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Q1(c)

Critical perspective on avoidance and joking relationship

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2024 · Anthropology GS 1 · 10 marks · The Nature of Culture

2.1 The Nature of Culture: The concept and Characteristics of culture and civilization; Ethnocentrism vis-a-vis cultural Relativism.

Facts & figures for this PYQ only.

Numbers move. Confirm the latest Budget, Economic Survey or census round. This sheet is for revision, not a substitute for the model answer.

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Radcliffe-Brown

His classic essays interpreted joking and avoidance as structural mechanisms that combine attachment with separation in kin relations.

Symmetrical joking

Both categories may tease each other; in an asymmetrical relation one party has licensed disrespect while the other accepts it.

Affinal tension

Marriage joins groups while preserving distinct interests. Avoidance and joking can regulate this simultaneously close and competitive relation.

Indian illustration

Devar-bhabhi or jija-sali familiarity often contrasts with respect toward senior affines, though caste, region and household practice vary.

Critical test

The stated norm must be compared with observed interaction; a joke may communicate solidarity, criticism, domination or harassment.

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