (who usually are alien spirits) are not intend on doing evil. They possess people to serve as mediums to bring the necessary offerings and to create a home for them (i.e., the *malopo*) and to restore harmonious relationships between them (i.e., the *malopo*) and the medium's family (see SG:146). Option 4 is incorrect. Sorcerers don't have an inherent desire to harm others (see SG:143). Option 5 is incorrect. Diviners are used to consult the supernatural to obtain information that is otherwise not available and are not evildoers *per se* (see SG:147).

QUESTION 14

Option 4 is correct. Consult SG:141-2 in this regard. Option 1 is incorrect. A totem is an animal, plant or object that is linked with a particular group. The concept is used for a wide range of beliefs and practices in connection with the relationship between groups and animals, plants or objects. The group may be named after the totem and may believe itself to be descended from the totem. The totem may also be closely linked with the group's wellbeing and group members usually follow certain rules of conduct with regard to their totem, eg by not killing or eating it.

Option 2 is incorrect. A fetish is a special kind of object to which supernatural powers are ascribed in some societies. It is believed to be the temporary abode of **supernatural powers or spirits**. Fetishes may be used for various purposes such as protection against witchcraft, witch-finding, or success in war. They can be used for offensive as well as defensive purposes.

Option 3 is incorrect. Amulets are objects that are used for protection against misfortune and for securing strength, health and good fortune. They may be worn on the body, or placed in various positions where their influence is needed, eg inside or under houses, under a threshold, or in gardens and fields.

QUESTION 15

A thorough study of the tutorial matter would have revealed that **Option 2 is the correct answer**. Anthony Wallace defined religion as "a kind of human behaviour – which can be classified as belief and ritual concerned with supernatural beings, powers and forces" (Wallace 1966:6-7). Consult SG:132 in this regard.

2 GENERAL MATTERS REGARDING THE EXAMINATION

Before we pay attention to matters relating to the examination, we wish to thank you for the feed-back we received on the tuition methods we employ and on the course in general. We trust that your encounter with anthropology has been an enriching experience, and that you have acquired insight into human beings in general and their lives in various forms of society which will have an enduring significance for you in future.

2.1 Tutorial letters not received

For various reasons some students did not receive all the tutorial letters. We advise you to check the list of tutorial letters given below to make sure that you are in possession of all of them. You will need these tutorial letters when revising the assignments in preparation for the examination, and it is therefore important that you have them at hand for this purpose.

APY1501	101, 201, 202 (which you are reading now)
ANTALLX	301

Should you be missing any of these tutorial letters you can **download** them from **myUnisa** or you can request these tutorial letters from the **university** by means of

- (1) an **SMS** directed to **43579**,
- (2) an **email** send to despatch@unisa.ac.za or
- (3) a **fax** sent to **012 429 4150**.

2.2 Admission to the examination

ALL STUDENTS WHO REGISTERED FOR APY1501 AND SUBMITTED ASSIGNMENT 01 ON TIME WILL OBTAIN ADMISSION TO THE EXAMINATION.

2.3 Delimitation for the examination

The entire syllabus will be covered in the examination and **all learning themes** therefore need to be studied for the examination.

2.4 The examination paper

The examination paper consists of **60 multiple-choice questions** that have to be answered in **2 hours**. As a rough guide-line, you should take approximately 2 minutes to answer a question. Do not spend more time on individual questions than your time allocation allows because you may tend to rush the other questions to make up the difference and consequently not do so well. If you have time left at the end, you can go back to earlier questions. The multiple-choice questions must be answered on mark reading sheets and all questions are of equal value. Marks for the examination count a total of 60.

The questions will be similar to those set in the assignments. So, for example, there is also a genealogical diagram upon which questions on kinship are based. The questions follow more or less the same sequence as the learning themes in the SG and are grouped together according to them (eg the human species, identity, kinship etc). We also reassure you that all questions were evaluated thoroughly beforehand in order to avoid uncertainty and confusion.

● MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

Once again we refer you to the guidelines for the answering of multiple-choice questions which were given on pp.11-13 of Tutorial letter APY1501/101.

2.5 Examples and answers of examination questions

Below we provide examples of possible exam questions and then also the answers with comments.

2.5.1 Examples of examination questions

QUESTION 1

Anthropologists with their holistic perspective of human beings and human problems are sometimes approached to make their knowledge regarding societies and their way of life available to a variety of organisations.

To which of the following **sub-discipline(s) of anthropology** is the above-mentioned statement applicable?

1. Linguistic anthropology
2. Archaeology
3. Physical anthropology
4. Sociocultural anthropology.

QUESTION 2

When a cultural component or custom is studied and described within the context of its own culture, anthropologists refer to such an approach as

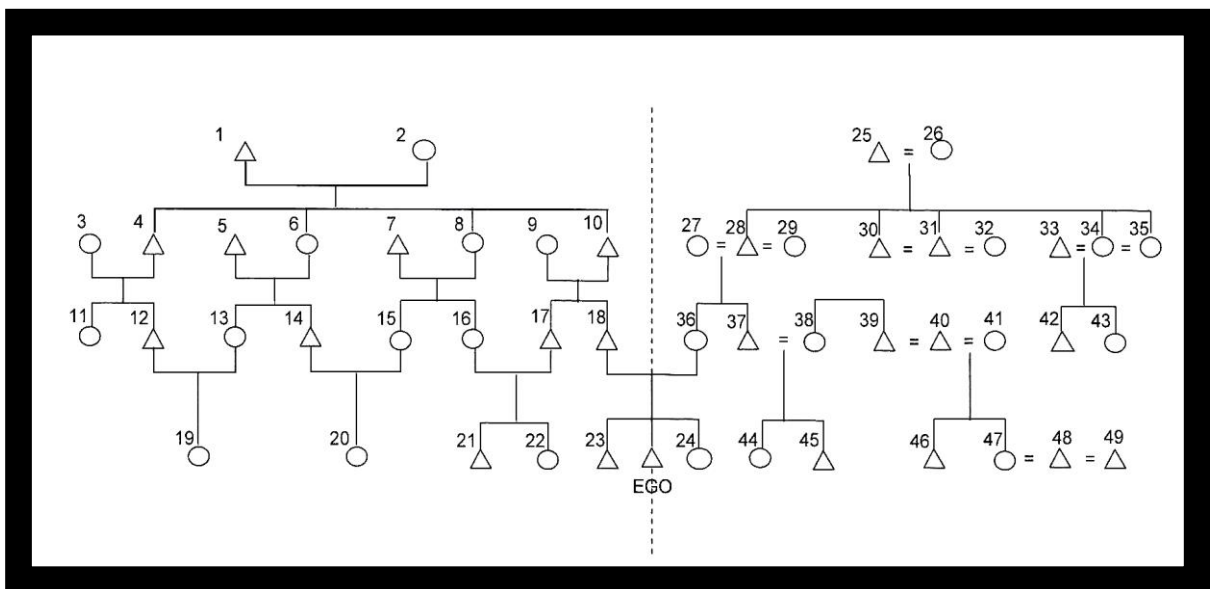
1. ethnographic.
2. holistic.
3. culturally relativistic.
4. ethnocentric.

QUESTION 3

An anthropological study that sees the people being studied as actors in their own sociocultural context, and incorporates people’s own perceptions and categorisations of the world in which they are living has adopted

1. an etic approach.
2. an emic approach.
3. a reflexive approach.
4. an ethnocentric approach.

STUDY THE FOLLOWING DIAGRAM AND THEN ANSWER QUESTION 4-7.



QUESTION 4

Who is the apical ancestor of the patrilineage to which 20 belongs?

1. 14
2. 5
3. 1
4. 6
5. 4

QUESTION 5

In a matrilineal descent system EGO would belong to the same descent group as

1. 2, 10 and 18.
2. 23, 24 and 44.
3. 27, 36 and 37.
4. 26, 28 and 35.

QUESTION 6

Which of the following relatives of EGO are **CORRECTLY** identified?

1. Cross-cousins: 21 and 22
2. Patrilineal kin: 19 and 22
3. Parallel-cousins: 44 and 45

QUESTION 7

Which of the following represents a **cross -cousin marriage**? The union between

1. 30, 31 and 32
2. 16 and 17
3. 14 and 15

QUESTION 8

Which one of the following is **NOT** a possible **ground for dissolution of marriage** among South African indigenous groups?

1. Marriage instability due to the mother's brother's exercising of authority over his sister's children in matrilineal societies.
2. The interference of the respective kin groups in a couple's life.
3. The death of the husband.
4. Adultery or ill-treatment of the wife.

QUESTION 9

Members of these descent categories cannot indicate how they are genealogically related. They assume that they are related because they share a common name. Members are forbidden to marry each other since this is regarded as incest. They do not all gather and meet for a specific purpose.

To which descent category among the Xhosa does this description apply?

1. Lineages
2. Moieties
3. Phratries
4. Clans

QUESTION 10

Initiation and incorporation into the ranks of the *Malopo* cult group are accompanied by

1. trance.
2. possession.
3. mediumship.
4. 1, 2 and 3
5. 1 and 2

QUESTION 11

Indicate the **INCORRECT** option.

Persons acting as leaders in societal rituals include

1. prophets.
2. priests.
3. diviners.
4. witches.
5. shamans.

QUESTION 12

In anthropological theory the concept of **myth** is used to refer to

1. tales of fictitious events based on irrational ideas.
2. a primitive form of scientific thinking.
3. tales of cosmic origins and their meanings.
4. oral tradition of verifiable historical events.

QUESTION 13

Which one of the following statements **CORRECTLY** describes a **talisman**?

1. It is believed to become the temporary abode of supernatural powers or spirits since it contains various ingredients, which induce spirits or powers to dwell within it, and is used as protection against witchcraft or for securing success in war.
2. It may be worn on the body or placed in various positions where its influence is needed; it is used for protection against misfortune as well as for securing strength, health and good fortune.
3. It refers to an impersonal power, is associated with certain people and objects, it may be used for good or evil purposes, but people must know how to employ it otherwise it can be harmful to them.

QUESTION 14

Religion as distinguished from magic is associated with

1. an impersonal power and an attitude of dependence.
2. personalised spiritual beings and an attitude of manipulation.
3. an impersonal power and an attitude of manipulation.
4. personalised spiritual beings and an attitude of dependence.

2.5.2 Answers to and comments on the questions

QUESTION 1

Nowadays anthropological knowledge is used to alleviate human suffering and solve human problems on virtually every terrain. One therefore finds that anthropological knowledge is applied in the spheres of all four sub-disciplines.

A close examination of the relevant study material (SG:6-8) reveals that, of the four sub-disciplines of anthropology, only sociocultural anthropologists study people in societal and cultural context and make their knowledge available to organisations (SG:8-10). Note on pp.9-10 the long list of areas in which anthropological knowledge is nowadays indispensable and in demand. **Option 4 is therefore the correct answer.**

Option 1 is incorrect because linguistic anthropologists are put to work exclusively where societies experience communication problems. An example is the communication problems between medical personnel and their patients in the Third World. Linguistic knowledge is also a key that offers access to the worldview of people.

Option 2 is incorrect because archaeologists are mainly involved in excavating and interpreting concrete cultural objects of prehistoric people which are then displayed in museums. Archaeological knowledge is therefore important for the conservation of cultural heritage.

Option 3 is incorrect because physical anthropologists study the physical-biological aspects and characteristics of human populations and do not study their way of life. For example, when victims of crimes and road accidents need to be identified, physical anthropologists can determine the race, gender and age of such victims from their skeletal remains.

QUESTION 2

The correct answer is Option 3, because the concept of cultural relativism implies that the culture of a society should be interpreted in terms of **their** traditions and experiences (consult SG:26). What is acceptable for one society is not necessarily acceptable or “correct” for members of other societies. Many westerners regard Hindu taboos regarding the eating of beef as ridiculous and wasteful, because it is an excellent source of protein. By contrast, Hindus consider the slaughter and consumption of cattle to be barbaric. It is theorised that one of the most important reasons for the taboo regarding eating beef is that in a developing country like India, cattle manure is used for the cultivation of grain, as well as for fuel. In terms of this view, the taboo developed to ensure that there would always be sufficient manure available for fuel and fertiliser.

Options 1 and 2 are incorrect because the term ethnography that has been developed by anthropologists refers to the scientific description of people and cultures. The term holistic refers to a comprehensive view and study of culture. It implies that everything relating to the life of a society is studied, namely, the environment to which they must adapt for their survival, their history, kinship system, economy, political and religious systems, to mention only a few aspects.

A holistic view of culture also implies that the integration of the different aspects of such a culture are studied to determine the influence of, say, religion on the other aspects thereof (consult SG:4 and 34 respectively).

Option 4 is incorrect because the concept ethnocentric implies that one evaluates the customs and behaviour of other people subjectively in terms of one's own cultural values. This approach is therefore the opposite of cultural relativism (consult SG:25-26).

QUESTION 3

Option 2 is correct. Consult SG: 25 in this regard. Option 1 is incorrect. In the case of an etic approach, an anthropologist works from the assumption that people are so subjectively involved in their own life-styles that they find it difficult to have an impartial view of it and therefore studies the culture of a society from the outside as a scientist. However, the anthropologist, like all scientists, is also human and possesses preferences and predispositions that make unqualified objectivity impossible. This is why anthropologists combine the **etic** and **emic** approaches in their fieldwork strategies (see SG: 25).

Option 3 is incorrect (see SG: 28). Reflexivity implies more than an emic approach and requires a “ sensitive, intensive and continual involvement of the fieldworker with the people being studied, as well as an identification with, and a moral responsibility for their problems and quality of life” (De Jongh 2010:297-298 cited on SG: 28).

Option 4 is incorrect. Ethnocentrism is the inclination of many people to regard their own culture or way of life as superior, and they use the values and practices of their own culture to judge the behaviour and beliefs of others (see SG 26).

QUESTION 4

Before answering this question and the next one, you should have thoroughly studied the various systems of descent reckoning (SG:100-107), especially patrilineal and matrilineal systems.

From an analysis of the diagram it should have been clear that the apical ancestor of 20 is traced through 14 to 5. **Option 2 is therefore the correct answer.** The apical ancestor of 20 is therefore 5 and not 1.

Note that the apical ancestor of 20 in a patrilineal system cannot be 1, because in such a system one traces one's descent through males only. Patrilineal descent can therefore never be traced through a female - in this case 6 in the diagram.

QUESTION 5

In a matrilineal descent system EGO traces his descent through females. Both males and females are, however, members of a matrilineal descent group although only the daughter passes membership of their mother's descent group to their children.

Since EGO traces his descent through his mother (36) to 27, his earliest ancestress, and the latter's son (37) also belongs to her matrilineage, **Option 3 is correct.**

Option 1 is incorrect because it refers to Ego's patrilineal kin.

Option 2 is incorrect because 23 and 24 are his own brother and sister and therefore belong to his matrilineage, while 44 is incorrect because she traces her descent in a matrilineal descent system through a female (38) that belongs to a different descent group to EGO. Note that 38 is not genealogically related to EGO's matrilineage by descent.

QUESTION 6

Option 1 is incorrect because 21 and 22 are parallel-cousins of EGO.

Option 2 is correct because 19 and 22 are patrilineal kin of EGO. Note that they trace their descent through males only.

Option 3 is also incorrect because 44 and 45 are cross-cousins of EGO.

QUESTION 7

Option 2 is correct. The union between 16 and 17 represents a cross-cousin marriage. 16 and 17 are the children of siblings of the opposite sex, that is the children of a sister (8) and a brother (10) respectively.

Option 1 is incorrect. The union between 30, 31 and 32 is an example of fraternal polyandry.

Option 3 is incorrect. The union between 14 and 15 represents a parallel-cousin marriage.

QUESTION 8

Because you were required to indicate which option is **NOT** a possible **ground for the dissolution of marriage among South African indigenous groups**, the incorrect option here is the correct answer.

Option 1 is correct. Marriages in matrilineal societies such as the Bemba of Zambia are indeed unstable and, because of the authority of a mother's brother over his sister's children, easier to dissolve than in patrilineal societies (see SG:124).

Option 2 is also correct, because marriages among South African indigenous groups are indeed sometimes dissolved due to the interference by kin (such as a mother-in-law or divorced sister-in-law who once again lives with or near her father's home).

Option 3 is the correct answer, because among South African indigenous groups the death of a husband is not a ground for the dissolution of a marriage. Consult SG:125 in this regard. In these societies marriage is regarded as a contract between two descent groups which places reciprocal obligations on both these groups. The woman's descent group should contribute a healthy, fertile woman with an ability to work while that of the man undertakes to protect and sustain her and to beget children with her. These obligations are not terminated by death. The **levirate** (the continuation of a deceased husband's marriage) and **sororal substitution or supplementation** (the continuation of a deceased wife's marriage, or the supplementation of the deficiency of an infertile wife, respectively) are customs among South African indigenous groups which emphasise the reciprocal obligations of the respective descent groups and ensure that the marriage is not terminated by the death of one of the marriage partners.

Option 4 is also correct. On SG:125, adultery and the ill-treatment of a wife are listed as grounds for the dissolution of marriages.

QUESTION 9

A thorough study of 8.3.3.2 (Descent groups) in Learning Theme 8 was necessary before this question could be answered (see SG:107-113). From such a study it would have been apparent that moieties (Option 2) and phratries (Option 3) are not found among the Xhosa. Lineages (Option 1) and clans (Option 4) do, however, occur among Xhosa-speakers. If genealogical relationship cannot, however, be indicated then the descent category referred to in the option would be clans. The reference to a common name and exogamy are further indications that the contents of Option 4 refer to clans. **Option 4 is therefore correct.**

QUESTION 10

Ancestral spirits are sometimes thought to reveal themselves by **possessing people**. This is especially the case among the Venda-, North-Sotho- and Tsonga-speaking peoples of Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces and to a lesser extent among certain Tswana speakers of the North-West Province. A person who is possessed is used by an ancestral spirit, known as a *lelopo* spirit (plural *malopo*), as a **medium** to communicate with the living. People who are possessed by *malopo* spirits form a cult group, which performs acts under the guidance of a *malopo* traditional doctor.

When a person, usually a woman, is possessed by a *lelopo* spirit, she gets the so-called *malopo* illness, which is treated under the guidance of a *malopo* traditional doctor. The treatment of the medium is accompanied by the performance of *malopo* dances and a purification ritual, during which the medium is incorporated into the ranks of the *malopo* cult group. During the *malopo* dances a great deal of liquor is consumed, and other narcotics and hallucinogenic drugs are taken in the midst of hypnotic and frequently deafening music and drum rhythms. In the process, the *malopo* medium(s) and members of the cult group go into a **trance**.

From this, it is evident that **Options 1, 2 and 3** are correct. **Option 4 is therefore the correct answer.** Consult SG:146 and 152-154 for full particulars of *malopo* possession among certain indigenous groups in Southern Africa.

QUESTION 11

The instruction of this question required you to indicate the **incorrect option** for the correct answer.

Prophets, priests, diviners and shamans (Options 1, 2, 3 and 5) all act as leaders in the performance of rituals (consult SG:151-152) and therefore none of these options is the correct answer.

Option 4 is the correct answer because witches never act as leaders when rituals are performed, but, like sorcerers, are associated with the malevolent (evil) application of magic to harm people (consult SG:142 for further information on witches and their malevolent actions).

QUESTION 12

Option 3 is correct. Consult SG:143-144 in this regard. Option 1 is incorrect because it reflects the popular meaning of the term myth and not the meaning which anthropologists attach to the term. Options 2 and 4 are incorrect because myths do not try to prove anything or to convey practical, verifiable information about some state of affairs. Myths are therefore not histories (Option 4) or scientific explanations (Option 2) of the world as it is.

QUESTION 13

Option 2 is correct. Consult SG:141 in this regard. Options 1 and 3 are incorrect because they describe a fetish (see SG:140-141) and the concept of mana (see SG:141-142) respectively, and not a talisman.

QUESTION 14

Option 4 is correct. Personalised spiritual beings and an attitude of dependence are associated with religion. Consult SG:132-133 in this regard. Options 1, 2 and 3 are incorrect because an impersonal power and/or an attitude of manipulation is/are associated with magic.

2.6 Assignment questions in the examination

Do not disregard the sections of the tutorial matter that were covered in the assignments. As much as 20% of the examination paper may be taken from the assignments. We may ask identical questions to those that were set in the assignments or they may be adjusted in the examination paper. It will also be worth your while to revise the assignments when doing revision for the examination, since it will help you to understand the kind of reasoning necessary to answer these questions.

2.7 Revision before the examination

Hopefully you have now reached the stage where you can start with revision of the tutorial matter before the examination. The study program and the assignments have enabled you to cover the whole syllabus, and sufficient time is now left to once again work through the tutorial matter systematically in order to thoroughly prepare for the examination.

On p.9 of Tutorial letter APY1501/101 you will find a revision program that may be useful for planning your revision. Of course, you will have to make adjustments to this program, in order to meet your personal circumstances. Whatever the time schedule that you are following, we recommend the following procedures.

- **REPEATING THE ASSIGNMENTS**

You are in possession of the assignments, as well as the tutorial letter containing solutions to questions, together with explanations concerning the accuracy or inaccuracy of options. **By repeating** the assignments without consulting the solutions beforehand, you can test your readiness for the examination. **You should aim at being able to answer all questions correctly, including the reasoning in connection with incorrect options, without the aid of the tutorial matter.** Remember that although the entire examination paper is not going to be made up of assignment questions, many of the incorrect options refer to aspects of the tutorial matter that may appear in examination questions, and for this reason a thorough understanding of the topics of these options can only be to your advantage.

- **USING KEY CONCEPTS**

Make sure that you understand and can use the anthropological terms and key concepts in the SG correctly. These terms and key concepts make up the “vocabulary” of anthropology and without them you will not be able to answer the examination questions. In the study objectives of each learning theme and at the end of each learning theme, a list is provided of key concepts that appear in the particular learning theme.

Use these terms and key concepts to revise a learning theme or even a whole study unit. You can test your knowledge and understanding of these key concepts, or you can write down a few notes about each one that you can use later for quick reference. The lists of key concepts, however, also contain terms and concepts which are not important. For example, some terms from African and foreign languages are not important. However, most of the key concepts are important.

Below we provide you with **some** examples of key concepts in Learning theme 8 for purposes of revision. You should now make your own notes on key concepts in other learning themes. For this purpose we refer you to pp10-11 of Tutorial Letter APY1501/101 where you will find an example of how to make summaries for examination purposes.

KEY CONCEPTS

KINSHIP SYSTEMS	
Affinity	Refers to relationships produced by marriage
Alliance theory	Developed where rules of exogamy prohibit marriage within the same group Strategy of seeking alliances through marriage between hostile groups Such marriage alliances may be formed between numerous neighbouring groups without restriction
Apical ancestor	The most senior member of the lineage, living or deceased, indicated in the diagram; in a patrilineage, a male, and in a matrilineage, a female
Clans	Unilineal descent groups Consist of members who claim to be descended from a common fictive ancestor. Descent can therefore not be demonstrated genealogically as in the case of lineages Mostly confined to non-western societies
Clanship	Clan members are identified by means of a distinctive clan name that is transferred from parent to child Note the connection between clans and lineages Ranking of clans occurs in many non-western societies Clans are not localised groups and clan members are usually spread over a wide area Clans are usually exogamous groups Clans are sometimes corporate groups - not among South African indigenous groups Connection between clanship and totemism
Cognatic descent	Refers to the tracing of descent through both parents, through all four grandparents, all eight great-grandparents, and so forth
Consanguinity	Refers to relations based on biological ties, whether they are authentic or fictive May also result from adoption
Cross-cousins	The term refers to the children of a brother and sister
Descent	Refers to someone's origin through a line of successive ancestors
Diagram	Here a diagram refers to a genealogy or "family tree" which shows all the different "branches" of descendants of a particular ancestor or a number of ancestors Can serve various purposes

Double descent	A double unilineal descent system, according to which patrilineal descent is used for certain purposes, while matrilineal descent is used for other purposes This system of descent reckoning functions among the Herero of Namibia		
Dual organisation	A society which is divided into two halves has a moiety division or dual organisation These halves may be two major clans, or may each include a number of clans The two sections may also be exogamous units Moiety membership may also involve particular rights and obligations		
EGO	Latin word meaning I It refers to the starting point for analysing a genealogy		
Endogamy	The rule that someone is expected to marry within a certain group Examples: alliance endogamy local group endogamy kin group endogamy (parallel-cousin marriage and cross-cousin marriage)		
Exchange of brides	Marriage custom where two kin groups exchange daughters		
Exogamy	A prohibition against marriage within a particular group (family, lineage or clan) Prohibition may be supported by supernatural sanctions Still widely observed among Southern Nguni Note: exogamy and incest are not synonymous		
Genealogy	See the term, diagram, above		
Generation	A single stage in the descent of people that comprises approximately 25-30 years		
Kinship	Refers to two types of relationships, namely descent and affinity		
Lineages	Refers to a set of people who trace their descent from a common ancestor through known links The relationship of every member to other lineage members is known in genealogical terms Also note that the term lineage refers to deceased and living members, whilst the term lineage group refers to the latter only Make sure that you are conversant with the connections between clans and lineages and also the differences between the two phenomena		
Lineal kin	Are consanguineal relatives in the direct line of descent		
Marriage	Choice of marriage partners: maturity or adulthood restrictions based on kinship (see exogamy above) prohibitions connected with ritual avoidances preferential marriage (cf. the term endogamy above)		
	Choice of marriage partners in secondary marriages:		
	polygamy	polygyny	sororal polygyny
		polyandry	fraternal and heterogeneous forms

	Levirate
	sororate two other forms apart from the polygynous form
	Ghost marriage
Marriage goods	Goods transferred by the husband's kin group to that of the wife Transfer of marriage goods is compulsory and forms part of the marriage contract Nature and quantity of the goods differ from people to people Note that the goods delivered should not be regarded as payment for the bride
Matrilineal descent	Refers to descent reckoning through a person's mother, mother's mother, mother's mother's mother and so forth Characteristics: <u>Matronomy</u> - children bear the family name of their mother <u>Matrilineal succession</u> - a man is succeeded by his Br and then by his SiSo <u>Matrilineal inheritance</u> - property is inherited in the mother's line
Nominal kin	All the individuals who are acknowledged as kin, for example, all one's ancestors on the father's side, as well as the mother's side in the case of a cognatic descent system
Parallel descent	According to this system males reckon descent through their fathers and females reckon it through their mothers The inheritance of property also follows the same principle
Patrilineal descent	Refers to descent reckoning through a person's father, father's father, father's father's father, and so on Characteristics: <u>patronomy</u> - children bear the family name of their father <u>patrilineal succession</u> - a man is succeeded by his So and then by his SoSo <u>patrilineal inheritance</u> - property is inherited in the male line
Phratries	Refers to an association of two or more clans who claim descent from a common ancestor Recognition of their common origin may be reflected in the rendering of assistance and the showing of solidarity Phratries are not found in southern Africa and occur mainly among certain Native American tribes and in parts of western New Guinea
Residential arrangements	This refers to post-marital rules of residence The following are distinguished: <u>neolocal residence</u> - the couple reside in a locality independently of the parents of either <u>patrilocal or virilocal residence</u> - the couple reside with the husband's kin group <u>matrilocal or uxorilocal residence</u> - the couple reside with or close to the wife's family <u>avunculocal residence</u> - in some matrilineal societies the married couple reside with the man's maternal uncle <u>bilocal residence</u> - the couple are expected to live for a period with or near the bride's parents and for another period with or near the groom's parents
Siblings	Refers to persons of either sex who have the same father and mother

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN RELIGION AND MAGIC

Although religion and magic are **closely related**, they are **not identical** concepts. Some anthropologists base their distinction between religion and magic on the **ATTITUDES** of people. In this case

religion

is associated with an attitude of dependence, while

magic

is associated with an intention to manipulate.

➤ **PROBLEMS WITH SUCH A DISTINCTION**

Attitudes

- are subjective and highly individualistic
- are not easily identifiable
- are strongly influenced by the emotional condition of individuals
- vary and are subject to change.

The distinction is nevertheless, very useful since it focuses on religious experiences and behaviour.

➤ **A DISTINCTION BASED ON ATTITUDES**

Such a distinction does not always coincide with a definition of religion (such as that of Tylor) as the beliefs and practices involving personalised supernatural beings such as gods, ghosts and spirits, since it is possible that an individual or a group may perform an act which attempts to **manipulate (which is associated with magic) a personal supernatural being (which is associated with religion)**.

- Supplication of a personal supernatural being in an attitude of dependence is **definitely religious**

while

the manipulation of an impersonal power is **definitely magical**.

Pure magic <-----> Pure religion

These are polar concepts. Many acts fall between these two poles; in other words they are neither pure magic nor pure religion. There is no rigid distinction.

ELEMENTS PRESENT IN RELIGION

1. Belief in supernatural powers
2. Symbols to which followers of a particular religion attach particular importance
3. A code of acceptable behaviour
4. Beliefs about the origin and destiny of human beings and about their relationship with the supernatural
5. The performance of acts such as prayers, sacrifices etc directed at the supernatural
6. Leaders and followers who participate in religious acts.

- good relations with the ancestors are necessary and are maintained by rituals that usually include the killing of an animal such as an ox or goat, the pouring of beer and calling on the ancestors.

The rituals are usually performed by the living kin of the ancestor(s) being called on, or, in the case of tribal ancestors, by the chief of the tribe.

➤ **Christian beliefs**

Christians believe in the **immortality of the soul** but most **deny communication with the dead** and visits to graves, and erecting tombstones are regarded as tokens of loyalty and affection and not actual contact with kin.

Note that religion is closely associated with the kinship system of most societies.

What do we call this interrelation between various aspects of culture?

THE SUPERNATURAL IN NATURE

There is often a **close relationship** between religious ideas and natural phenomena. Association of natural phenomena with the supernatural occurred in many of the great religious systems of the past, eg that of the Greeks, Romans, ancient Egyptians, etc and still occurs today, eg in Hinduism. There are **several ways of spiritualising** these phenomena. They may be believed to be **inhabited by spirits, eg the spirits of the dead or they may be regarded as Gods.**

GODS

➤ **Monotheism**

Belief in the existence of one god
(Examples of this are to be found in Christianity, Islam and Judaism.)

➤ **Polytheism**

Belief in the existence of more than one god

Zulu - *uNkulunkulu* and *Nomkhubulwana*

Ancient Greeks - Pantheon of gods

!Xū - The great god who lives in the eastern sky and the lesser god who lives in the western sky.

➤ **Atheism**

The belief that a god (or gods) does not exist.

➤ **Deism**

The creator has withdrawn from the world and is no longer involved in human affairs.

➤ Theism

The creator is still involved with creation, directs its affairs and has a personal relationship with it.

Deism <----->Theism

These are polar concepts and most beliefs regarding the creator fall between the two.

TOTEMS

➤ What are they?

Totems are objects, animals, plants etc associated with a particular group.

The Ndebele have totemic clans. The Khumalo clan may not eat fish or rock rabbit (*dassie*) because these are their totems.

➤ Characteristics of totemic groups

- The group is closely connected with its totem.
- They usually occur among groups with unilineal systems of descent reckoning such as clans and lineages. An exception here is the Sotho who do not have clans but totemic groups.
- The group is frequently named after its totem which is believed to be its ancestor.

Southern Ndebele. The Sibanyoni clan is named after the feather (*isiba*) of the guinea-fowl (*lenyoni*). The guinea-fowl is therefore considered to be its clan ancestor.

- The totem may be closely associated with the well-being of the group concerned and so may not be eaten, killed or hurt in any way. It must be venerated and protected.

Exception

Among the Australian aborigines, the totem forms part of their diet and rituals are performed to ensure its increase.

ARE YOU AWARE THAT THE XHOSA GENERALLY DO NOT HAVE TOTEMIC CLANS, NOR DO THEY VENERATE ANY TOTEMIC OBJECTS OR ANIMALS?



THE SUPERNATURAL IN IMAGES, WORDS AND ACTIONS

➤ Images

Images of gods and spirits are often believed to be the **temporary homes** of such supernatural beings. They are placed on altars in homes and temples.

Certain Hindu in Natal place a brass container filled with water on their altars at home as the temporary home of the goddess, Gange. She is named after the River Ganges.

Exception

Statues in Roman Catholic Churches are not believed to be the home of the person they depict.

➤ Fetishes

These are objects to which supernatural powers are ascribed in some societies. They also serve as temporary dwellings for supernatural beings but **unlike images, are worn on a person**. Ingredients may be put into the objects to entice the spirits to dwell in them. They are used for protection against evil or success in war.

➤ Charms, talismans and amulets

These objects all fall in the same category. **They are worn on a person or placed where the influence of the supernatural is needed**, for example, under a roof or in a garden. They are used for:

- protection against misfortune
- prevention of illness
- obtaining strength and good fortune.

➤ Spells

Spells **always involve words**. These may be sung or said. They are intended to bring about a desired result **if uttered correctly**. The word(s) may be the name of the person to be influenced or harmed. Spells may be used to make medicine more powerful.

➤ Simulation

This involves **actions** or **gestures** that are intended to achieve a desired goal. The actions/gestures imitate some part of what is desired.

Shaking a stick at an approaching storm by a Mpondo man is a gesture intended to frighten the storm away.

A dance to imitate the wriggling of a grub eaten by the Australian aborigines is intended by them to increase the supply of these grubs, which are an important source of food.

Mana and ritual impurity

Mana is an impersonal supernatural power present in people and objects. It does not occur in equal amounts. Some bearers have more mana than others.

Mana **may be increased by ritual acts.** In itself it is a neutral power but it can be used for both good and evil. Care must be taken when contact is made with persons and objects having mana.

On the one hand, **ritual impurity or pollution is associated with certain conditions related to stages in the life cycle** such as death, and on the other, with conditions such as menstruation and miscarriage. It can be **removed by ritual washing.**

MANA IS NOT FOUND AMONG XHOSA-SPEAKERS WHEREAS RITUAL POLLUTION DOES OCCUR AMONG THEM.

WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY

➤ **Witchcraft**

- An inherent (inborn) power to harm others.
- Witches have familiars such as baboons, snakes, exhumed corpses, *uThikoloshe* etc which they use for evil deeds.
- They perform their evil deeds at night.

Note that familiars cannot act on their own.

➤ **Sorcery**

- This is the harmful use of magic
- It is learned
- Sorcerers are not inherently evil
- They use words, actions and material objects to harm others for personal reasons.

➤ Possession

Possession occurs when an external spirit or supernatural power inhabits a person. There are two types of possession.

- **Malevolent (Negative) possession**

This is possession by an **evil spirit** and is often manifested in the form of 'incurable illness'.

- **Benevolent (Positive) possession**

This is possession by a **benevolent** (good) spirit.

- **Mediumship**

The possessed person is **under control** of a spirit that communicates with other people through the possessed person.

- **Shamanism**

The possessed person is believed to **command and control** the spirit by which he/she is possessed.

➤ *Malopo*

Among some indigenous groups in South Africa (eg Venda-, Tsonga-, and the North Sotho-speakers), **ancestor spirits** reveal themselves through the possession of people.

- Possessing spirits (*malopo*) cause **illness** which is seen as a sign that a spirit wants to possess a person.
- The medium (possessed person) has **no choice** but to accept the notification that a spirit wishes to possess him/her and should he/she **not** act on such a notification, he/she is likely to suffer serious consequences.
- Mediums are usually women.
- The person as well as members of her/his descent group usually react **positively** to such a notification and spirits are **invited** to possess the chosen person.
- Initial possession of a person usually takes place under the guidance of a *malopo* doctor.
- Treatment of a person with *malopo* illness takes place under the leadership of a *malopo* doctor. The treatment is combined with the performance of *malopo* dances and a purification rite during which the person is incorporated into the ranks of *malopo* doctors. During the dance the spirit is invited to manifest itself in the medium.
- People that are possessed in such a manner form a cult group that acts under the leadership of a *malopo* doctor.
- *Izangoma* possession of the Ndebele and other Nguni groups differs from the *malopo* possession in the sense that the former does **not** develop into a cult and that the bodies of traditional practitioners are not possessed by the possessing spirit's personality.

➤ **Traditional healers**

Traditional leaders specialise in providing medicines for:

- healing
- the treatment of other forms misfortunes
- securing success (eg in battle)
- protection against evil, and the
- fulfilment of desires (eg love potions).

Traditional healers do not practice divination. They have knowledge of the medicinal properties of various substances, but also ascribe the effect of their medicines to the supernatural. In this sense then their dispensing of medicines and other functions can be seen as ritual acts.

➤ **Herbalists**

Herbalists are **a particular type of medicine man** who has specialised knowledge of the medicinal properties of plants, roots etc. They also do not practice divination. Their knowledge is learned, but is seen as originally coming from the supernatural.

➤ **Shaman**

The term shaman is commonly used as a synonym for a diviner. More specifically, a shaman is **a medicine man who is also a diviner**. The term is not commonly used for a ritual leader in the South African context.

RITUALS MAY BE PERFORMED AT REGULAR INTERVALS OR LINKED TO PARTICULAR EVENTS OR CRISES.

➤ **Occasional rituals**

Such rituals are performed when necessary, for example:

- during family disputes
- when building a new house
- during illness, and
- thanksgiving to the ancestral spirits.

➤ **Cyclical rituals**

These rituals occur during stages in the life of the individual (eg birth, initiation, marriage, death) OR during specific seasons (eg ploughing, harvesting etc).



We wish you all the best with your preparation for the examination.

Kind regards

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