

Descent, Alliance, and Lineation¹

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The discussion of interpretations resulting from the application of descent theory on the one side and alliance theory on the other (for instance Schneider 1965) should give rise to a reconsideration of our scientific terminology, since it apparently may depend not so much on the ethnographic facts but on the pre-conceived implications of the terminological tool when our understanding is asked to rely on two contradictory approaches. We should doubt the validity of the confrontation of an African and an Asian "type of society" as well as any correlation of philosophical orientation of the theories and regional predilection of anthropologists. Alliance theorists tend to confound structure and function no less easily than descent theorists who hypostatise special functions into an all pervading idea resulting, for instance, in "matrilineal societies."

Any intention, therefore, to prove the validity of descent theory not only for African but also for Asian societies will risk to repeat the usual procedure of presenting "correlations" which can be explained by the application of one's theory, although they may be quite accidental. The only way to overcome this speculative functionalism, whether positivistic or idealistic, is (in my view) to disentangle the multiple aspects of "descent" and "alliance" by refining instead of redefining our terminology. In this paper I shall try to concentrate on one aspect, that of exogamy, which can, in most cases, be separated rather easily from descent but has been engulfed by alliance theory. It is therefore alliance theory against which I shall have to maintain my arguments. Still, I hope not to defend descent theory. The analysis will be restricted to a few examples which recently have received the attention of alliance theory: "marriage classes" (sections), systems with "prescriptive marriage," and finally those with "preferential marriage."

1. Sections

When Lévi-Strauss (1949) presented his "structures elementaires" he started from Australia and proceeded to India. Last year Dumont (1966b) started from India to reconquer the homeland of alliance where the late descent ruler, Radcliffe-Brown, who had even doubted the legitimacy of the alliance rule in India, had exerted such powerful influence that even Lévi-Strauss "did not apply his

¹ Slightly revised version of a paper prepared in 1967 for a publication in the Southwestern Journal of Anthropology. The editor accepted the paper, but demanded a reduction of the diagrams (costly to publish at that time). I refused to comply with this condition and refrained from submitting the paper elsewhere. This revised version includes data which became available in 1969 only. Still I had no reason to change the lineation formulas developed in this paper, but they were rewritten and commented in the form devised in my contribution of 1970 in such a way that the reader need not consult it.

theory to the Kariera and Aranda directly, but accepted and elaborated Radcliffe-Brown's and Lawrence's treatment" (Dumont 1966b: 234).

Still, the opposition is not so neat as it may seem. Both alliance theory and descent theory admit principles of descent and intermarriage. The question is how these principles may contribute to our understanding of the different forms of section systems, or, more precisely, which of the principles is more decisive. While Dumont advocates intermarriage (alternating with "filiation"), Lawrence and Murdock voted for double (unilineal) descent producing intersecting social groups. Radcliffe-Brown, on the other hand, looked for the terminology of kinship and maintained that "marriage is regulated by consanguinity and consanguinity alone" (1923: 158). Lastly, Seligman's interpretation of the Ambrym system relied on "filiation" and intermarriage, so that we should group her together with Dumont. This is, to be sure, a rather paradoxical statement, and I shall have to explain it.

To begin with, for Seligman "descent" has a much wider meaning than birth-right membership in a social group (1927: 349). It primarily refers to bilateral relationship, although social organisation tends to legitimate only one "form" of it (i. e. one kind of lineality). Similarly, Dumont speaks of "lineal filiation." A second point is that Seligman overtly and Dumont silently assume that one cannot marry into the grouping to which one is filiated. Finally, with both authors, intermarriage explains the interrelation of the sections. But while Dumont stresses the role of intermarriage, Seligman acknowledged it rather unwittingly (1927: 357): "As a brother and a sister marry a sister and a brother, and neither men nor women can marry into the groups of either parent, the rules that apply to [...] the wife's brother of A1 also apply to A1." In other words: since parents are not to be married one cannot marry the parents of one's spouse.

Even if we accept this, the question remains how to know one's parents-in-law before one has selected a partner, unless there is a tradition of intermarriage? We could forego this tradition in case Seligman's idea of incest associated with bilateral descent would be able to explain bilateral cross-cousin marriage in a four section system. But she maintains that the two are incompatible (rightly so, as long as "bilateral" is not to be replaced by "bilineal"). Her solution: "by means of the use of named groups, indirect descent has so adequately replaced direct descent, that instead of both forms being recognised as bars to marriage, *both forms are equally ignored in that capacity and are superseded by the classes*" (1927: 375, italics mine). Thus, according to Seligman, descent is irrelevant for the Australian systems in question, and it is therefore that she deliberately does not speak of "sections" but of "matrimonial classes."

Dumont's "kinds of local groups" (v. i.) apparently come much closer to Lawrence's moieties than to Seligman's classes. For Dumont's argument it is indeed not so much descent which matters, but the device by which the local groups are bisected. While descent theory will assume another (or even a third) set of moieties, Dumont recognises alternating generations which he characterises as "two kinds of generations which bisect each local group and which, as particularized in each kind of local group, are linked one to one by intermarriage"

(1966: 238). These alternating generations are complementary in a similar way as are the local groups joined by "holistic patrilineal descent." There is, however, a practical difficulty in assigning membership in "holistic generations." In order to know somebody's generation and thus to alleviate the burden of continual kinship reckoning one will have to rely either on section names or on kinship terms, and we should have to resume the discussion where Radcliffe-Brown and Seligman left it.

Named descent moieties are rather common, but named generation moieties are not. The simplest way to avoid the issue is just to postulate that the marriage partner is of the same generation. This procedure, however, will not only contradict the facts, but also upset our anthropological terminology as long as our notion of generation relies on the steps of filiation. The confusion becomes evident in Dumont's interpretation of the Ambrym system. Here he suggests that it will be "impossible to relate the three groups by intermarriage in the same generation, for at least one intermarriage between different generations will be necessary" (1966b: 243). As far as I can see, a six section system will always allow marriage with FMBSC = FFZSC who, *at the same time*, are to be classified as MBDC = FZDC or MFZC = MMBC (etc., because their parents again need not be of the same generation, cf. Löffler 1960b: 446 f.). Dumont's intermarriage between different generations appears to be nothing but a wrong interference from a poor diagram, still it proves that also he accepts the traditional connotation of "generation." Hence his interpretation of the class systems may be seen to rely on two aspects of what is usually called "descent." Alternating generations of the Ambrym system obtain in the isolated descent group only; the intermarrying sections cannot stand in any definite generation relation to them. Thus there are three pairs of intermarrying sections connected by nothing else but "descent." What then is descent?

We have seen that Dumont accepts "holistic descent," explained by him as "two kinds of local groups, ideally affines to each other" (1966b: 237 f.) in the case of the Kariera and "four kinds of local groups" in the case of Aranda. To be sure these kinds are not only complementary to each other but are of exactly the same kind. Dumont avoids to call them groups, for him "groups" have "substantial unity" and "individability." Dalton and Matthews who called these "kinds" "descent groups" may be excused as they lacked a better terminology, but Radcliffe-Brown is to be blamed for perpetuating this usage.

Still, we have to ask why a number of groups acting uniformly towards each other (by avoiding marriage) and uniformly towards another number of similar groups (by practising intermarriage) and who "think of each other as 'our side' and 'the other side'" (Dumont 1966b: 236) should not be called "group" as well? If there is anything to be questioned, it is Dumont's assumption that all these "kinds" consist of "local groups." The interplay of descent exogamy and local exogamy is, e. g., most important for the Aranda system as described by Spencer and Gillen (cf. Löffler 1966a: 59 f.), and we should not evade the issue by blurring the difference. If Dumont will concede that the "kinds" can be essential or (in Radcliffe-Brown's phrasing) that moieties can exist irrespective of their

location, then there remains no basis for his refusal to acknowledge a polar pair of "moieties" as well. But since these moieties admittedly will be far less "substantial" than Dumont's kinds of local groups, the question remains whether they should be called "descent groups." Nevertheless, they behave *as if* they were descent groups, and that is why Dumont tries to replace them by his "kinds."

By descent Radcliffe-Brown understood "the entrance of an individual into a certain *social group* as being the child of a member of the group," and he maintained that this descent "is necessary always unilateral" (1929: No. 35). In demonstrating the application of his definition, Radcliffe-Brown, at first sight, seems to contradict his own characterisation of the section systems: "Even if both parents belong normally to the same group, as in Indian castes [...], it is strictly the caste of the father that determines that of the child," while in cases of irregular marriages "in the majority of the Australian tribes, the section membership of the child is determined through the mother alone" (1929: No. 157). If caste descent is to be called patrilineal, then section descent should be called matrilineal. There are, however, other kinds of "descent groups" in Australia which may be patrilineal, for instance local groups or totemic clans. All kinds of interactions in which one has to participate by virtue of being the child of either one's father or one's mother are descent groups in the sense of Radcliffe-Brown's definition of 1929,² including Dumont's kinds of local groups, complementary and "ideally affines" to each other.

What does this "ideally" imply? Do they or don't they intermarry? Let us assume four sections, to be called A, B, C, D. A intermarries with B, C intermarries with D. That is all. In order to connect A ↔ B and C ↔ D, intermarriage will be of no further help and we must take recourse to a new rule, for instance that male A's and female B's children are C while male B's and female A's children are D, and similarly for C and D. This rule, however, is uneconomic, for we may achieve the same result by taking into consideration the father or mother (and their children) only. "Given the rule of patrilineal filiation and the rule of intermarriage, the rule of matrilineal filiation is entailed" (Dumont 1966b: 236) – but, we must add, only as long as we remain within the regular system. In cases of irregular marriages "the father is thrown away." An exception is provided by the Northern Aranda who "throw away" the mother (Radcliffe-Brown 1929: No. 157).

We should keep in mind that in the preceding quotation Dumont's "filiation" is (like that of Lévi-Strauss) the equivalent of the English "descent" shorn off the implication of a social group. It is therefore not to be confounded with Fortes' "filiation," which he defined as "universally bilateral" (1953: 33) in the same way as Radcliffe-Brown's "kinship" was "always bilateral" (1929: No. 35). On the other hand, we must hesitate to characterise the unilineal one-step

² Not the "evolutionists" and "diffusionists" (Radcliffe-Brown 1929, No.35) but the different connotations of "descent" caused the "confusion of the thought" right down to Dumont's charge (1966b:237) that Goody (1961) "confused" descent with inheritance.

recruitment as "descent," since the existence of a social group has yet to be proved. In order to avoid the usual misunderstandings, I shall use "descentation" to denote the process by which a person is legally assigned to any grouping on behalf of but one of the parents.

Applying the term to our four sections, we get two times two sections united by descentation as well as two times two sections united by intermarriage. Whether there are also two kinds of local groups is completely irrelevant to the system as such, and there need not be, as has been correctly stated by Seligman, any descent groups at all, whether patri- or matrilineal. None of the paired sections acts uniformly against its "partner": the sections united by descentation have different marriage partners, the sections united by intermarriage have different descentation partners.

Applying this interpretation of a four section system to six and eight section systems, we recognise that the intermarrying pairs are a general phenomenon as much as the "interdescending" pairs. (I call them "interdescending," since the third generation connected by descentation is, as far as the section systems are concerned, equated with the first generation.) In order to account for a six section system we need a new rule, viz. that sections interdescending with intermarrying sections may not intermarry. And in order to account for an eight section system, we need a further rule, viz. that sections interdescending with intermarrying sections may not interdescend. Thus we have four kinds of rules: 1) prescribing intermarriage, 2) prescribing descentation, 3) proscribing intermarriage, 4) proscribing descentation. "This may be legitimate, but is it economical?" (Dumont 1966b: 236). Because the "negative" rules had to be added to the "positive" rules, the only way in which we can hope to reduce their number and the resulting complications is to try the reverse procedure, i. e., to start with the proscriptions. Instead of defining the marriage partner, we may define who is not to be a marriage partner. Though by now completely negating Lévi-Strauss' principle of "positive rules" which we already had to violate anyhow, this procedure has the advantage that it can be applied to all societies and not only to those with "prescriptive marriages."

All those with whom marriage is interdicted may be said to belong to an exogamous group which, however, need not be a social group. A person's belonging to this group may be determined in different ways. In case it rests on alignment by birth, I shall call it "lineation." This "lineation" has got nothing to do with Dumont's "descent," defined as "transmission of membership in the [unilineal] exogamous group" (1957: 4), but means the rules of alignment by which inclusion in a reference group can be determined. I decidedly use "can be determined" instead of "is determined" in order to indicate the character of a logical construct. Whether certain principles of lineation are verbalised by a people or not is completely irrelevant for the validity of its rules. All that is necessary to identify lineation is to show that a people's behavioural norms

relating to exogamy allow the application of its rules, just as the "behaviour" of material objects allows us to apply the laws of physics.³

For the sake of an exact notation of the "extension" of exogamy let me introduce some signs. A father's patrilineal descendants (corresponding in the social sphere to members of a patrilineage) shall be designed by σ_n ("descendants by sons"), a mother's matrilineal descendants (corresponding to a matrilineage) by δ_n ("descendants by daughters"). The index is meant to indicate the number of descending generations. In case these lines are extended above one's father or mother, I shall use an exponent, so that, for instance, σ_n^3 will designate the patrilineal descendants of ones FFF, while simple δ stands for δ_1 , the mother and her children.⁴ In case index and exponent are theoretically infinite, I shall use Σ (~ patrisib) and Δ (~ matrisib). In case a society possesses but a limited number of these infinite lines I shall use a bracketed index, so that, for instance, $\Sigma_{(2)}$ stands for "patrimoiety." Alignment to these lines shall be possible via the father or via the mother, so that, for instance, $M\sigma_m^n$ corresponds to a mother's patrilineage, while $F\Sigma$ (= Σ) will stand for a father's (equal to one's own) patrilineal group of unlimited depth, corresponding to a patrisib. If (and only if) male and female siblings have different alignments, this shall be shown by a prefixed m (male) or f (female), so that, for instance, mMa_n^2 will stand for the patrilineal descendants of a man's MFF. Although this notation could be used for other alignments as well, in the following context it shall be used for those of exogamy only.

With E for spouse, I might expand our last example to $E \neq mM\sigma_n^2f$ to indicate that a man is forbidden to marry any female of the patrilineal descendants of his MFF. Since, however, the marriage proscription is mutual, it will be better to use this formula in such a way that it comprises the whole exogamous unit. This can be easily achieved by inverting it. For this purpose, however, the traditional F (for father) and M (for mother) prove an obstacle. In order to know what kind of relative Ego is for a distant relative written down in the conventional notation, most people will have to take recourse to a diagram. This procedure becomes superfluous as soon as we replace F by Pm, M by Pf, B by Gm, Z by Gf, S by Cm, D by Cf. Now all we have to do is to read the formula from right to left. In case the formula contains indices and exponents, they will have to be inverted, P will become C and vice versa. For the example mentioned above we receive $[mPf\sigma_n^2f]^{-1} = f\sigma_n^2fCm$. As a consequence, the whole exogamous unit will be unequivocally and completely contained in the formula $[mPf\sigma_n^2f]^{\pm 1}$. Formulas like these do not explain exogamy, but they describe it precisely. They do not rely on descent theory nor on alliance theory, especially not on "positive" mar-

³ The restriction of "lineation" to the rules of exogamy is, of course, artificial. Its principle and the notation system can be applied to any system of alignments.

⁴ In order to exclude father or mother, the exponent will be 0, but mark that a negative exponent should be replaced by a positive index and a negative index by a positive exponent. Negative ascentation is descentation and vice versa.

riage rules. They just state who is not to be married. Moreover, by their simple structure they help to preclude (and to detect) wrong inferences.

Returning to the section system, let us assume that marriage is forbidden with Σ_2 and Δ_2 . This implies that each person is aligned to one of two infinite patriline (patrimoieties) which may be designated by A and B as well as to one of two infinite matriline (matrimoieties) which may be designated by 1 and 2. It follows that anybody must have one (and only one) of the four combinations: A1, A2, B1, B2. All those having the same combination constitute one "section." No member of any section can marry anybody whose combination minimally has one line in common with him. This leaves only two kinds of marriage partners: A1 \leftrightarrow B2 and A2 \leftrightarrow B1. Although theoretically the combination depends on the intersecting lines, the sections as groups depend on the interactions according to the specific rule of lineation. What in fact matters is not the single line but the combination, and it is but consequent to name the sections and not the lines (or "moieties"). Nevertheless, in case of irregular marriages or, even more pressing, in case of intertribal marriage, people will be forced to decide whether the patri- or matriline shall be more "substantial." This legalisation has only one choice: it must be either the father's or the mother's membership which is decisive. This is what I have called descentation.

An illustrative example of matrilineal descentation is given by Dumont's discussion of the Murngin system. Shorn off his "straight" and "oblique filiation" Dumont's fig. 5 may be redrawn and continued as follows:

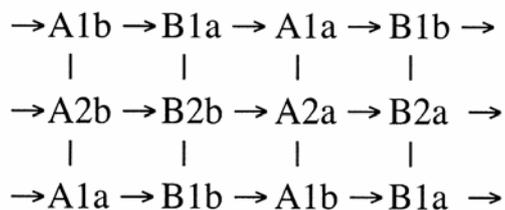


Fig.1: Murngin sections following Dumont

The arrows point to the man (husband's section); the last column on the right joins the first on the left; the vertical lines connect fathers with their children. A and B shall denote patrilineal moieties, 1 and 2 alternating generations, a and b were not defined by Dumont, he only tells us that "Kariera A1 will be replaced by two sections, Ala and Alb" (1966b: 244 f.). Dumont's assertion that the son's son is in the same section as his father's father is contradicted by the diagram, but remains possible nevertheless, since what matters is another suggestion, namely that "if the child of a 'regular' marriage of a man of Ala is in A2a, the child of an 'alternate' marriage of the same man must be A2b, as there is no other possibility" (1966b: 246). Thus an "a"-child is from an "a"-mother and a "b"-child from a "b"-mother, and the child's section is determined by that of his mother. The diagram represents the alternate marriages only. The reason is obvious: the "regular" marriages would produce nothing but a simple four section model. Although a and b do not constitute exogamous groups (or matriline of a

lineation system), they turn up as symbols for descentation of section membership. Dumont's interpretation of the Murngin system may be correct or not, what is important here is that the system as conceived by him implies "double descent" as defined by Radcliffe-Brown.

Will my lineation theory be able to explain Dumont's Murngin system? I do not think so. The reason is simple: it is only the diagram which suggests that Ego's MBC are on the right side and his FZC on the left. Regular marriages, however, will revert the situation. A man of let us say A2a can marry both, woman of B2a and B2b. But he is forbidden to marry his FZD. If this A2a man's FZ married a B1b man, her children will be in the same section (B2a) as our man's MBC. Consequently any intermarrying sections contain two types of cousins: those whom one can marry and those whom one cannot. Marriage (as already stated by Warner 1958: 123) cannot be regulated by section membership, and therefore exogamy alignments cannot correspond to these sections. This example shows that descentation – although it still represents a kind of inheritance, in this case the assignment of mother's mother's section name – may exist independently of lineation.

Let us now turn to the Aranda system. Dumont rightly insists that double descent cannot explain the number of eight sections. For him: "the difference with Kariera as regards intermarriage consists in the fact that the two generation sections of one local group *marry not in the same, but in two different kinds of local group*" (1966b: 241). There is nothing new in this statement, and the accompanying diagram (2c) is not so much a "Dumont proposal" as the Radcliffe-Brownian arrangement of the kinship terms. Still, let me continue the quotation: "If we assume that A1 intermarries with B1 and C1 with D1, it follows that A2 intermarries not with B2, but with D2 (it could be C2) and C2 with B2 (if not with D2)" (loc. cit.). If we translate the symbols in brackets into kinship positions, their configuration conveys nothing less than that Dumont is unable to explain why A2 intermarries with D2 (classificatory FFZSC = FMBSC and MFZDC = MMBC), *but not with C2* (FFZDC = FMBDC and MFZSC = MMBSC), that is, why marriage is possible between children of classificatory cross-cousins of the same sex but not of the opposite sex. Until now the reason for this rule was obvious: the latter belonged to Ego's moiety. Dumont, totally disregarding Radcliffe-Brown's remark (1927: 346) that "in the North Aranda there are names [...] also for the patrilineal moieties," ridicules these "hypothetical moieties" altogether. Unless he provides us with a better explanation we must conclude that his new "theory" explains less than the old, and it equally "does not account for the number of groups" (1966b: 242).

In this connection we should mention Murdock's idea of a third pair of moieties (1949: 54), not to warm it up again, but to reinterpret it. According to Murdock it results "from the imposition of an exogamous taboo upon one's mother's patrilineal kinsmen." There can be no doubt that marriage with these kinsmen is prohibited, and if we translate Murdock's "taboo" into the symbols of a lineation rule, it reads $M\Sigma$. The alignment $\Sigma_{(2)}$ has already been established by the "taboo" between children of cross cousins of opposite sex. Since $M\Sigma$ belongs to Ego's

opposite $\Sigma_{(2)}$, there must be at least two Σ in each moiety, else there would be no marriage partners left. This yields a total of four Σ . The new formula summing up the proscribed lines now reads $\Sigma_{(2)} + M\Sigma_{(4)}$. Let me call the four $\Sigma_{(4)}$ A, B, C, D, and the two $\Sigma_{(2)}$ A+C and B+D. Attributing two alignments to each person, we get eight possible combinations intermarrying as follows: AB \leftrightarrow DC, AD \leftrightarrow BC, CB \leftrightarrow DA, CD \leftrightarrow BA. All other combination are excluded by "moiety identity." In the frame of a genealogical diagram the symbols show the following distribution:

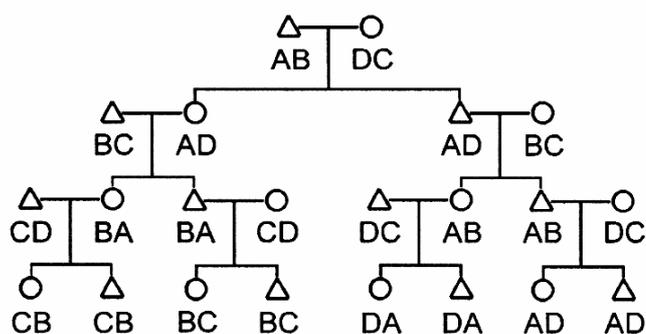


Fig. 2: Alignment combinations of an eight section system

The first position stands for $\Sigma_{(4)}$ (as part of $\Sigma_{(2)}$), the second for $M\Sigma_{(4)}$. Besides those persons whose alignments show one symbol in common, also those whose first position belongs to the same "moiety" (A+C, B+D) will be forbidden to marry. All siblings have the same combination as their FF, they belong to the same section. An additional introduction of symbols for matrimoieties will not change the marriage possibilities; the system is complete without matrilineal moieties. I fully concur with Dumont that double descent is useless to explain the Aranda system. Nevertheless his local group argument must be wrong, since with the Aranda "there is no necessity for a man to marry out of his own local group" (Spencer & Gillen 1899: 560). Moreover the picture is not yet complete. A man is not free to marry any woman of his "marriage partner" section, because this section contains two kinds of women: *anua* (Spencer & Gillen) or *noa* (Strehlow) are marriageable, *apulla* (Spencer & Gillen) or *palla* (Strehlow) are not. Radcliffe-Brown's systematisation rests on the material of Strehlow (Southwestern Aranda), and here *palla* is a woman who – defying Dumont's intermarrying generation sections – does not belong to Ego's generation (Strehlow 1908: 55 n. 2), with the Northeastern Aranda of Spencer and Gillen *apulla* is a girl who belongs to the same "family" as Ego, is his blood relative. Here enters a second set of lineation rules, probably (based on the still existing matrilineal element of the system) $PP\delta_3$. However, due to the overarching system which covers most of these relatives as well and since the mother is "thrown away," this formula can be easily reinterpreted as $PP\sigma_3$ similar to what we shall find in Northern India.⁵

⁵ For a more detailed analysis cf. Löffler 1966a.

In order to elaborate a last point let me return to the Ambrym system. Although I refrained from introducing and explaining the formula, my interpretation of this system (Löffler 1960b) was in part based on lineation theory. Ambrym exogamy conforms to the formula $\Sigma_{(3)} + M\Sigma_{(3)}$. Designating the three patriline by A, B, C, we get six possible combinations divided into three pairs of marriage partners: $AB \leftrightarrow CB$, $AC \leftrightarrow BC$, $BA \leftrightarrow CA$, accounting for the following diagram:

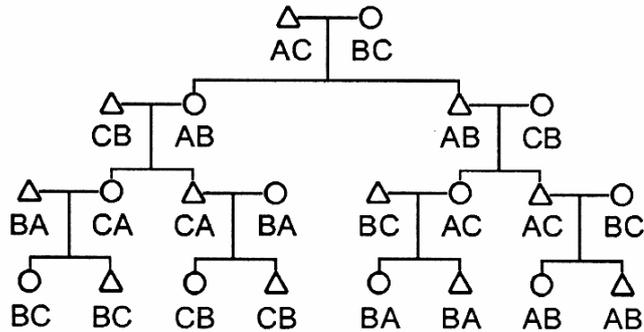


Fig.3: Alignment combinations of a six section system

It may be remarked that, while the marriage partners in an eight section system did not have any element ("line") in common, those of the six section system always show the same second element, their $M\Sigma_{(3)}$. This is due to the fact that there are three "lines" only. The only line still available for marriage is $PM\Sigma_{(3)}$. Marriage will be possible with MBDC and MFZC ($BA \leftrightarrow CA$), MMBC and FZDC ($AC \leftrightarrow BC$), FMBSC and FFZSC ($AB \leftrightarrow CB$), etc. Anybody belongs to the same section as his (or her) FF and PMM. As in the Aranda system, no matriline enters the scheme, and matrimoieties, if added, will not change the result, i. e. $\Sigma_{(3)} + M\Sigma_{(3)} + \Delta_{(2)} = \Sigma_{(3)} + M\Sigma_{(3)}$. This lineation rule explains the peculiar situation that Deacon found matrimoieties in Ranon but not in Balap, although both systems functioned in the same way. The matrimoieties of Ranon are practically superfluous for the regulation of marriage, but since the Ranon people claimed that they regulate it, a matrilineal dual system must have been of importance formerly.

Comparing the lineation formulas of the six and the eight section system, their difference may be seen to rest mainly on the total number of Σ composing the system. Lineation itself cannot account for this difference. Must we then, like Dumont, accept the numbers as given or can we account for it? I suggest the latter, but will not go into the details here, since I have published them elsewhere (Löffler 1960b and 1966a). For the present purpose I suggest that it is here where alliance should enter the field. The simplest exogamy rule based on alliance (but not valid for the $\Sigma_{(3)}$ of Ambrym) is that any two (however defined) minimal lines which intermarry with a third line of the same sort cannot intermarry. If, for instance, both A and B intermarry with C, then A and B cannot intermarry. As a result, any number of these lines will be assigned to either the one or the other of two bundles which I have called $\Sigma_{(2)}$, but which

also might be called "moieties." These moieties, in their turn, may be split up again by additional lineation rules.

Provided these moieties (by now defined by lineation, that is by rules of exogamy, independently of any named social groups) are patrilineal, they may (but need not) contain any number of Dumont's local groups and as such will replace his "kinds of local groups." Still, the real bone of contention is what I called the "additional lineation rules." Refraining from introducing a second incompatible principle, I cannot use Dumont's ill-defined "alternating generations" unless I can redefine them via lineation. In the case of eight and six section systems I can do so (despite in my view quite valid objections of the native informants) without having recourse to matrimoieties, in the case of four sections I cannot. I'll have to accept both, $\Sigma_{(2)}$ and $\Delta_{(2)}$, that is, two patri- and two matri-moieties intersecting each other, thereby producing four sections.

Historically seen, there can be little doubt that it was on the basis of these four sections that eight and six section systems developed. That is why the native informants' objections are justified. Especially interesting is the Ranon situation, where the "alternating generations" of sections could be identified quite easily when counting patrilineally (Ego belongs to his FF's section), while the natives explained it matrilineally by that Ego belongs to his MMM's section. This (but not only this: no kin term system restricts the differentiation to two generations only!) proves that the "alternating generations" are nothing but a result of the system, and not vice versa.

Consequently we may assume that in any primary section system Ego belongs to both his father's Σ and his mother's Δ , which when existing (due to the alliance rule stated above) in pairs must produce the epiphenomenon of "alternating generations" which factually implies nothing but that ("irregular" marriages apart) Ego is assigned to the same section as his FF. What in my view is more important is the fact that additional patrilineal filiation rules may render the recognition of matrilineal moieties superfluous.⁶

2. Prescriptions

In the previous chapter "alliance" has been used with the connotation that a single marriage gives rise to equational norms for all subsequent marriage partners assigned to the same line (or combination of lines) as one of the primary marriage partners. If a man of A marries a woman of B and another man of A a woman of C, C and B will be equated. This equation welds B and C into a single reference group of A. This identification by A, however, need not have any effects on the relation between these lines themselves. It is only by adherence to alliance exogamy (forbidding marriage between B and C by virtue of common marriage with A) that the equation becomes independent of the reference group. Alliance exogamy results in moieties irrespective of bilateral or unilateral mar-

⁶ For a more detailed analysis of eight section systems, especially those of the Aranda, see Löffler 1969 (Kinship and Locality in Section Systems: a Reconsideration).

riage. Without it, "symmetric alliance" (allowing marriage with some cousins whether patri- or matrilateral) will assume, for instance, the form of a "Dravidian" system, while "asymmetric alliance" (containing a strict prohibition for men to marry their patrilateral cousins) gives rise to a peculiar type of system, which shall be discussed next.

These explanations should be sufficient to dispel the wrong confrontation of dual systems and asymmetric alliance systems built on Lévi-Strauss' original opposition between "échange généralisé" and "échange restreint," which, in the meantime, was relinquished by himself (Lévi-Strauss 1956: 117). Even so, his tendency to equate "restricted exchange" with a dual system and "generalized exchange" with unilateral cross-cousin marriage has proved rather harmful. People were expected to "exchange" girls for girls and goods for goods even if the transfer was unidirectional; the profit of this business had to be found in a greater number of affinal ties. Finally, affinal relations became a value in itself, for the maintenance of which people subjugated themselves to heavy economic losses and other troubles.

An illustrative example is provided by Leach's explanation of the Lakher⁷ system of marriage prestations. To explain why these prestations are extremely differentiated and manifold, Leach suggested that with the Lakher the affinal link was intrinsically weak and the payments were meant to reconsolidate the relationship. Sociologically I should maintain that many interactions are a sign of a strong integration and hence a strong link, and economically I should maintain that payments are made not to increase one's obligations but to get rid of them. It is tautological that it would not be so if it were otherwise, but it is not logical to explain the existence by the non-existence.

What then does it mean when Leach postulates weak links? It is logical that if there is no giver, there can be no taker and vice versa. These givers and takers have to rely on each other for their existence. Why then should they trouble to develop an additional system of complicated payments? Leach's answer is to suppose that "[...] the affinal link is completely terminated by divorce or by the death of either spouse. There is certainly a valuation [!] that affinal links *should* be maintained beyond death but the maintenance is achieved only [!] by renewed payment of valuables [...]" (1963: 245). People have to pay in order to sustain the structure. This is, to be sure, not ethnography, but fiction. But let's follow it up.

Though the ethnographer speaks of the mother's brother and takes the trouble to specify who of several mother's brothers will receive the sum in question, Leach insists that the payments are not made from person to person but from lineage to lineage. Admittedly the men normally involved may be dead so that their heirs will replace them, and we may, for Leach's sake, call this a lineage, but it will be pretty hard then to find any payment which is not made from lineage to lineage. However, Leach adds to this "lineage" not only the MB but also

⁷ To be pronounced La-khèr. Their own name for themselves is Maraa. Their area belongs partly to India (Mizoram), partly to Burma (Chin State).

the WB (1963: 245f), an affinal, who in no way needs to belong to the same corporate group. Here our mistake in interpreting Leach's "lineage" becomes obvious: it resembles a "line" in my lineation system.

The real question is, whether the MF, MB and MBS receive their prestations as consanguinals of Ego and his son – or as affinals of Ego's father and his son and son's son. Leach subscribes to the second view. Since Ego's mother is a member of her father's lineage, he infers that the Lakher are a patrilineal extreme case, "in the sense that the mother has no kinship ties with her husband's children but is bound only to their father as an affine" (1961: 14). Consequently, a son should be able to marry his own mother, but Leach is afraid, "that neither the Lakher nor their ethnographer seem to have considered this bizarre possibility!" I myself am afraid that for a patrilineal extreme case this possibility should not be bizarre at all. Still, a Lakher is not even allowed to marry his mother's sister. Leach does not tell us why this should be so.

Another unexpected effect of Leach's theory is that girls are not "exchanged" at all; they are "hired out." Nevertheless, people pay a "bride price" to establish an affinal relationship. After the death of a female affinal they pay once more in order to continue the affinal relationship, making it an alliance. Apparently "alliance" is something which must be bought. To quote Dumont (1966: 237): "Do we 'explain' anything when we reduce a structure to a substance? At any rate, we do not understand it."

Leach tries to understand it by quoting a Lakher tale according to which the death due for a woman was introduced because her husband insisted on having sexual intercourse with the dead body. I should suggest that we need not take this literally, but read it as a version of the idea of postmortal family life, insured by buying the bones. Still, a death due is also paid on the death of a man. While a woman's death due is paid by her youngest son (or his heir) to her brother (or his heir), a man's death due is payable by his eldest son (or his heir) to the deceased's maternal uncle (or his heir)

If a woman's death due were paid in order to continue the alliance between her husband's and her brother's patrilineages, we might expect a similar reason behind the death due of a man, that is, an alliance between the son on the one hand and the father and his maternal uncle (as members of the same *matrilineage*) on the other. Moreover, if the death due for a woman could be said to evince the affinal relationship between a mother and her children, that for a man might evince that between a father and his children. Leach's "extreme case" becomes a funny case of "double affinal descent," a world novelty. So let's see whether he was able to avoid this result.

When a chief dies, his daughter (or her son) may loot his family tomb. According to Leach (1963: 243) the chief's daughter and her son represent the wife-takers who had to pay valuables and now take them back. If we accept this, there obviously exists an affinal relationship between father and daughter! This, however, contradicts the assertion that a woman is a member of her patrilineage. Leach tries to solve the problem by establishing a kind of wife-taking "household" (1963: 241) – if he had used Murdock's terminology he might have

called it a "clan" – leaving the wife-givers bare of women, since the women they married themselves are and remain their affinals.

At any rate, the affinal alliance between lineage and household has to be continued: it is now brother and sister who become affines. Leach seems to be afraid of the consequences and hastens to explain that the married woman remains a "corporate member" of her lineage of birth, "even though she has a domestic identity in the household of her husband," so that, as before, "the woman's son is her affine rather than a kinsman" (1963: 244). We must conclude that corporateness determines whether one's children are affines or con-sanguinals, while identity is responsible for access to and inheritance of valuables. Lost in bewilderment, let us return to Lévi-Strauss. He simply diagnosed "un symptome pathologique" (1949: 327).

However, a Lakher, reading this verdict, might maintain that his people are simply not interested in complying with the requirements of "alliance theory." He might maintain that he does not regard his mother's brother as an affine but as a kinsman, and that he calls his wife's father by the same kin term in order to let him know that henceforth he will not be treated like an alien but like a respected member of the family. He might add that the Lakher also accept mother's brother's wife and the mother-in-law into the family circle and, in order to sanction this acceptance, forbid any marital relations with these women; add that this connection is again expressed by the fact that a child after his father's death (irrespective of his descentation) is free to choose whether it will stay with the father's relatives or with the mother's brother; add that women receive parts of the marriage payments, that their goods are inherited by their daughters, and that even their "rank" (expressed by the height of the marriage price) can be transmitted to their daughters. All this was known by Leach. However, it will prove nothing as long as "descent" is nothing definite but something to be maintained for a particular purpose. A particular transaction operated patrilineally may be claimed to prove it, the matrilineal corollary may not. Instead of having a lineage basis, it can be interpreted as a kind of lineal kinship, called filiation. While, for instance, Lakher clans are ranked, rank "is a quality which is transmitted by filiation rather than by descent and is, in part, sex linked." Why "in part"?

The rank quality of a woman "has to be purchased by the patrilineage of the child's father, in part from the patrilineage of the mother and in part from the patrilineage of the mother's mother" (Leach 1963: 48). Apparently the lineages sell qualities which are not their own. In order to make it a reasonable business we better assume that there are on the one hand rights to be inherited patrilineally and on the other hand matrilineally inherited rights which have to be paid off in order to be transmitted patrilineally as well. These payments form, it should be noted, part of the marriage price, and similar rights must be acquired correspondingly through other parts of this price. By the main price, for instance, the "rights over the children of a woman are acquired by the patrilineage of the husband" (Leach 1963: 245, 247). In case the price is not paid, or if it is refunded, the children will join their mother's brother's group. It is here where I

agree with Leach. But mark the consequences: it depends on nothing but this price whether the mother is a consanguinal or (in Leach's view) an affinal.

According to Lévi-Strauss such transactions transcend the exchange by alliance and belong to what he called "marriage par achat." "[...] c'est du dehors, des caracteres concrets, et non de la structure formelle du groupe, que surviennent les dangers qui le [l'échange généralisé] menacent. Le mariage par achat fournit alors, en se substituant a lui, une nouvelle formule qui, tout en sauve-gardant son principe, donne en même temps le moyen d'intégrer ces facteurs irrationnels [...]" (Lévi-Strauss 1949: 327). One of these "irrational" factors is the tendency neither to lose one's daughter nor to break the alliance. "Les innombrables paiements [...] semblent stipulés pour imposer l'idée que le fil, disposé de toute éternité pour guider la fiancée chez le fiancé [...] peut à chaque instant se rompre [...]" (Lévi-Strauss 1949: 317).

From here to Leach's thesis it needs but a small, though decisive, step, viz. to unite what Lévi-Strauss had separated, his "deux modalités du mariage (degré prescrit et achat discuté)." As long as we regard the prescribed degree as a fiction, this identification may seem justified. It should be born in mind, however, that Lévi-Strauss himself was careful enough not to claim that the payments in question fostered alliance, but to suggest that they served to ward off the dangerous tendencies which worked against alliance, and, unlike Leach, he did not hesitate to ascertain "une certaine solidarité en ligne féminine" (1949: 377). Indeed, paying off grievances caused and debts incurred during marriage by smaller payments and buying rights and titles by bigger payments may have a function quite different from that imputed on it by Leach, namely to slacken or even to sever the bonds between the wife and her kinsmen. I suggest that this may be especially the case with the payment received by the maternal uncle of the bride (or his sons): By accepting the payment he and his heirs will cede their claims as kinsmen of the bride, no predetermined marriage regulation will obtain between a woman's and her mother's brother's children. A corresponding gift among the Mru, neighbours of the Lakher, is called *chum-müa*, the "put-to-an-end gift." One's wife-givers' wife-givers may be one's wife-givers as well, but it is equally possible that they are one's wife-takers. It is in the latter case only that Lévi-Strauss' circle can be closed, that Ego is a member of MMM's patrilineage.⁸

These payments to the maternal uncle of the bride bring to an end the "kind of lien" which Leach adopted from Lévi-Strauss without accounting for it. For Lévi-Strauss this lien resulted from a tendency to exchange a woman for a woman: a man has given his sister, her daughter should return. The asymmetric system forbids her to return, so that "l'obsession patrilatérale se fait sentir dans la participation, autrement inexplicable, de l'oncle de la fiancée au bénéfice des prestations matrimoniales" (Lévi-Strauss 1949: 563). Leach argued that Lévi-Strauss here largely ignored "structural ties deriving from marriage between mates of different corporations" (1961: 122). However, either Leach's structure

⁸ Unlike in Ambrym, this may be, but need not be the case.

is not that of Lévi-Strauss or he himself ignored its effects. Otherwise he should have noticed that the payments are not a tribute for the upkeep of the structure as such. I am not very fond of Lévi-Strauss' sentimental arguments either. What is at stake here is status. I concur with Leach that the main payment to the bride's father (and his "lineage") is meant to acquire the rights to affiliate her children to the husband's patrilineage. But that's not all; it also means the dissection of the matriline, as shown by the payment to the bride's maternal uncle.

In fact the men sell, piece by piece, the rights over their daughters, rights which they acquired when marrying their wives who, in their turn, are daughters of other men. The trouble is that the fathers sell only part of these rights, others they bequeath on their sons. As a result, these heirs will demand a payment on the marriage of their sister's daughter. As long as these payments will cut the matriline only, they will consist of just a token, but they may become substantial when they serve to rise the brideprice of one's future daughter. Structurally seen the common end of all these transactions may be said to be the assertion of the patrilineal system against a (by these very payments) still acknowledged matrilineal alignment – quite irrespective of strong or weak affinal links. But these payments are not necessary for the up-keep of the structure. Their basic function is the assertion of male dominance. It is the men who effect the transfers among themselves according to their own rules. In some of these transfer ceremonies women may not even be allowed to be present.

Let me add that in the course of Christianisation these transactions may be temporarily abolished. Even the named patrilineal descent groups, identified as "heathen" may be negated in the name of equal rights for both sexes. But this is nothing but eye-wash. After some time they will reappear and payments will be resumed on an even larger scale. But there is a major difference: the bride's family by now is free to demand any price it thinks appropriate to its family standards. This finally abolishes the role of the matriline and reduces the importance of the bride's maternal uncle.

Judging from Lakher ethnography, there can be no doubt that the maternal uncle formerly had a weighty voice in family matters – perhaps he still has. Due to the system there must exist a strong structural bond between brother and sister. Even after marriage a woman remains a member of her "clan" (or lineage). The strength of the sibling bond naturally tends to weaken that between husband and wife. This weakness of the marital bond, however, did not influence the asymmetric alliance between "clans." The genealogies published by Parry (1932) show a continued unilateral relation between the named descent groups. Leach when postulating "weak links" confounded the ego-centred family sphere with the socio-centred structural sphere.

Socio-centred descent groups must cut across ego-centred kin groups. Parry notes that a maternal uncle is entitled to a share of any wild animal shot by his nephews and has in turn "to give shares of any animals he shoots to his nieces, and if he has no nieces he is expected to give shares of meat occasionally to his nephews" (1932: 244). For Leach this is an example of prestations between affinal groups, for me it is an obligation between kinsmen.

This may be just a question of definition, since with the Lakher a mother's brother is called by the same term as a wife's father. Their sons again are called by the same term. In this equation, however, I cannot see an ascending extension of the affinal relationship between Ego and his brother-in-law. On the contrary and consistent with what happened in the semantic field, this skewing (Lounsbury 1964) suggests a descending extension of consanguinal relationship between Ego and his mother's brother. In Leach's functionalism there is little scope for similar "extensions" of kin terms. With Dumont, however, we find formulations like "genealogical or diachronic affines, who inherit, so to speak, an affinal tie which originated in an upper generation (e. g. mother's brother)" (Dumont 1957: 27). If Ego would "inherit" his father's affinal relationship with WB, he should tend to call his MB = FWB like WB and correspondingly to call his ZS like ZH. The contrary is the case: he calls his WB like his MB and his ZH like his ZS.⁹ I must conclude that the Lakher, instead of classifying the mother's brother as an affinal, classify the wife's father and together with him his son as "consanguinals." Consequently we can expect them to be forbidden to marry into Ego's group – and they are forbidden to do so.

I anticipate an objection. Granted that "consanguinity" may be regarded as a bar to marriage, why then will Ego be allowed to marry a daughter or a sister of a consanguinal? Is not a consanguinal's consanguinal a consanguinal as well? Yes – as long as we are dealing with biological relations. But here we are dealing with lineation. In order to account for matrilateral cross-cousin marriage, we can start our analysis by assuming two patriline, one for Ego and one for mother's brother. In order to forbid marriage with the patrilateral female cross-cousin, we have to align females to both lines and males to one line (that of their father) only. Since a man cannot marry his mother etc., we must add a matriline. In case these lines are of infinite depth, our formula will be $\Sigma + fP_f\Sigma + \Delta$. Symbolising the patriline by A, B, C, etc. and the matriline by 1, 2, 3, etc., we may draw the following simplified diagram:

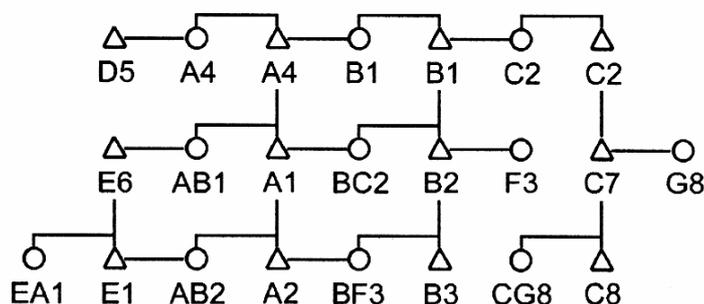


Fig. 4: Lineation system allowing matrilateral cross-cousin marriage. Any two categories showing a symbol in common cannot marry.

⁹ Primarily the two terms (common in the whole area) designated both grandfathers and children's children.

Although A and B may be called "affines," there is yet a "consanguinal" bond between a man and his niece as well as his patrilateral female cross-cousin. Any girl has her maternal uncle's alignments, corresponding to Leach's "kind of lien." The Lakher *ngazua*, which Leach interpreted as a "wife-receiving household" (the term actually refers to the women), are all those categories to the left of a man having one symbol in common with him: his FZ, FZD, Z, ZC, etc. This grouping is defined in relation to a given Ego, and it is only by confusion of a classificatory principle (ZH = FZS, DH = ZS) with a kin group that it can be interpreted as a social group (lineage or household).¹⁰

There are, however, other ethnographic data, which demand a modification of our preliminary lineation formula. First, a man can marry his MZD, and to account for this we shall have to replace the indefinite Δ by a definite δ^2 . Second, "clans" are not necessarily exogamous, hence there is no prove that the exogamous lines are of unlimited depth and we shall have to replace Σ by σ_m^n . Third, a man should not be able to marry his FFZSD, while in our diagram C8 could marry BF3. To account for this we shall have to replace BF by BFC, indicating that a woman can marry neither into her father's patriline, nor into her mother's patriline, nor into that of her father's mother (fPmPf σ_m^n). Fourth, the rule that a woman can fetch a higher marriage price in case her M, her FM, and her FFM were women of higher rank, may indicate even a third patriline, that of her FFM (fPmPmPf σ_m^n). Instead of the former simple fPf Σ , we now have f σ_m^2 Pf σ_m^n , and the Lakher formula reads $[\sigma_m^n + f\sigma_m^2Pf\sigma_m^n + \delta^2]^*1$.

One of the implications of this formula is that a man is not forbidden to marry a patrilaterally related girl in case her FFFMF is this man's FFFFF. When I tried for the first time to analyse the Lakher regulations with the help of the lineation concept (1960), I had not yet developed the present notation system and therefore tried to explain the fFFM σ_m^n regulation by a classificatory interpretation of the "MF-line" (M Σ). When doing field research among the Bawm, immediate neighbours of the Lakher, I learned that they allowed marriage with a "FZD" provided that the common ancestor was more than five generations removed. My premature conclusion was that the Bawm had no asymmetric alliance system. It is but now that I perceive that the apparently arbitrary number of five exogamous generations with the Bawm and the equally arbitrary number of three higher ranked mothers with the Lakher conform to exactly the same lineation formula. The Bawm data allow us to refine our lineation formula once more. Since the generation rule applies to relatives of the same named descend group as well, exogamy is determined by $[\sigma_4^4 + fPf\sigma_4^3 + f\sigma Pf\sigma_4^2 + f\sigma^2Pf\sigma_4 + \delta^2J^{\pm 1}]$, which we can retranscribe as $[m(\sigma_4^4 + \delta^2)f + f\sigma^2P\sigma_4m]^{\pm 1}$. In other words: Ego's exogamy range patrilineally comprises 4 generations above (and by reciprocity also below) him, with a maximum of one female link in between, matrilineally

¹⁰ Cf. also: "The category *pupa* [...] comprises: MoBr, WiFa, MoBrSo (m.s.), WiBr, WiBrSo. From a man's point of view this is simply [...] the patrilineal lineage of the bride" (Leach 1963: 244f). Sorry, mother's brother and wife's father need not be related at all. They are just classified together. "A man's view"? Leach's view.

two generations above him, but with a depth of one descending generation only (so that marriage with a matrilinear parallel cousin is possible). The preponderance of patrilineality is obvious, but there is no reason to call it an "extreme case."¹¹

The new formula does not fundamentally change the diagram given above. All we have to do is firstly to replace EA1 by EAB and BF3 by BFC, and secondly to split and to reinterpret the matriline as links between Ego and his mother's mother's children. The role of these links may be shown by a discussion of the death dues. We remember that the youngest son has to pay for his mother to her brother, the eldest son for his father to the latter's maternal uncle. This distinction, theoretical as it may be, reflects the fact that the elder the boy, the less he will depend on his mother, the more he will represent the "lineage." But there may be more behind it. In case BC2 dies, her youngest son A2 will pay the death due to B2. A2 and B2 belong to the same matriline. In case A2 dies his eldest son A9 (not shown in the diagram) will have to pay to the same B2 again. Thus B2 receives two successive payments, one on his sister's death and one on his nephew's death.

In high-ranking families the same persons, the sister and the nephew, are entitled to loot the family tomb on B2's father's death, i. e., to take valuables which B2 should inherit. When we read the three events in a proper time sequence, we see that the death dues are nothing but a restitution of what has been taken ("looted") before. By allowing his sister and nephew to hold during their lifetime part of his deceased father's valuables, B2 acknowledges their membership in his kin group, their "consanguinity." His sister's daughters are not especially mentioned in this context, but that they are included too, is shown by the fact that the uncle claims part of their bride-price. We may even surmise that if he refused the looting, he would have no claims at all.

Most probably it is the youngest son, staying together with his mother and remaining after her death in the parental house, who is safeguarding these "family" valuables. The uncle's or his heir's right to claim them back, will come to an end with the death of the last nephew; the matriline does not extend any further. What has been interpreted by Leach as delayed exchanges between "wife-givers" and "wife-takers" are indeed nothing but obligations (which also include the mutual gifts of hunting prey) between members of a kin group overlapping two patrilineages and thereby two patrilineal inheritance groups.

But what defines this kin group? It is not a family. Its composition is best approximated by $[\delta^2,]^{\pm 1}$, the rudimentary matriline.¹² Wasn't MF mentioned too?

¹¹ It should be noticed that no lineation formula can account for the fact that a man is forbidden to marry WM or MBW (a woman DH or HZS). The terminology classifies them together with mMMBD ~ fFZDS, but these may be marriageable. The prohibition results from the previously contracted marriage, and as such will also be valid for a woman's HF and FZH (a man's SW and WBD), as also for FBW, MZH, etc., resulting in a completely bilateral pattern, quite similar to the system we know from our own culture.

¹² By calling this group which otherwise has no name a δ -group, I in no way intend to derive all the interactions within this group from the lineation formula. The formula does not

Yes, but it was on his death only that M and her children began to play a role (looting his tomb). And MBS? Again only after MB had died. MF and his patrilineal descendants MBS provide for the dominance of the patrilineal inheritance rule. A man's sister and her sons may "hold" the valuables, but they cannot inherit them. On the other hand, MBD is never mentioned. There is no matri- and no patriline that could connect her to Ego. But this very exclusion makes her important: she can become Ego's wife. However, there is no obligation to marry her. It contributes at best nothing to an understanding of the situation when it is characterised (by Lévi-Strauss and Leach) as "prescriptive marriage." Though this "prescription" is said to exist on the level of the "model" only (actually it is inferred from the kin term system), it was supposed to induce a preference in actual life.

Since I could prove that this "model" and its prescription cannot even induce a preference (s. Löffler 1966b: 78), we should ask why the Lakher might have a preference nevertheless. I suggest that the matrilineal obligations discussed above play a role here again. Instead of two sets of obligations – one against his mother's brother and his son, the other against his wife's father and his son – Ego will have only one. This preference, however, cannot, in its turn, explain the alliance. It will lead astray when we interpret the fact that the Lakher call their in-laws like consanguinals as nothing but a device of make-believe. These affines are not only treated like kinsmen, they also comply with the rules of exogamy. These rules apply irrespective of any preference for an actual matrilineal cross-cousin.

So let us return to the general structure of asymmetric alliance. In order to account for it, all we need is a lineation system according to which a woman cannot marry any man of the patriline of any parent of her patriline's members (in short $f\Sigma P\Sigma m$), or, by inversion, that a man cannot marry any woman of the patriline of any child of his patriline's members ($m\Sigma C\Sigma f$). The individual relationship of marriage and the ensuing consanguinity is transposed into relations between lines: every line has as its partners a number of mother's father's (or wife's brother's etc.) lines as well as a number of daughter's son's (or sister's husband's etc.) lines. Which characterisation we prefer is irrelevant for the analysis, the anthropological usage prefers "wife-givers" and "wife-takers," the terms used by the people themselves often imply meanings like "the forefathers" and "the progeny."¹³ Still, these two aspects of the complementary relationship

explain why the Lakher load it with so many functions. To explain them would require a more enlarged and detailed analysis. I indicated above that it also serves the male power play in a system of ranked lineages.

¹³ Leach argued (1961: 122) "that [...] the cross ties linking the different patrilineages laterally are not felt by the people themselves to be of the nature of descent." This may be doubted, cf. Mru *pen* (wife-takers) besides *pen* (give birth), *tutma* (wife-givers) derived from *tut* (down, root); Khumi *pakiüng* (wife-givers) from *kung* (back) and *theo'* (wife-takers) from *thok* (come forth, issue). Even Leach's own Kachin material disproves him: *dama* (wife-takers) from *ma* (child), since *dama's dama* are *shu* (grandchildren); *mayu's mayu* (wife-givers

are by no means exhaustive, and to reduce them to affinity cannot but restrict and distort our analytical instruments.

This brings us back to a terminological question: shall we still call the special type of these regulations (with the depth limited to five generations) among the Lakher and Bawm "asymmetric alliance"? Or should we restrict this term to those societies, which fully comply with the $[f\Sigma P\Sigma m]^{\pm 1}$ formula, as for instance the Mru? Needham hesitated to include the Lakher in his list of societies practising so-called "prescriptive matrilineal cross-cousin marriage" (Needham 1962: 55). He based his analysis mostly on terminology, and the resulting difficulties may be best seen from the Bawm example: the former asymmetry in cousin terms has become brittle, and it is possible to use even bilaterally homogeneous terms for the descending generations.

To solve the question let me return to my initial definition of alliance. A single marriage should enforce equational norms upon all consecutive marriage partners of each line; a line may have any number of generations. With the Lakher these equations do obtain, not only in the sphere of terminology but also in that of exogamy. Thus, the definition can be applied and we can characterise also the Lakher and Bawm systems by "asymmetric alliance" or, if necessary, by "limited" asymmetric alliance.

Lévi-Strauss has argued that "if we exclude all consideration of marriage preferences expressed in terms of kinship degrees, the definition of the social structure will become empty and tautological, since all we shall know about the marriage system of these tribes is that each group is supposed to receive its wives from 'wife-giving' groups and to give its daughters to groups concerning which nothing can be said either, except that they are 'wife-takers' in relation to the former" (1965: 17). My foregoing analysis should have shown that this is far from true. Instead of subsuming anything similar under one notion, we should, first of all, distinguish the preferences from the configurations of kin terms.

Marriage cannot take place between terms or categories, but kin terms can be applied in such a way that a marriage partner and his relatives are assigned to certain categories. In case these categories also include consanguinals, the bad habit of speaking of "prescriptive marriages" has provoked the useful, although in this connection completely irrelevant argument that it is demographically impossible to fulfil the "prescription" because nobody can have all these consanguinals, so that "even a prescriptive system cannot be but preferential at the level of reality" (Lévi-Strauss 1965: 17). Once more: asymmetric alliance can exist without any preference for marriage with one's mother's brother's daughter. On the other hand, a strongly preferential system as that of Dumont's Kallar can do without asymmetric alliance – at least in the sense defined here. Lévi-Strauss, however, turns his former statement around and maintains that "even a

of wife-givers) are *ji* (grandfathers). Confronted with the facts, Leach (in a personal letter to the author dated Aug. 25, 1965) admitted that "the lateral relationship of alliance is thus arranged as if it were lineal relationship of patrilineal [sic!] descent." (That this "as if" is the matrilineal "women's view," submerged by the male bias, will be shown in my paper of 1992: "Male bias in models of asymmetric kinship terminologies")

preferential system is prescriptive at the level of the model" (1965: 17). Similar statements may be good to hush up one's blunders, but they cannot serve as guidelines for an analysis.

For me, "asymmetric alliance" would be an empty model indeed, if it did not refer to an actually existing regulation of exogamy which can be determined by a formula like $[f\Sigma P\Sigma m]^*$ ¹ or its derivatives. Its function is "to generate marriage possibilities and impossibilities" (Lévi-Strauss 1965: 14). I fully concur "that the ideal model which would enable us to understand the workings of asymmetric systems [...] must rest in the long run upon the notion of permitted or prohibited degree. For it is only by turning back to this notion that we may understand the significant features of the system" (1956: 17). However, I am sure that the best way to completely misinterpret "the system" is to confound exogamy with preference, or alliance with marriage.

Alliance may imply, as we have seen, consanguinity, and Leach's abstruse constructions have shown us what can happen when one believes in Lévi-Strauss' dictum (1965: 19) that "an asymmetric system makes one cross-cousin into a 'father-in-law' and the other into a 'son-in-law'," while "a Crow-Omaha system takes the opposite stand by turning affines into kinsmen." As a matter of fact, in both cases a MBS can be called like MB and cannot marry into Ego's line. Lakher exogamy reflects an asymmetric alliance system, and Lakher kin terminology reflects an Omaha system (as defined by Murdock 1949). Though this coexistence is quite common, it is in no way obligatory. What distinguishes the Omaha systems of Southeast Asia from those of North America are differences due to adjustments of the kin terms to asymmetrical lineation in the one case and symmetrical lineation in the other.

Lévi-Strauss tells us that the Crow-Omaha systems as he defines them can be characterised by a special rule which "may be best formulated by saying that whenever a descent line is picked up to provide a mate, all individuals belonging to that line are excluded from the range of potential mates for the first lineage, during a period covering several generations" (1965: 19). The stress must be on "all," since otherwise the same might be said of asymmetric alliance systems. Let us now turn to a society, which complies with this "generalized definition of a Crow-Omaha system" and is said to turn "affines into kinsmen."

3. Preferences

One of the confusing consequences of affinal alliance theory is the interpretation that, under patrilineal conditions, either the mother must be an affine of her children, or affinal relationship will obtain between father and daughter as well as between brother and sister. What is implied *a priori* cannot be proved, and the affinal fission has to be postulated. These fissions are a *conditio sine qua non* of the theory; the actual organization of kin is quite irrelevant! Leach chose to separate mother and children, although the terms which he took to denote the affinal groups indicated the separation of siblings.

What Leach tried to avoid, Dumont imposed on the Indian system. To quote him: "[...] the distinction between 'brother' and 'sister', with reference to a male Ego, may express the ceremonial distinction between consanguineous and affinal relatives, *the only condition being that the distinction is generalized* from sister to the male members of the family she has married into. In actual fact, *this generalization results immediately from the definition* we had to give to the relevant 'vector' [...] A gift sent to a male Ego's married sister, as soon as by its content is not actually destined for her alone, but to the family in which she lives, is in effect an affinal gift" (Dumont 1966c: 98 f; italics mine). The "relevant vector" subsumes affinal categories under consanguinal terms, but Dumont had to define it as affinal according to his theory. Consequently he can conclude that the information "Among us, girls do not inherit, but to them, to their husbands, to their children [...] we make gifts" is "strongly suggestive of a differentiation or opposition between lineal filiation and affinity" (1966c: 110). These gifts seem to show a certain resemblance to those of the Lakher, but there is a difference in the pattern of the interpretation: Leach had the gifts exchanged between "lineages" which at closer inspection might be minimal descent units or nothing but category units produced by the Omaha term system, Dumont's opposition of affinity and lineal filiation relies on abstract units only.

Though this difference may be of theoretical importance, for the actual practice of gift-giving it is of no explanatory value. Neither theory accounts for the kinds of goods, the occasions on which they are given and, last but not least, the directions into which they go. What is taken into account is the mere fact that there exist "prestations" between members of two families related by marriage which are relevant for their children's obligations and rights. For Leach this is an affinal relation between two "lineages" so that Ego's mother must belong to the opposite "lineage," for Dumont this is an affinal relation between kinship constructs or even groups, so that "it is impossible to classify the mother with her 'natal descent group' as one could do for a bride or a wife, precisely because to ego she is a *mother*" (Dumont 1961a: 85). I may be allowed to ask whether the mere word can constitute a valid reason. Something more must be implied. If a sister can, at least ceremonially, become a kind of "affine" for her brother, the same might be true of a mother in relation to her son. Perhaps it is local nearness which really matters.¹⁴

What Leach does, is to blur once more the two spheres distinguished by Radcliffe-Brown, that of kinship and that of descent, first by using a term from the kinship sphere – affinity – to obtain between descent groups, then by deducing from this redefinition a kinsman's – the mother's – role as an affinal. Goody's "residual claims" from descent and Leach's "economic dues as an expression of alliance" testify to the same ideology, that of descent theory, neglecting rights which might arise from kinship. By devouring father "kinship," son "descent"

¹⁴ Dumont may have sensed this, since in 1969 he organized a conference on "Kinship and Locality" in which also Schneider participated. Schneider (1968) had shown the relevance of local nearness in US kinship, but the conference took little notice of this seminal contribution to the interpretation of kinship.

has developed an Oedipus complex, expressed by the "bizarre possibility" that a man marries his own mother.

Dumont remains in the kinship sphere. His lineages are named exogamous units. Those united by alliance are not these lineages, but "lines" which can be determined by ceremonial roles, kinship terms etc. without, in general, assuming corporateness. These "lines" result from marriage regulations; they do not exist by themselves. "The very existence of the marriage regulations implies that affinity is transmitted from one generation to the next" (Dumont 1957: 24), similar to (but not by means of) membership in a descent group. Who should be called an affinal is determined by definition. "[...] there is likely to be an affinal content in terms which are generally considered to connote consanguinity or 'genealogical' relationships (such as 'mother's brother' etc.). This is obviously so when there are no special terms for affines, for otherwise we should have to admit that in such cases affinity is not expressed at all" (Dumont 1957: 25).

Well, I prefer to admit it. Why should a kin terminology feel obliged to make a distinction? Our own system does not make any difference between consanguinal and affinal "uncles" and "aunts." Do these terms therefore acquire an "affinal content"? Definitely not, since Ego is not permitted to marry the persons designated by these terms. A married couple and their siblings do not bequeath their personal affinal relationship to their children. Is there any reason to suppose the situation to be different in India?

When Lévi-Strauss claimed that his Crow-Omaha systems turn affinals into consanguinals, all he did was to overlook the fact that there is a worldwide tendency¹⁵ not to use special affinal terms but to accept affinal relatives in the realm of those who are called by terms used for consanguines. The above quoted passage notwithstanding, Dumont clearly recognized this for North India: "Terminologically, MB and FHZ are not affinal relatives," but he continues: "and yet they appear as such in the usages we have described" (1966c: 144). If he calls this "more or less contradictory" it is his fault, not theirs.¹⁶ A usage which obtains between consanguinals and affinals is not bound to prove "affinity."

¹⁵ Our own culture is no exception as far as the terms of address are concerned. It needs an attitude of cultural haughtiness to assume that people who do not use a similar distinction are not able to express it when they use the "descriptive" level. To the surprise of naive anthropologists, even Australian aborigines know to distinguish their own uncles, from the classificatory ones. To claim that such a term denotes an "affinal" or a "consanguinal" is pure fancy work of anthropologists who want to prove their theory.

¹⁶ Is our use of "uncle" for a father's or mother's brother and a father's or mother's sister's husband "contradictory"? Definitely not. We just follow the rule that parents' siblings' spouses, according to their sex, are to be classified as parent's siblings. We may privately distinguish between consanguinal and affinal "uncles," we may not attribute them the same status, but this need influence neither our personal predilections for the one or the other of our uncles or aunts nor our willingness to call them by this term. Kinship terms with us as anywhere else have their own history and follow their own logic. They are in no way obliged to represent what anthropologists, for the sake of their theory, call consanguinals and affinals.

There can be no doubt that, in case of a South Indian MBD marriage, the affinal relationship in the first generation may be repeated in the second. It is, however, only a matter of terminology whether we call this repetition "transmittance" or use Radcliffe-Brown's formulation that "marriage is determined by consanguinity and consanguinity alone." When I reject the latter formulation it is because it does not tell us why certain consanguinals can be married or not. Dumont tries to circumvent the question by postulating positive marriage regulations between affinals. But I have my doubts that this will be helpful. What is preferred in South India (unilateral cross-cousin marriage with the Kallar) is forbidden in North India. North Indian descendants of actual affines should, following Dumont, act as if they inherited the affinal relationship, but marriage is prohibited. What then has become of the "positive marriage regulation"? Dumont argues that people have been "prevented from developing them to their logical consequences" (1966c: 110). Again, this logic is his and not theirs.

Let us assume that FZH has a ceremonial role and that affinity disappears "into consanguinity for the next generation." The result will be that FZH's role cannot be taken over by his son but must go to a new affine, ZH. From the same fact Dumont concludes that affinity does not disappear into consanguinity (1966c: 95). The only way in which his argument will make sense is to return to the commonplace truth that Ego's line will have affinals as long as it has descendants who marry. This is valid everywhere and has nothing to do with the actual organisation of kin. "The very existence of marriage regulations implies that affinity is transmitted from one generation to the next." Maybe, but Dumont means "positive regulations." These, however, remain without consequences in North India, so that we may safely assume that the "transmittance" cannot and does not depend on them. Obligations contracted and rights received on the occasion of marriage may be subject to inheritance. To call this family business "transmittance of affinity" is at least misleading.

Marriageability is a question of negative regulations (categories tabooed), which no positive regulation will be able to explain. Or has the interdiction to marry one's parents-in-law anything to do with a positive regulation? If you are expected to marry an affine, you cannot have it the other way round too, at least not without a negative regulation superseding the postulated positive one. This fact had been quite clear until alliance theorists detected that the regulation of exogamy could not be explained by descent theory. Dumont, criticising Eme-neau, argued that he seemed to assume "that the prohibition of marrying close parallel relatives outside one's exogamous group – which is real – is an index of a second underlying exogamic principle, and finally that exogamy would be the only principle of all marriage prohibitions. This can hardly be admitted, as it would follow, for instance, that the prohibition of incest with the mother in a patrilineal society would have to be taken as an index of matrilineal exogamy. There are clearly two sets of prohibitions of a different nature: exogamy, attached to a group, is one, while the prohibition of marriage between close relatives attaches to each individual and is another" (Dumont 1957: 21).

This criticism, in order to be valid at all, has to rely on a definition of "exogamy" and "exogamous group" which was not Emeneau's. Emeneau would not have maintained that exogamy is the only principle of marriage prohibitions, since he knew that there are prohibitions due to endogamy as well. Endogamy precludes marriage with persons who are not and cannot be relatives, exogamy on the other hand, excludes persons who are relatives by birth (consanguinal), by marriage (affinal), by ritual assignment (as for instance godfathership), by common locality, etc. Affinal exogamy is predominantly bilateral, consanguinal exogamy can be bilateral as well, but very often is bilineal. In the latter case patri- and matriline rarely are given the same weight. Patriline may take the size of descent groups (Σ), matriline may be reduced to δ^1_1 . Since there exist so many variants in between, I think it futile to claim that Σ denotes exogamy, while δ^1_1 is an incest prohibition.

Unfortunately Dumont does not define the nature of the "group" without which there will be no "exogamy." Must it be possible to define this "group" independently of marriage prohibitions or must it even be possible to define it independently of Ego? Are marriage prohibitions which refer to indefinite lines "exogamy" and those for definite lines "incest prohibition"? In this case the Lakher would have incest prohibitions, while their neighbours, the Mru, who follow the same alliance pattern but use lines of unlimited depth, would have exogamy. If indefinite lines are not required, how limited must a definite line become to change its quality? Is δ^3_3 incest prohibition or exogamy? Is affinal exogamy (as defined above) because of its minimal extension to be called "incest prohibition"?

In order to know who cannot be elected for marriage, Ego must do some kinship reckoning,¹⁷ unless patri- or matriline (or both) are identified with social units (for instance, named descent groups). This identification is by no means necessary. It can be recalled whenever it results in inconveniences, as for instance demographic stress (no partners available). But as long as it obtains, the "complementary" (whether matrilineal or patrilineal) alignment may dwindle in importance, and the extension of the line may recede until it comprises at best Ego's mother or father. As a result it is no abstrusity (as Dumont apparently thinks it is) that, for instance, "the prohibition of incest with the mother in a [so-called] patrilineal society would have to be taken as an index of matrilineal exogamy." It is "matrilineal exogamy," though a very reduced one indeed (δ^1_1). It may be reduced still more; lineation also provides for δ^1_0 (forbidding marriage with the mother, but allowing it for siblings by the same mother). As we shall see below when analysing the *sapinda* rule, Emeneau is to praise and not to blame when he assumed that the prohibition of marrying close parallel relatives outside one's exogamous group indicates a second underlying exogamic principle (for North India it is the matriline), and that exogamy is the only principle of all marriage prohibitions. Dumont, replacing the unitary concept by his dich-

¹⁷ For instance: the Aranda rules narrowing down the partners by section membership, the 5 generation limit of Lakher and Bawm, or just the European system

tomy, failed to recognise the transformation of these old rule. This shows that his dichotomy is not only useless, but could even blindfold an eminent social scientist who otherwise meritoriously faught against preconceived European ideas in analysing Indian culture.

To confound lineation with descent is an old sin, lying at the bottom of all endeavours to explain exogamy by descent plus something else, an "element complementary to it" (Dumont 1957: 22), be it "filiation" or "alliance." Since "filiation" here has little in common with the fact that women, impregnated by men, bear children, but simply means the exerted choice which I (in order to distinguish it from Fortes' "filiation") renamed "descentation," it may well be that exogamy rules (here formalised via "lineation") antedated both.¹⁸

One may ask whether rules of exogamy have any general function of their own apart from that of prohibiting marriage. Since I am not going to maintain that "a structurally logical ordering of relatives into a meaningful pattern" (Dumont 1966c: 110) is a function, my answer should be negative. This however does not imply that special alignment combinations could not stipulate the existence and development of certain types and forms of social organisation. Even so, lineation formulas are no notations for Lévi-Strauss' "structures formelles" which "constituent la base indestructible des institutions matrimoniales, de la prohibition de l'inceste par laquelle l'existence de ces institutions est rendue possible, et de la culture elle-même, dont la prohibition de l'inceste constitue l'avènement" (Lévi-Strauss 1949: 547). Rules of exogamy are far from being indestructible.

There is only a limited number of primary combinations. In general, these combinations are not subject to wilful manipulations; changes result from the retention of the traditional rules under new social conditions. They may constitute a limiting factor in the interpretation of special historical developments. Nevertheless, retention and unintended transformation have their limits as well; exogamy rules may experience a complete breakdown. Moreover, wilful manipulations do occur, for instance, as devices of intended assimilation such as, in the North Indian context, the rising of one's caste status.

According to Dumont the main effect of the North Indian rules of exogamy - for instance the rule not to marry into the descent groups ("gotras") of one's FF, MF, FM, and MM – is that they prevent repetition of marriage between these patrilineal groups. But the prohibition of FF's patriline is obviously useless in this context. "At the same time," Dumont claims, "a four 'gotra' rule does not by itself prohibit the cross cousins" (1966c: 112). Unless he explains why, I main-

¹⁸ I frankly admit that Lévi-Strauss in 1949 did suggest this before me. Due to his male bias his subsequent elaborations may have contributed to his fame, but nevertheless they are lacking any explanatory value. "Incest prohibitions" were not the basis of culture, they antedate mankind. What humans did, was to formulate them, to expand them and sometimes (due to culture which conceptualised "incest") also to reduce them. For a man not to mate with his mother or sister or daughter, for a woman not to mate with her father or brother or son may seem "natural," but it need not correspond to "cultural" norms, the less so since all these kinship categories may have been culturally redefined.

tain that this rule even prohibits the marriage between the patrilineal children of these cross-cousins. In the following diagram, Ego is indicated by the black sign, the four gotras are represented by A, B, C, D and the letters attached to each pair of siblings indicate those of the four gotras into which these siblings cannot marry.

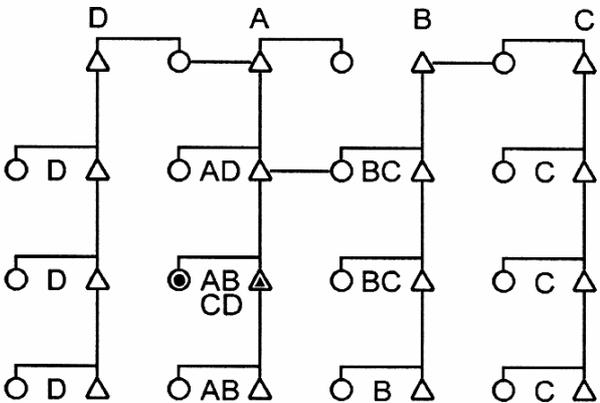


Fig. 5: The four-gotra rule.

The diagram shows that Ego (ABCD) can marry neither his (or her) first cross-cousins (BC) nor his (or her) second cross-cousins (D and C), the relation between AB and B in the fourth generation repeating that of ABCD and D. It can also be seen, as has already been noticed by Dumont, that marriage can be resumed in the fourth generation (AB ↔ D or AB ↔ C).¹⁹ There is yet a nearer cousin who can be married under this rule: MZC. Since this type of marriage is equally prohibited, there must exist a more comprehensive rule. Moreover, the four-gotra rule is in no way ubiquitous in North India. Kapadia writes: "The exogamy of the Hindus has two aspects. The first, *sapinda* exogamy prohibits marriage between persons related to each other within certain generations on the father's and the mother's side. The other, *gotra* exogamy, prohibits marriage between members of the same gotra" (Kapadia 1958: 124). He further remarks "that the restrictions of the *sapinda* exogamy primarily implied marriage beyond the family, i. e. four generations on the father's side and three on the mother's" (1958: 127).

Kapadia does not tell us how to trace this relationship, but he calls a marriage with the first cousin a marriage in the third generation. This makes sense only when we count the number of generations from the common grandparent. As a result the *sapinda* rule excludes 1st cousins via the mother and 2nd cousins via the father. But there is yet another version of the *sapinda* rule, mentioning not 4 and 3, but 7 and 5 generations. Quite a number of scholars have worried about the two variants, have scrutinised old sources and tried to decide who introduced the rules and which one was actually in force. I suggest that there can be no

¹⁹ To preclude wrong inferences from the diagram it should be noted that the prohibition of ABCD (etc.) applies to the siblings only and not to their ortho-cousins who may have other female ancestors. Marriages between two gotra are always possible.

satisfying answer, since both versions most probably represent one and the same rule. All we have to do is to count not only one way, but up and down again. 5 and 7 are the minimum number of symbols which (apart from the lineally connecting lines) are needed to draw a diagram to show the difference between 1st and 2nd cousins. Before the introduction of the 4-gotra rule such a drawing for illiterate people (as for modern anthropologists) is the easiest way to ascertain whether a distant relative is marriageable or not.

Still, there remains one question. The rule says nothing about linearity. If we had to count bilineally only, cross-cousins would be excluded and the patrilineal rule would be useless, since it would be completely superseded by the patrilineal *gotra* rule. Hence we should count bilaterally. But this leads to another problem. FFFDDC will be excluded via the patrilineal part of the rule. But for them Ego is a MMMSSC who is allowed by the matrilineal part of the rule. A contradiction? No, what is permitted by one formulation may still be interdicted by another one. In the same way the matrilineal part of the rule, though (when considering the reciprocity of the relations) largely overlapping with the patrilineal part, still adds new relatives not excluded by the patrilineal part: the matrilineal parallel cousins.

When translating these rules into a lineation formula, I therefore should be allowed to write them in such a way that also they overlap in part. By inverting $\sigma^3CC + \delta^2C$ (the Indian formulation) we receive the reciprocal equivalent $PP\sigma_3 + P\delta_2$, the first part of which (comprising the patrilineages of FF, FM, MF, and MM) immediately brings us back to the 4-gotra rule. All we need in order to extend the patrilineal exogamy starting with the father of these four grandparents to all members of the gotra is his replacement by the gotra ancestor (for instance by ritual identification).

The 4-gotra rule relieves the burden of kinship reckoning, it cannot, however, replace the $P\delta_2$ part of the *sapinda* exogamy. Because $PP\sigma_3$ partly does the same job (forbidding marriage with a cross-cousin), the latter can be reduced to δ^2_2 without changing the result. Nevertheless $PP\Sigma + \delta^2_2$, when compared with the classical *sapinda* rule, clearly shows the reduced importance of the formerly matrilineal, now matrilineal component. Minimal as this shift may appear, it implies a fundamental change in the social structure from a formerly (nearly) bilateral to a rigidly patrilineal system. Still this system is not reflected in the formal properties of the kinship term system. When we compare this situation with that of the Lakher, where male dominance is definitely less pronounced than in North India, while the term system is heavily influenced by the patrilineal structure and the matrilineal part of the exogamy rules reduced still more than in North India, it should become obvious how misleading it is to throw the three criteria into one pot. They are connected, but not by any simple mechanism which would allow us to use them as a single criterium.

I have to explain my formulation that the patrilineal dominance is not reflected in the formal properties of the kinship term system. By "formal properties" I mean its outward appearance without considering the value connotation of some

terms, but also without taking into consideration the range of their applicability beyond those nearest relatives generally used to translate their meaning. Kinship terms need not reflect exogamy rules, but they often do. In order to check this, we should be able to take a closer look at their extension. Unfortunately, ethnographers rarely take the trouble to give a detailed account of these extensions.²⁰ Yet we may surmise that they also reflect the depth of the exogamous group, so that for instance the term for MB can be used (under the *sapinda* rule) for MB's orthocousins too, or (under the 4-gotra rule) for all his gotra members of approximately the same age.

This simple principle, however, is not as clearcut as it may seem. This becomes obvious when we turn to the "sibling" terms. Descriptively, each type of cousin has its own set of terms, but when addressing them, Ego uses the "sibling" terms instead. This extension seems to follow the 4-gotra rule, but if this were true, Ego should exclude matrilineal parallel cousins of 2nd or higher degree. Nothing like that has been reported; these terms can be extended to nearly everyone including foreigners. However, Ego will not normally use them for his affines, while affines' affines can be "siblings" again. The effect is similar to what we found in Australia: if A marries B and C marries B, A and C will be "siblings" and allocated to the same moiety. As has been mentioned, the Aranda even have a kind of *sapinda* rule (PP σ_3) by which marriage with one's proper cross-cousins of 2nd degree is prohibited though their section membership would define them as marriageable. It would be futile to expect further similarities. In Northern India there is no rule which forbids A to marry C when both A and C intermarry with B (see Dumont 1966c: 111).

I would not even have mentioned the parallel unless there had been a widespread tendency to equate the Dravidian term configuration and exogamy rules (as found in South India and Sri Lanka) with a dual system. Since a moiety system can be called a dual system as well, it is tempting to look for further parallels. I'll choose the opposite way: unless the fact that A and B intermarry with C entails no marriage bar for A and B, all that the Australian and the South Indian systems have in common is the dual appearance – and even this is deceptive, because in the South Indian case it is nothing but an anthropological construct.

As far as the rules for consanguinal exogamy are concerned, the Aranda regulations are similar to those of Northern India and medieval Europe; those of the Karia, on the other hand, are not really similar to those of South India. To be sure, "prescriptive cross-cousin marriage" has been attributed to both the Karia and the Dravidian system, but this kind of "marriage" is nothing but a wrong inference from an artificially simplified kin term structure. In the Dravidian system marriage between first cousins is tolerated, but (contrary to Lévi-Strauss' assertion) not preferred, with the Karia on the other hand it seems to be backed by the four section system, while in effect it is not. Similar to the Aranda, the Karia exclude consanguinal cross-cousins though they belong to the section of

²⁰ Cf., for instance, with reference to the Sinhalese system, Leach (1960: 124): "Unless otherwise noted, all terms are subject to rather wide collateral extension."

one's marriage partners. And the last similarity disappears when one has a look at the terms for grandparents and grandchildren. The Dravidian system subsumes them under one pair of terms only, but keeps the generations distinct. The Kariera system makes a dual distinction, but merges the generations.

Defying this difference, Tambiah (1958: 22) asserts that the "terminology is used as if the entire society consisted only of two intermarrying exogamous patrilineal groups." Most remarkably this statement even went beyond what Leach (who otherwise shows a predilection for similar statements) would accept. His comment: "Practical usage does not correspond strictly to this formal design" (Leach 1960: 126). My comment: A good example how Lévi-Straussian models may distort an anthropologist's view about his own system (Tambiah is Sinhalese).

Even though it refers to endogamous sub-castes only, we may tolerate Tambiah's "entire society," insofar as other sub-castes use more or less the same system. However, Leach during his field work in Sri Lanka found that the term for FyB could be applied to "any male of Ego's subcaste of the senior generation *whose precise kinship status was unknown*" [my italics; the passage shows that even the subcaste is no "entire society"]. Similarly the terms for both elder and younger brother may be used indiscriminately, even of individuals who should, according to formal principles, be classed as cross-cousins. "In general the 'matrilateral' or 'affinal' terms [...] have a more restricted usage than their 'patrilateral' counterparts [...]. The former group of terms are applied only to relatives who are effectively in an affinal relationship with Ego" (Leach, loc. cit.). Under "matrilateral" or "affinal" terms Leach subsumes not only those for cross-cousins = siblings-in-law and that for MB = FZH, but also that for FZ = MBW and their reciprocals. Those who wonder how Leach managed to shift the FZ from the "patrilateral" to the "matrilateral" or "affinal" relatives may be referred back to the Lakher case where Leach did similar miracles. More important, however, is the fact that obviously Tambiah's complementary "exogamous patrilineal group" is nothing but a fiction. Since Sinhalese terms are neither patrilineal nor exogamous and since moreover kin term systems are ego-centred, not socio-centred, these terms also cannot be interpreted "as if" they implied that kind of moieties invented by Tambiah.

Leach, despite his critical remarks on Tambiah's model, invents an alliance system also for the Sinhalese by quoting "Dumont (1957), who points out that in societies of this type the sociological facts are better expressed by saying that 'my cross-cousin is the child of my father's brother-in-law' than by the more conventional statement that 'my cross-cousin is the child of my mother's brother or of my father's sister'" (Leach 1960: 125). Maybe, but the question is whether my own brother-in-law is the same as my father's brother-in-law's son. The Sinhalese marriage regulations do not exclude this, but there is no preference. Normally the equation is based on nothing but an equation in the terminology.

When Leach calls these equations "sociological facts" he may need this to substantiate his belief in "prescriptive marriages," but we better stay aloof, the more so as in the beginning even Lévi-Strauss (1949) stayed aloof. At that time

he still knew to distinguish between term systems and marriage rules. In 1965, however, he had succumbed to the arguments of his scholars like Tambiah, Leach, and Dumont. All systems discussed here became prescriptive on the level of the model, and preferential in practice. Though I used Lévi-Strauss' "preferences" as a heading for this chapter, the reader should not expect to find them in reality but be prepared to locate them nowhere else than in alliance theory.

Let's return a last time to North India. Wide as the extension of "consanguinals" may be, our lineation formula does not prohibit marriage with close "affinals" like FBWBD.²¹ Seen reciprocally, this means that Ego's FZ and Z can be married by some man and his brother's son respectively, i. e., by men of one lineage. Two lineages can continue their marriage relations provided only that each lineage has at least three "wife-givers." From the point of view of alliance, our lineation rule should be called very effective. People seem to favour these alliances, since Dumont states that "in order to repeat intermarriage between local descent groups, the Sarjuparis predominantly marry a "FBWBD" (1966: 111). Unfortunately, the Sarjuparis themselves provide that a girl should not be married into the same house as her father's sister (1966: 105). Still, Dumont maintains "that the form of the family, joint or elementary, is not, synchronically at least, relevant to prestations" (1966: 93).

It may seem difficult to reconcile these three points, but apparently the Sarjuparis prefer unilateral "alliances" between exogamous lineages (or localities), excluding repetition with the same line, while the South Indian Kallar (as described by Dumont 1957) indeed do prefer unilateral marriage with the same line, including exchange between two exogamous lineages (or localities). This difference must exist due to different lineation rules. Similarly, lineation will temper the impact of ranking between the affinal units and thereby hypergamic tensions. Yet neither lineation nor its "structurally logical ordering of relatives into a meaningful pattern" will explain the preference. To call this preference a "positive marriage rule" obscures the issue. As in the Lakher case, we shall not have to look for structures or unprompted values, but for obligations and rights contracted by marriage and inherited by descent. I should suppose a correlation between matrilineal preference and unilineal inheritance, but other factors may be important too. Structural analysis should not replace but pave the way for functional analysis.

When Dumont commented on the Fortes-Leach controversy (1961b) he advocated a "double entry scheme" for descent theory and alliance theory. In principle his proposal came near to the position Leach had already taken, but Dumont also tried to persuade the descent theorists to accept his restriction of "descent" to the unilineal exogamous group, so that, whenever there is no common ancestor for two lineages, "marriage" will be the only way to connect them. Fortes' "filiation" becomes superfluous and can be used for non-exogamous descent.

²¹ In the classificatory South Indian (Dravidian) term system this woman would be classed as as a WBD and could be married too.

This proposal calls for nothing less than a complete confusion, since corporateness, political role etc. will now become the domain of filiation, especially unilineal filiation. To be sure, Lévi-Strauss' somewhat diffuse use of "filiation" is older than Fortes' definition, but the latter proved an uneasy obstacle to alliance theory. "The essence of this concept [...] is that Ego is related to the kinsmen of his two parents because he is the descendant of both parents and not because his parents were married" (Leach 1961: 122). Examples will be illustrative. Filiation (as used by Fortes) will imply that for instance Ego is related to his MB via his mother and not because his father married his mother, to his FZ via his father and not because his mother married his father, etc.

Let us now take the alliance view, assume that "filiation" (as used by Dumont) is matrilineal, and proceed to the next example: Ego is related to his father's brother not via his father but because his (Ego's) mother married his father (her husband). Let us concede this and follow the known argument of the alliance theorists: FB transmits the affinity to his son who then will be able to marry his FBD. Thus, alliance theory could help to explain what otherwise would remain a violation of the principles of the structural theory of marriage. By marrying into their patrilineage the men will forfeit all the benefits of marrying out, as expounded in 1949 by Lévi-Strauss.

On the level of the theory, however, there appears a rather unpleasant result: Lévi-Strauss' incest theory and his alliance theory lead to contradictory results. Dumont solves the question by telling us that people who marry their parallel cousins "do not distinguish in the structural sense consanguinity from affinity," and though they marry with ease their FBD, "we cannot speak of 'marriage preference' in the ordinary sense" (Dumont 1961b, No.11). Sorry, I see no reason why father's brother's daughter should be considered a less "ordinary" mate than mother's brother's daughter. When a Lakher marries his MBD, he "marries in" and thereby avoids a dual load of obligations. When a North Indian Muslim marries his FBD, he does more or less the same and keeps the family property together. However, I am not going to maintain that there is no structural difference.

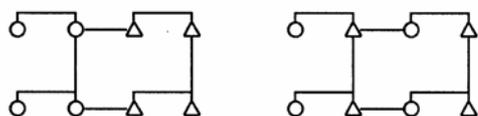


Fig. 6: Simplified model of affinity under patrilateral parallel cousin (left) and cross-cousin marriage (right).

Fig. 6 shows that in both cases, cross- as well as parallel cousin marriage, intermarriage can be continued and affinity "inherited." But there is a structural difference: the lines in the cross-cousin diagram can represent lineages; those in the parallel cousin diagram cannot, intermarrying partners are subsequent generations of males and females. It will be useless to suggest that intermarrying generations and their "transmittance of affinity" – or positive marriage regula-

tions which "should not be considered as consisting of a relation between consanguineous ties and affinity, but as a feature of affinity itself (Dumont 1957: 24) – can by themselves produce systems of alliance between social units which, at the same time, may very well exist. As long as lineation is restricted to its minimum extension ($\sigma + \delta$), preferences for remoter kinsmen (there is no reason to call them affines) will be of no help. Nothing but proscriptions will change the pattern. Whether the extension of exogamy will follow lineal or local lines probably depends on the prevailing group concept and organisation. It is here that we should have to re-enter the sphere of functional interdependencies of different structures.

I'll not go into further details, but content myself with having singled out the lineal aspect of exogamy which *may or may not* be related to other kinds of "lineages." In case exogamous lines and corporate lineages are coextensive, this has the advantage that their extension and interrelation can be determined rather easily and exactly. Still, we should not expect this to be the case. We do not know the reason for the different variations and constellations; at any rate, the number of basic combinations seems limited. Similar charts for succession and inheritance rules, even if more complicated, can be worked out, and I am sure that the comparison of these charts will yield better results than a controversy about the question whether mother's brother "inherited" his affinal character from mother's father or not.

There can be no doubt that "kinship" and "descent" are functionally interdependent in different ways and degrees, but instead of blurring the distinction by "filiation" and "alliance," we should try to refine and to define our criteria, separating instead of mingling the spheres of kin term system, exogamy rules, succession, inheritance rules, local groups, political and religious units, etc. They may or may not show a common structure, but the synopsis of their interplay in intercultural comparison will help to reduce the speculative element pervading functionalism.

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