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# Kinship and Social Organization

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The aim of these lectures is to demonstrate the close connection which exists between methods of denoting relationship or kinship and forms of social organization, including those based on different varieties of the institution of marriage. In other words, my aim will be to show that the terminology of relationship has been rigorously determined by social conditions and that, if this position has been established and accepted, systems of relationship furnish us with a most valuable instrument in studying the history of social institutions.

In the controversy of the present and of recent times, it is the special mode of denoting relationship known as the classificatory system which has formed the chief subject of discussion. It is in connection with this system that there have arisen the various vexed questions which have so excited the interest – I might almost say the passions – of sociologists during the last quarter of a century.

I am afraid it would be dangerous to assume your familiarity with this system, and I must therefore begin with a brief description of its main characters. The essential feature of the classificatory system, that to which it owes its name, is the application of its terms, not to single individual persons, but to classes of relatives which may often be very large. Objections have been made to the use of the term 'classificatory' on the ground that our own terms of relationship also apply to classes of persons; the term 'brother', for instance, to all the

male children of the same father and mother, the term 'uncle' to all the brothers of the father and the mother as well as to the husband of an aunt, while the term 'cousin' may denote a still larger class. It is, of course, true that many of our own terms of relationship apply to classes of persons, but in the systems to which the word 'classificatory' is usually applied, the classificatory principle applies far more widely, and in some cases even, more logically and consistently. In the most complete form of the classificatory system there is not one single term of relationship the use of which tells us that reference is being made to one person and to one person only, whereas in our own system there are six such terms, viz., husband, wife, father, mother, father-in-law and mother-in-law. In those systems in which the classificatory principle is carried to its extreme degree every term is applied to a class of persons. The term 'father', for instance, is applied to all those whom the father would call brother, and to all the husbands of those whom the mother calls sister, both brother and sister being used in a far wider sense than among ourselves. In some forms of the classificatory system the term 'father' is also used for all those whom the mother would call brother, and for all the husbands of those whom the father would call sister, and in other systems the application of the term may be still more extensive. Similarly, the term used for the wife may be applied to all those whom the wife would call sister and to

the wives of all those whom the speaker calls brother, brother and sister again being used in a far wider sense than in our own language.

The classificatory system has many other features which mark it off more or less sharply from our own mode of denoting relationship, but I do not think it would be profitable to attempt a full description at this stage of our inquiry. As I have said, the object of these lectures is to show how the various features of the classificatory system have arisen out of, and can therefore be explained historically by, social facts. If you are not already acquainted with these features, you will learn to know them the more easily if at the same time you learn how they have come into existence.

I will begin with a brief history of the subject. So long as it was supposed that all the peoples of the world denoted relationship in the same way, namely, that which is customary among ourselves, there was no problem. There was no reason why the subject should have awakened any interest, and so far as I have been able to find, it is only since the discovery of the classificatory system of relationship that the problem now before us was ever raised. I imagine that, if students ever thought about the matter at all, it must have seemed obvious that the way in which they and the other known peoples of the world used terms of relationship was conditioned and determined by the social relations which the terms denoted.

The state of affairs became very different as soon as it was known that many peoples of the world use terms of relationship in a manner, and according to rules, so widely different from our own that they seem to belong to an altogether different order, a difference well illustrated by the confusion which is apt to arise when we use English words in the translation of classificatory terms or classificatory terms as the equivalents of our own. The difficulty or impossibility of conforming to complete truth and reality, when we attempt this task, is the best witness to the fundamental difference between the two modes of denoting relationship.

I do not know of any discovery in the whole range of science which can be more certainly put to the credit of one man than that of the classificatory system of relationship by Lewis Morgan. By this I mean, not merely that he was the first to point out clearly the existence of this

mode of denoting relationship, but that it was he who collected the vast mass of material by which the essential characters of the system were demonstrated, and it was he who was the first to recognize the great theoretical importance of his new discovery. It is the denial of this importance by his contemporaries and successors which furnishes the best proof of the credit which is due to him for the discovery. The very extent of the material he collected [1871] has probably done much to obstruct the recognition of the importance of his work. It is a somewhat discouraging thought that, if Morgan had been less industrious and had amassed a smaller collection of material which could have been embodied in a more available form, the value of his work would probably have been far more widely recognized than it is today. The volume of his material is, however, only a subsidiary factor in the process which has led to the neglect or rejection of the importance of Morgan's discovery. The chief cause of the neglect is one for which Morgan must himself largely bear the blame. He was not content to demonstrate, as he might to some extent have done from his own material, the close connection between the terminology of the classificatory system of relationship and forms of social organization. There can be little doubt that he recognized this connection, but he was not content to demonstrate the dependence of the terminology of relationship upon social forms the existence of which was already known, or which were capable of demonstration with the material at his disposal. He passed over all these early stages of the argument, and proceeded directly to refer the origin of the terminology to forms of social organization which were not known to exist anywhere on the earth and of which there was no direct evidence in the past. When, further, the social condition which Morgan was led to formulate was one of general promiscuity developing into group-marriage, conditions bitterly repugnant to the sentiments of most civilized persons, it is not surprising that he aroused a mass of heated opposition which led, not merely to widespread rejection of his views, but also to the neglect of lessons to be learnt from his new discovery which must have received general recognition long before this, if they had not been obscured by other issues.

The first to take up the cudgels in opposition to Morgan was our own pioneer in the study of the early forms of human society, John Ferguson McLennan [1876: 331]. He criticized the views of Morgan severely and often justly, and then pointing out, as was then believed to be the case, that no duties or rights were connected with the relationships of the classificatory system, he concluded that the terms formed merely a code of courtesies and ceremonial addresses for social intercourse. Those who have followed him have usually been content to repeat the conclusion that the classificatory system is nothing more than a body of mutual salutations and terms of address. They have failed to see that it still remains necessary to explain how the terms of the classificatory system came to be used in mutual salutation. They have failed to recognize that they were either rejecting the principle of determinism in sociology, or were only putting back to a conveniently remote distance the consideration of the problem how and why the classificatory terms came to be used in the way now customary among so many peoples of the earth.

This aspect of the problem, which has been neglected or put on one side by the followers of McLennan, was not so treated by McLennan himself. As we should expect from the general character of his work, McLennan clearly recognized that the classificatory system must have been determined by social conditions, and he tried to show how it might have arisen as the result of the change from the Nair to the Tibetan form of polyandry [1876:373]. He even went so far as to formulate varieties of this process by means of which there might have been produced the chief varieties of the classificatory system, the existence of which had been demonstrated by Morgan. It is quite clear that McLennan had no doubts about the necessity of tracing back the social institution of the classificatory system of relationship to social causes, a necessity which has been ignored or even explicitly denied by those who have followed him in rejecting the views of Morgan. It is one of the many unfortunate consequences of McLennan's belief in the importance of polyandry in the history of human society that it has helped to prevent his followers from seeing the social importance of the classificatory system. They have failed to see

that the classificatory system may be the result neither of promiscuity nor of polyandry, and yet has been determined, both in its general character and in its details, by forms of social organization.

Since the time of Morgan and McLennan few have attempted to deal with the question in any comprehensive manner. The problem has inevitably been involved in the controversy which has raged between the advocates of the original promiscuity or the primitive monogamy of mankind, but most of the former have been ready to accept Morgan's views blindly, while the latter have been content to try to explain away the importance of conclusions derived from the classificatory system without attempting any real study of the evidence. On the side of Morgan there has been one exception in the person of Professor J. Kohler [1897], who has recognized the lines on which the problem must be studied, while on the other side there has been, so far as I am aware, only one writer who has recognized that the evidence from the nature of the classificatory system of relationship cannot be ignored or belittled, but must be faced and some explanation alternative to that of Morgan provided.

This attempt was made four years ago by Professor Kroeber [1909], of the University of California. The line he takes is absolutely to reject the view common to both Morgan and McLennan that the nature of the classificatory system has been determined by social conditions. He explicitly rejects the view that the mode of using terms of relationship depends on social causes, and puts forward as the alternative that they are conditioned by causes purely linguistic and psychological.

It is not quite easy to understand what is meant by the linguistic causation of terms of relationship. In the summary at the end of his paper Kroeber concludes that 'they (terms of relationship) are determined primarily by language'. Terms of relationship, however, are elements of language, so that Kroeber's proposition is that elements of language are determined primarily by language. In so far as this proposition has any meaning, it must be that, in the process of seeking the origin of linguistic phenomena, it is our business to ignore any but linguistic facts. It would follow that the student of the subject should seek the antecedents of

linguistic phenomena in other linguistic phenomena, and put on one side as not germane to his task all reference to the objects and relations which the words denote and connote.

Professor Kroeber's alternative proposition is that terms of relationship reflect psychology, not sociology, or, in other words, that the way in which terms of relationship are used depends on a chain of causation in which psychological processes are the direct antecedents of this use. I will try to make his meaning clear by means of an instance which he himself gives. He says that at the present time there is a tendency among ourselves to speak of the brother-in-law as a brother; in other words, we tend to class the brother-in-law and the brother together in the nomenclature of our own system of relationship. He supposes that we do this because there is a psychological similarity between the two relationships which leads us to class them together in our customary nomenclature. I shall return both to this and other of his examples later.

We have now seen that the opponents of Morgan have taken up two main positions which it is possible to attack: one, that the classificatory system is nothing more than a body of terms of address; the other, that it and other modes of denoting relationship are determined by psychological and not by sociological causes. I propose to consider these two positions in turn.

Morgan himself was evidently deeply impressed by the function of the classificatory system of relationship as a body of salutations. His own experience was derived from the North American Indians, and he notes the exclusive use of terms of relationship in address, a usage so habitual that an omission to recognize a relative in this manner would amount almost to an affront. Morgan also points out, as one motive for the custom, the presence of a reluctance to utter personal names. McLennan had to rely entirely on the evidence collected by Morgan, and there can be no doubt that he was greatly influenced by the stress Morgan himself laid on the function of the classificatory terms as mutual salutations. That in rude societies certain relatives have social functions definitely assigned to them by custom was known in Morgan's time, and I think it might even then have been discovered that the relation-

ships which carried these functions were of the classificatory kind. It is, however, only by more recent work, beginning with that of Howitt, of Spencer and Gillen, and of Roth in Australia, and of the Cambridge Expedition to Torres Straits, that the great importance of the functions of relatives through the classificatory system has been forced upon the attention of sociologists. The social and ceremonial proceedings of the Australian aborigines abound in features in which special functions are performed by such relatives as the elder brother or the brother of the mother, while in Torres Straits I was able to record large groups of duties, privileges and restrictions associated with different classificatory relationships.

Further work has shown that widely, though not universally, the nomenclature of the classificatory system carries with it a number of clearly defined social practices. One who applies a given term of relationship to another person has to behave towards that person in certain definite ways. He has to perform certain duties towards him, and enjoys certain privileges, and is subject to certain restrictions in his conduct in relation to him. These duties, privileges and restrictions vary greatly in number among different peoples, but wherever they exist, I know of no exception to their importance and to the regard in which they are held by all members of the community. You doubtless know of many examples of such functions associated with relationship, and I need give only one example.

In the Banks Islands the term used between two brothers-in-law is *wulus*, *walus*, or *walui*, and a man who applies one of these terms to another may not utter his name, nor may the two behave familiarly towards one another in any way. In one island, Merlav, these relatives have all their possessions in common, and it is the duty of one to help the other in any difficulty, to warn him in danger, and, if need be, to die with him. If one dies, the other has to help to support his widow and has to abstain from certain foods. Further, there are a number of curious regulations in which the sanctity of the head plays a great part. A man must take nothing from above the head of his brother-in-law, nor may he even eat a bird which has flown over his head. A person has only to say of an object 'That is the head of your brother-in-law', and

the person addressed will have to desist from the use of the object. If the object is edible, it may not be eaten; if it is one which is being manufactured, such as a mat, the person addressed will have to cease from his work if the object be thus called the head of his brother-in-law. He will only be allowed to finish it on making compensation, not to the person who has prevented the work by reference to the head, but to the brother-in-law whose head had been mentioned. Ludicrous as some of these customs may seem to us, they are very far from being so to those who practise them. They show clearly the very important part taken in the lives of those who use the classificatory system by the social functions associated with relationship. As I have said, these functions are not universally associated with the classificatory system, but they are very general in many parts of the world and only need more careful investigation to be found even more general and more important than appears at present.

Let us now look at our own system of relationship from this point of view. Two striking features present themselves. First, the great paucity of definite social functions associated with relationship, and secondly, the almost complete limitation of such functions to those relationships which apply only to individual persons and not to classes of persons. Of such relationships as cousin, uncle, aunt, father-in-law, or mother-in-law there may be said to be no definite social functions. A schoolboy believes it is the duty of his uncle to tip him, but this is about as near as one can get to any social obligation on the part of this relative.

The same will be found to hold good to a large extent if we turn to those social regulations which have been embodied in our laws. It is only in the case of the transmission of hereditary rank and of the property of a person dying intestate that more distant relatives are brought into any legal relationship with one another, and then only if there is an absence of nearer relatives. It is only when forced to do so by exceptional circumstances that the law recognizes any of the persons to whom the more classificatory of our terms of relationship apply. If we pay regard to the social functions associated with relationship, it is our own system, rather than the classificatory, which is

open to the reproach that its relationships carry into them no rights and duties.

In the course of the recent work of the Percy Sladen Trust Expedition in Melanesia and Polynesia I have been able to collect a body of facts which bring out, even more clearly than has hitherto been recognized, the dependence of classificatory terms on social rights [Rivers 1919]. The classificatory systems of Oceania vary greatly in character. In some places relationships are definitely distinguished in nomenclature which are classed with other relationships elsewhere. Thus, while most Melanesian and some Polynesian systems have a definite term for the mother's brother and for the class of relatives whom the mother calls brother, in other systems this relative is classed with, and is denoted by, the same term as the father. The point to which I now call your attention is that there is a very close correlation between the presence of a special term for this relative and the presence of special functions attached to the relationship.

In Polynesia, both the Hawaiians and the inhabitants of Niue class the mother's brother with the father, and in neither place was I able to discover that there were any special duties, privileges or restrictions ascribed to the mother's brother. In the Polynesian islands of Tonga and Tikopia, on the other hand, where there are special terms for the mother's brother, this relative has also special functions. The only place in Melanesia where I failed to find a special term for the mother's brother was in the western Solomon Islands, and that was also the only part of Melanesia where I failed to find any trace of special social functions ascribed to this relative. I do not know of such functions in Santa Cruz, but my information about the system of that island is derived from others, and further research will almost certainly show that they are present.

In my own experience, then, among two different peoples, I have been able to establish a definite correlation between the presence of a term of relationship and special functions associated with the relationship. Information kindly given to me by Father Egidi, however, seems to show that the correlation among the Melanesians is not complete. In Mekeo, the mother's brother has the duty of putting on the first perineal garment of his nephew, but

he has no special term and is classed with the father. Among the Kuni, on the other hand, there is a definite term for the mother's brother distinguishing him from the father, but yet he has not, so far as Father Egidi knows, any special functions.

Both in Melanesia and Polynesia a similar correlation comes out in connection with other relationships, the most prominent exception being the absence of a special term for the father's sister in the Banks Islands, although this relative has very definite and important functions. In these islands the father's sister is classed with the mother as *vev* or *veve*, but even here, where the generalization seems to break down, it does not do so completely, for the father's sister is distinguished from the mother as *veve vus rawe*, the mother who kills a pig, as opposed to the simple *veve* used for the mother and her sisters.

There is thus definite evidence, not only for the association of classificatory terms of relationship with special social functions, but from one part of the world we now have evidence which shows that the presence or absence of special terms is largely dependent on whether there are or are not such functions. We may take it as established that the terms of the classificatory system are not, as McLennan supposed, merely terms of address and modes of mutual salutation. McLennan came to this conclusion because he believed that the classificatory terms were associated with no such functions as those of which we now have abundant evidence. He asks, 'What duties or rights are affected by the relationships comprised in the classificatory system?' and answers himself according to the knowledge at his disposal, 'Absolutely none' [1876: 366]. This passage makes it clear that, if McLennan had known what we know today, he would never have taken up the line of attack upon Morgan's position in which he has had, and still has, so many followers.

I can now turn to the second line of attack, that which boldly discards the origin of the terminology of relationship in social conditions, and seeks for its explanation in psychology. The line of argument I propose to follow is first to show that many details of classificatory systems have been directly determined by

social factors. If that task can be accomplished, we shall have firm ground from which to take off in the attempt to refer the general characters of the classificatory and other systems of relationship to forms of social organization. Any complete theory of a social institution has not only to account for its general characters, but also for its details, and I propose to begin with the details.

I must first return to the history of the subject, and stay for a moment to ask why the line of argument I propose to follow was not adopted by Morgan and has been so largely disregarded by others.

Whenever a new phenomenon is discovered in any part of the world, there is a natural tendency to seek for its parallels elsewhere. Morgan lived at a time when the unity of human culture was a topic which greatly excited ethnologists, and it is evident that one of his chief interests in the new discovery arose from the possibility it seemed to open of showing the uniformity of human culture. He hoped to demonstrate the uniformity of the classificatory system throughout the world, and he was content to observe certain broad varieties of the system and refer them to supposed stages in the history of human society. He paid but little attention to such varieties of the classificatory system as are illustrated in his own record of North American systems, and seems to have overlooked entirely certain features of the Indian and Oceanic systems he recorded, which might have enabled him to demonstrate the close relation between the terminology of relationship and social institutions. Morgan's neglect to attend to these differences must be ascribed in some measure to the ignorance of rude forms of social organization which existed when he wrote, but the failure of others to recognize the dependence of the details of classificatory systems upon social institutions is rather to be ascribed to the absence of interest in the subject induced by their adherence to McLennan's primary error. Those who believe that the classificatory system is merely an unimportant code of mutual salutations are not likely to attend to relatively minute differences in the customs they despise. The credit of having been the first fully to recognize the social importance of these differences belongs to J. Kohler. In his book *Zur Urgeschichte der Ehe*, which I have

already mentioned, he studied minutely the details of many different systems, and showed that they could be explained by certain forms of marriage practised by those who use the terms. I propose now to deal with classificatory terminology from this point of view. My procedure will be first to show that the details which distinguish different forms of the classificatory system from one another have been directly determined by the social institutions of those who use the systems, and only when this has been established, shall I attempt to bring the more general characters of the classificatory and other systems into relation with social institutions.

I am able to carry out this task more fully than has hitherto been possible because I have collected in Melanesia a number of systems of relationship which differ far more widely from one another than those recorded in Morgan's book or others which have been collected since. Some of the features which characterize these Melanesian systems will be wholly new to ethnologists, not having yet been recorded elsewhere, but I propose to begin with a long familiar mode of terminology which accompanies that widely distributed custom known as the cross-cousin marriage. In the more frequent form of this marriage a man marries the daughter either of his mother's brother or of his father's sister; more rarely his choice is limited to one of these relatives.

Such a marriage will have certain definite consequences. Let us take a case in which a man marries the daughter of his mother's brother, as is represented in Figure 7.1.

One consequence of the marriage between *C* and *d* will be that *A*, who before the marriage of *C* was only his mother's brother, now becomes also his wife's father, while *b*, who before the marriage was the mother's brother's wife of *C*, now becomes his wife's mother.

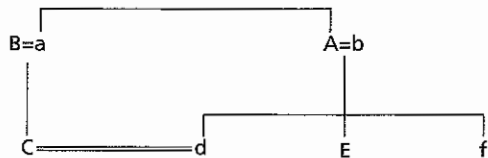


Figure 7.1

Key: Capital letters are used to represent men and the smaller letters women.

Reciprocally, *C*, who before his marriage had been the sister's son of *A* and the husband's sister's son of *b*, now becomes their son-in-law. Further, *E* and *f*, the other children of *A* and *b*, who before the marriage had been only the cousins of *C*, now become his wife's brother and sister.

Similarly, *a*, who before the marriage of *d* was her father's sister, now becomes also her husband's mother, and *B*, her father's sister's husband, comes to stand in the relation of husband's father; if *C* should have any brothers and sisters, these cousins now become her brothers- and sisters-in-law.

The combinations of relationship which follow from the marriage of a man with the daughter of his mother's brother thus differ for a man and a woman, but if, as is usual, a man may marry the daughter either of his mother's brother or of his father's sister, these combinations of relationship will hold good for both men and women.

Another and more remote consequence of the cross-cousin marriage, if this becomes an established institution, is that the relationships of mother's brother and father's sister's husband will come to be combined in one and the same person, and that there will be a similar combination of the relationships of father's sister and mother's brother's wife. If the cross-cousin marriage be the habitual custom, *B* and *b* in Diagram 1 will be brother and sister; in consequence *A* will be at once the mother's brother and the father's sister's husband of *C*, while *b* will be both his father's sister and his mother's brother's wife. Since, however, the mother's brother is also the father-in-law, and the father's sister the mother-in-law, three different relationships will be combined in each case. Through the cross-cousin marriage the relationships of mother's brother, father's sister's husband and father-in-law will be combined in one and the same person, and the relationships of father's sister, mother's brother's wife and mother-in-law will be similarly combined.

In many places where we know the cross-cousin marriage to be an established institution, we find just those common designations which I have just described. Thus, in the Mbau dialect of Fiji the word *vungo* is applied to the mother's brother, the husband of the father's

sister and the father-in-law. The word *nganei* is used for the father's sister, the mother's brother's wife and the mother-in-law. The term *tavale* is used by a man for the son of the mother's brother or of the father's sister as well as for the wife's brother and the sister's husband. *Ndavola* is used not only for the child of the mother's brother or father's sister when differing in sex from the speaker, but this word is also used by a man for his wife's sister and his brother's wife, and by a woman for her husband's brother and her sister's husband. Every one of these details of the Mbau system is the direct and inevitable consequence of the cross-cousin marriage, if it becomes an established and habitual practice.

This Fijian system does not stand alone in Melanesia. In the southern islands of the New Hebrides, in Tanna, Eromanga, Aneityum and Aniwa, the cross-cousin marriage is practised and their systems of relationship have features similar to those of Fiji. Thus, in Aneityum the word *matak* applies to the mother's brother, the father's sister's husband and the father-in-law, while the word *engak* used for the cross-cousin is not only used for the wife's sister and the brother's wife, but also for the wife herself.

Again, in the island of Guadalcanal in the Solomons the system of relationship is just such as would result from the cross-cousin marriage. One term, *nia*, is used for the mother's brother and the wife's father, and probably also for the father's sister's husband and the husband's father, though my stay in the island was not long enough to enable me to collect sufficient genealogical material to demonstrate these points completely. Similarly, *tarunga* includes in its connotation the father's sister, the mother's brother's wife and the wife's mother, and probably also the husband's mother, while the word *iva* is used for both cross-cousins and brothers- and sisters-in-law. Corresponding to this terminology there seemed to be no doubt that it was the custom for a man to marry the daughter of his mother's brother or his father's sister though I was not able to demonstrate this form of marriage genealogically.

These three regions, Fiji, the southern New Hebrides and Guadalcanal, are the only parts of Melanesia included in my survey where I found the practice of the cross-cousin marriage, and in all three regions the systems of

relationship are just such as would follow from this form of marriage.

Let us now turn to inquire how far it is possible to explain these features of Melanesian systems of relationship by psychological similarity. If it were not for the cross-cousin marriage, what can there be to give the mother's brother a greater psychological similarity to the father-in-law than the father's brother, or the father's sister a greater similarity to the mother-in-law than the mother's sister? Why should it be two special kinds of cousin who are classed with two special kinds of brother- and sister-in-law or with the husband or wife? Once granted the presence of the cross-cousin marriage, and there are psychological similarities certainly, though even here the matter is not quite straightforward from the point of view of the believer in their importance, for we have to do not merely with the similarity of two relatives, but with their identity, with the combination of two or more relationships in one and the same person. Even if we put this on one side, however, it remains to ask how it is possible to say that terms of relationship do not reflect sociology, if such psychological similarities are themselves the result of the cross-cousin marriage? What point is there in bringing in hypothetical psychological similarities which are only at the best intermediate links in the chain of causation connecting the terminology of relationship with antecedent social conditions?

If you concede the causal relation between the characteristic features of a Fijian or Aneityum or Guadalcanal system and the cross-cousin marriage, there can be no question that it is the cross-cousin marriage which is the antecedent and the features of the system of relationship the consequences. I do not suppose that, even in this subject, there will be found anyone to claim that the Fijians took to marrying their cross-cousins because such a marriage was suggested to them by the nature of their system of relationship. We have to do in this case, not merely with one or two features which might be the consequence of the cross-cousin marriage, but with a large and complicated meshwork of resemblances and differences in the nomenclature of relationship, each and every element of which follows directly from such a marriage, while no one of the

systems I have considered possesses a single feature which is not compatible with social conditions arising out of this marriage. Apart from quantitative verification, I doubt whether it would be possible in the whole range of science to find a case where we can be more confident that one phenomenon has been conditioned by another. I feel almost guilty of wasting your time by going into it so fully, and should hardly have ventured to do so if this case of social causation had not been explicitly denied by one with so high a reputation as Professor Kroeber. I hope, however, that the argument will be useful as an example of the method I shall apply to other cases in which the evidence is less conclusive.

The features of terminology which follow from the cross-cousin marriage were known to Morgan, being present in three of the systems he recorded from Southern India and in the Fijian system collected for him by Mr Fison. The earliest reference [Grant 1870: 276] to the cross-cousin marriage which I have been able to discover is among the Gond of Central India. This marriage was recorded in 1870, which, though earlier than the appearance of Morgan's book, was after it had been accepted for publication, so that I think we can be confident that Morgan was unacquainted with the form of marriage which would have explained the peculiar features of the Indian and Fijian systems. It is evident, however, that Morgan was so absorbed in his demonstration of the similarity of these systems to those of America that he paid but little, if any, attention to their peculiarities. He thus lost a great opportunity; if he had attended to these peculiarities and had seen their meaning, he might have predicted a form of marriage which would soon afterwards have been independently discovered. Such an example of successful prediction would have

forced the social significance of the terminology of relationship upon the attention of students in such a way that we should have been spared much of the controversy which has so long obstructed progress in this branch of sociology. It must at the very least have acted as a stimulus to the collection of systems of relationship. It would hardly have been possible that now, more than forty years after the appearance of Morgan's book, we are still in complete ignorance of the terminology of relationship of many peoples about whom volumes have been written. It would seem impossible, for instance, that our knowledge of Indian systems of relationship could have been what it is today. India would have been the country in which the success of Morgan's prediction would first have shown itself, and such an event must have prevented the almost total neglect which the subject of relationship has suffered at the hands of students of Indian sociology.

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# Structural Analysis in Linguistics and in Anthropology

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Linguistics occupies a special place among the social sciences, to whose ranks it unquestionably belongs. It is not merely a social science like the others, but, rather, the one in which by far the greatest progress has been made. It is probably the only one which can truly claim to be a science and which has achieved both the formulation of an empirical method and an understanding of the nature of the data submitted to its analysis. This privileged position carries with it several obligations. The linguist will often find scientists from related but different disciplines drawing inspiration from his example and trying to follow his lead. *Noblesse oblige*. A linguistic journal like *Word* cannot confine itself to the illustration of strictly linguistic theories and points of view. It must also welcome psychologists, sociologists, and anthropologists eager to learn from modern linguistics the road which leads to the empirical knowledge of social phenomena. As Marcel Mauss wrote already forty years ago: "Sociology would certainly have progressed much further if it had everywhere followed the lead of the linguists. . . ."<sup>1</sup> The close methodological analogy which exists between the two disciplines imposes a special obligation of collaboration upon them.

Ever since the work of Schrader<sup>2</sup> it has been unnecessary to demonstrate the assistance which linguistics can render to the anthropologist in the study of kinship. It was a linguist and a philologist (Schrader and Rose)<sup>3</sup> who showed

the improbability of the hypothesis of matrilineal survivals in the family in antiquity, to which so many anthropologists still clung at that time. The linguist provides the anthropologist with etymologies which permit him to establish between certain kinship terms relationships that were not immediately apparent. The anthropologist, on the other hand, can bring to the attention of the linguist customs, prescriptions, and prohibitions that help him to understand the persistence of certain features of language or the instability of terms or groups of terms. At a meeting of the Linguistic Circle of New York, Julien Bonfante once illustrated this point of view by reviewing the etymology of the word for uncle in several Romance languages. The Greek *θεῖος* corresponds in Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese to *zio* and *tio*; and he added that in certain regions of Italy the uncle is called *barba*. The "beard," the "divine" uncle - what a wealth of suggestions for the anthropologist! The investigations of the late A. M. Hocart into the religious character of the avuncular relationship and the "theft of the sacrifice" by the maternal kinsmen immediately come to mind.<sup>4</sup> Whatever interpretation is given to the data collected by Hocart (and his own interpretation is not entirely satisfactory), there is no doubt that the linguist contributes to the solution of the problem by revealing the tenacious survival in contemporary vocabulary of relationships which have long since disappeared. At the same time, the anthropologist