

Essay on cross-cultural comparison

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Gypsies from Sutherland's " Cross-cultural Law: Gypsy Offender

Kinship systems

The kinship system of the Gypsies is very complicated. There are no any formalized kin groups. The gypsies think of themselves of as brotherhood. This implies that anyone can fully participate in the communal rituals. They have an ideology of shared activity.

Marital customs

There are no explicit customs pertaining to marriage. There are a series of preferences like spouses should be Rom and known to the family. They should also be from good families and should not be first cousins. Most of the marriages practiced here are from a small circle of kin. The post marital residences alternate for several years but changes after the birth of several children. There are cases of diorce which are common in the early years of marriage and discussion of previous marriages in public are a taboo.

Political organizations

Rom resists any form of official leadership. There are cases of bosses arising especially when non-Gypsy authorities unite with a prominent Gypsy to be granted some form of control to some resources which are limited in nature. However, the authority of such men is subject to their ability to serve up the non-Gypsies. There are no institutions for communal decision making among the Gypsies.

Economy

The economy of the Gypsy is majorly driven by Subsistence and commercial Activities. They engage in various forms of trade with horses, antiques and secondhand cars. Since trade is insufficient, they take wage labor jobs in various factories and collective farms.

They are also involved in the production of industrial arts. They produce metal work which they may sell or put for their own use.

They are also involved in several forms of trade which is primarily on horses. They also sell second hand cars which has been on the rise of late.

Main modes of subsistence

Their main modes of subsistence include: blacksmiths and musicians, trade, land tenure

Magic religious beliefs and practices

Their main religious activities are derived from the Hindu and the Zoroastrian concepts. These concepts are used to distinguish between the good and the bad. When the ancestors are upset, they send signals which keep people on track. Many Gypsies are Christians with different denominations depending on their countries of origin.

Social change

The Gypsies do not encourage an act of someone being proud and appearing to stand above a fellow Gypsy. If such a behavior is noticed in a Gypsy, then he or she is considered to be willing to leave the community and assimilate with other non-Gypsies. Even though there are several cases of economic

inequalities, these are not considered to bring any form of social stratification among the Gypsy. The most common cause of informal dispute is lack of respect.

Residence patterns

The traditional Gypsy is a wanderer and some modern Gypsy still continue with their traditional culture of travelling. They usually maintain a sequence of home bases. The Gypsies tend to follow economic opportunities and hence their large numbers in the most populous cities.

Family structure and organization

The main common type of settlement with the Gypsy is the two generation household. In this case the grand children replace the children once they have all left their parental homes. This ensured that old people are not left to live alone. The families which are now common comprises of three to five offspring

Modes of social control

There are several modes of social control among the Gypsy. Since disputes are likely to arise in cases of disrespect, collapse of marriage and trickery in horse deals. Rom may resort to the use of Kris which is a council of Rom arbitrators. The Kris may suggest various forms of recompense. Their judgment however is not binding therefore the disputes which reach them may take several months until such a time when both parties may accept a compromise.

Health or illness related beliefs and behaviors

Their ideas about health and issues of illness are related to a world view which include the mentality of good and bad luck, dirt and cleanliness. They have cultural rules like washing of food, clothes, fasting and conducting rituals which act as remedies whenever a bad sign is sent.

A most common method of cure here is the Gypsy vomiting. The Gypsies also use a substance called a devil's dung which has long association with healing and spiritualism in India. Some Gypsy families turn to doctors either privately or at clinics. The Rom often prefer to pay for private medical care with a collection rather than the caring being provided for by a welfare doctor. The Gypsy culture tends to facilitate obesity and hence heart diseases.

Effects of modernizations or globalization

Modernization has made the Gypsies change the mode in which they view life and how they perform their activities. The modernization made it possible for the Gypsies to start selling secondhand cars and be involved in trade.

The Nuer from Shandy's "The Road to Refugee Resettlement"

Kinship systems

Nuer domestic groups are based on the ideal of patrilineal descent. The principle is often confounded by the actual composition of local groups. The Nuer have a notion that all adult males can claim ancestry to all other adult males.

Marital customs

The Nuer usually practice traditional marriage and the woman usually goes to the man's home. Divorce may also occur and in such cases when it is in the worst case, dowry may be returned.

Political organizations

The political organizations of these group is organized depending on the type of kinship that is in the system. There is a well organized form of political organization of this group.

Economy

Their economics and main mode of production include fishing and hunting. To some extent, agriculture is also a contributor to their economy.

Main modes of subsistence

Their main subsistence include food collection which is done by hunters, gatherers and fishers. They also include Pastoralism, agriculture which involves horticulture farming, peasant agriculture and industrial agriculture.

Magic religious beliefs and practices

The Nuer believe that God is the Spirit of they sky. They also believe that there are less spirits whereby some are found in the sky and the earth. They also believe in the coming of God which is through the rain, lightening and thunder. They also believe that the rainbow is the necklace of God.

They also believe that when a human being dies, the life and the soul separate. In this case, flesh remains to the earth and the breath or life goes back to God.

Social change

Herding is a very important part of Nuer culture. The Nuer often play drums and this is a very important part of the Nuer's social life.

Residence patterns

The married couple live in the locality which is associated with the husband's family. Patrilocal residence is also common in this group. The bride must therefore move from both her natal household and all of her relatives she has known all her life.

Discussion

From the above examples, it is evident that the two cultures discussed above are similar in one way or the other. However, there are differences which are very evident in their form of operations. The kinship system of the Gypsy is only peculiar to the Gypsy. They also lack some form of political organizations which is not common in the current governance systems found in different parts of the world. The form of economic activities carried out by the Gypsy is also peculiar to this group alone. They tend to shy away from utilizing their land and just decide to lease it out. However, most cultures in the world prefer the use the land for their own use.

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