

Here are your study notes, broken down by module to help you review efficiently. I have structured these to highlight the core definitions, key theorists, and major conceptual differences you will likely need for your semester examination.

Module SCANTH 3A2: Schools of Diffusionism

1. Concept and Features

- **Diffusionism** argues that cultural traits (inventions, beliefs, technologies) develop in a few centers and spread—or diffuse—outward to other societies through contact, trade, or migration.
- It emerged as a direct reaction against Unilinear Evolutionism, arguing that humans are generally uninventive and prefer to borrow ideas rather than invent them independently.

2. The British School (Heliocentric)

- **Key Thinkers:** G. Elliot Smith, W.J. Perry.
- **Core Idea:** Argued that all major cultural innovations (agriculture, religion, architecture) originated in a single location—ancient Egypt—and diffused to the rest of the world.
- **Current Standing:** Highly extreme and largely rejected today for ignoring independent invention.

3. The German-Austrian School (Kulturkreis)

- **Key Thinkers:** Fritz Graebner, Wilhelm Schmidt.
- **Core Idea:** Believed in "Culture Circles" or complexes (Kulturkreis). They argued that culture evolved in several different geographic centers (not just one) and spread outward in waves.

4. The American School (Culture Area)

- **Key Thinkers:** Franz Boas, Clark Wissler, A.L. Kroeber.
- **Core Idea:** Focused on empirical data rather than grand historical theories. They mapped "culture areas" (geographical regions with shared traits) and studied how specific traits diffused across neighboring groups based on environmental limits.

Module SCANTH 3B2: Schools of Evolutionism

1. Concept and Features

- **Cultural Evolutionism** is the theoretical premise that human societies progress and change over time, typically moving from simpler to more complex forms.

2. Classical vs. Neo-evolutionary Thoughts

- **Classical (19th Century):** Developed by "armchair anthropologists" who relied on secondary accounts. They believed in a single, predetermined path of progress, often placing European societies at the top.
- **Neo-evolutionism (20th Century):** Relied on hard empirical data, archaeology, and ecology. It dropped the ethnocentric undertones and focused on technology, energy, and environmental adaptation as the true drivers of change.

3. Evolutionary Approaches Compared

Approach	Key Theorists	Core Concept
Unilinear	E.B. Tylor, L.H. Morgan	All societies pass through the same fixed, universal stages (Savagery to Barbarism to Civilization).

Approach	Key Theorists	Core Concept
Multilinear	Julian Steward	Societies evolve along multiple, different paths depending on their specific ecological environment (Cultural Ecology).
Universal	L. White, V.G. Childe	Focuses on the overarching evolution of human culture globally, driven by energy capture and technological breakthroughs.

Exam Tip: For Leslie White, remember his famous equation: $E \times T = C$, where E is energy harnessed per capita, T is the efficiency of technology, and C is the level of cultural development.

Module SCANTH 3C2: Functional School of Thoughts

1. Concept of Malinowski

- **Biopsychological Functionalism:** Bronislaw Malinowski argued that culture exists strictly to meet the physiological and psychological needs of the *individual*, not just the society as an abstract entity.
- He pioneered long-term fieldwork and participant observation, famously through his work in the Trobriand Islands.

2. Theory of Needs Malinowski argued that every cultural institution (like family, religion, or economics) exists to satisfy specific human needs. He divided these into a hierarchy:

- **Basic Needs:** Biological survival requirements (food, shelter, reproduction).
- **Instrumental (Derived) Needs:** The societal structures created to organize and fulfill those basic needs (law, education, economic systems).
- **Integrative Needs:** The psychological and emotional need for meaning, purpose, and social cohesion (religion, magic, art, mythology).

Module SCANTH 3D2: Structuralism and Neo-structuralism

1. Social Solidarity and Division of Labour (Emile Durkheim) Durkheim analyzed how societies maintain cohesion as they grow and specialize.

Society Type	Type of Solidarity	Characteristics
Simple / Pre-industrial	Mechanical Solidarity	Cohesion based on similarity. People share the same work, values, and collective consciousness.
Complex / Industrial	Organic Solidarity	Cohesion based on interdependence. High division of labour means people need each other's specialized skills to survive.

2. Structural-Functionalism (Radcliffe-Brown)

- Unlike Malinowski (who focused on the individual), A.R. Radcliffe-Brown focused on **society as a living organism**.
- He argued that cultural institutions exist to maintain the *social structure* and keep the society functioning smoothly, much like organs keep a biological body alive.

3. Structuralism (Claude Lévi-Strauss)

- Shifted the focus to the underlying, hidden structures of the **human mind**.
- He argued that the human brain naturally organizes the world into **binary oppositions** (raw vs. cooked, nature vs. culture, male vs. female). These universal mental structures dictate social rules, kinship systems, and mythology across all cultures.

4. Social Structure vs. Social Organisation (Raymond Firth) Firth argued that looking at structure alone cannot explain social change, so he separated the two concepts:

Concept	Raymond Firth's Definition
Social Structure	The ideal, continuous blueprint of social relations. The rules that set the limits of what is organizationally possible.
Social Organisation	How people actually behave on a daily basis. The real-life choices, variations, and decisions individuals make within those limits.

5. Post-structuralism and Post-Modernism

- Emerged as a critique of Structuralism's search for "universal truths."
- Argues that there are no grand, objective structures governing humanity. Instead, reality is subjective, fragmented, and heavily shaped by **power dynamics**, language, and historical context (heavily associated with thinkers like Michel Foucault and Pierre Bourdieu).