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Meat and Marriage: An Ethnography of Aboriginal Taiwan

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肉 と 婚 姻
——台湾先住民の民族誌——

アルネ・レックム

This paper addresses an issue raised in recent debates on kinship: If kinship has been stripped of its authenticity as “what is in our blood,” what else can we look for while still finding the gloss useful? “Substance sharing” has been introduced as a trope for what generates an *experience* of kinship. The paper advises, however, against imputing another generic guideline as to “what kinship is” for our investigations. With ethnographic material drawn from the Takibakha of the Bunun aboriginal population in Taiwan, the study voices skepticism of the idea that kinship simply diffuses itself in multiple experiences of sharing. The paper argues in favor of studying discriminative illocutionary acts, finding, in the specific instance of the Bunun, that the issue is not just that of sharing, but equally, that of *not* sharing. People’s attention to such differences calls for a rethinking of the issue of the role of kinship in the study of cultural representations.

この論文は親族にかんする近年の論争から発生してきた問題をあつかう。もしも親族から「われわれの血の中にあるもの」という確実性がはぎとられるとするならば、他にいかなる有益な解釈が見いだせるだろうか。親族の経験という面を喚起する比喻として「サブスタンスの共有」(substance sharing) という考えが導入されるようになった。しかしこの論文は、われわれの考察を「親族とは何か」というもうひとつの一般的指標に還元することには反対である。

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キーワード: ブヌン (台湾先住民), 親族, 記号, 社会

この研究は、台湾の先住民であるブシンの Takibakha の民族誌的資料に依拠しながら、親族とはたんに共有することの多様な経験の中で広がってきたものだとする考えに対して疑義を提起する。本論文は、差別的発語内行為 (discriminative illocutionary acts) の分析視点から、ブシン特有の事例においては、親族の問題はたんに共有することだけでなく、同時に、共有しないことにもあるのだということを論じる。ブシンの人びとがそのような差異に対して注目することは、文化的表象の研究における親族の役割の問題を再考することを促すものである。

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1 Introduction

In recent opinions on kinship, the universality of a single and easily comparable issue of relatedness, such as blood relationships, is contested by ethnographies unveiling a plurality: people *making* kinship in a world embedded with local connotations (see e.g. Sahlins 1976; Strathern 1981). Even more radically, the question has been raised very recently by Astuti (2000), who asks if the whole issue of either patriliney or cognatism can be taken further down the scale from objectivity to subjectivity, by acknowledging them as alternatives, for an individual if not for a society. I keep in mind, nevertheless, that even as the topic of kinship provided a stepping stone for comparative studies, one early voice, Durkheim's, did not advance ancestry (including the belief in clan ancestors) as a first principle. His view in *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* was, succinctly: "Take away the name and the *sign* which materializes it, and the clan is no longer representable" (Durkheim 1915:33, my emphasis).

For Durkheim, blood relationships yielded no primacy to social organization—not even for Australian aborigines with clans subsumed under opposing "phatries." What gives existence in society, more readily, are the representations. These are sign artifices, such as species and phenomena in nature, names, formulas, places, natural and material objects.¹⁾

So the elemental for Durkheim belongs to a matter of *re-presenting* collectivities of humans. In modern nations, in his reasoning, a collective consciousness cannot be upheld by symbolic means to a similar extent. Durkheim

turns his attention, rather, to the moralities instantiating professional differentiation and bureaucratic functioning. But even in this extension of the view to what otherwise in his terminology is known as "organic solidarity," he enlarged our familiarity with what is socially constructed and contingent on symbolic motifs and their articulations.

I suggest in this essay that for the Austronesian speaking Bunun of Taiwan simple acts of either sharing or its opposite, *not* sharing, signify basic attachments. Bunun identities—as a tribe, a sub-group, a clan, a lineage—are not of the doxic kind even as they show up in mythologies and kinship.²⁾ Such articulable attachments do not routinely emerge with what is habitual, but with what can eminently be inscribed in memory by representations. They may not be *embedded* in partialities, but come into view with rather distinctive and, for the Bunun, much debated motifs sustaining illocutionary acts.³⁾ I suggest that the latter are generative signs: not the epiphenomena of mythology and kinship, but vehicles, rather, *for* making available such notions of origin and togetherness.

I consider it a distinctive task for anthropology, when setting terms for people's *identities*, to capture not just the estimated unifying categories, whether these may be thought of as e.g. *root* metaphors or *key* symbols (Ortner 1973), but also what can be supposed to be elementary illocutionary acts of wide-ranging significance. For the present ethnography, I propose that these refer to the culturally articulated terms for origin and interpersonal sympathy. In the first place, for the Bunun, stories of differentiated origin illustrate a rule for mating. Secondly, the very acts of sharing meat instantiate another rule, of what holds the *equivalence* of mating. The latter rule *re-presents* for the Bunun an idea of kinship.

Cultural representations may play upon such equivalences. Let me commence, however, with a more conventional word on an experience, not yet of a generative quality of discrete illocutionary acts, but of a situation for a people in an inclusive semantic field of origin and collective belonging.

2 Oneness of Family—Oneness of House

Bunun, meaning "human being," is a term of identification for a population of approximately 37,000, inhabiting the central mountain massif of Taiwan. Contemporary Bunun are co-residential in clustered settlements. Formerly, however, they settled in dispersed hamlets across the mountainsides. Residence in compact villages, to compare, was typical of other Austronesian-speaking aboriginal groups, e.g. the Paiwan and the Yami (for the latter, cf. Røkkum 1991).

The Japanese colonial administration of 1895–1945 instigated the transfer to areas of lower altitude.⁴⁾ Such migration to foothill levels precipitated

rather decisive changes in adaptive strategy: from hunting, gathering, and cultivation of millet on swiddens to field cultivation of corn and irrigated rice (Figure 1). Mushrooms, tea, and fruits are commercial supplements in agriculture adding to some yields from forestry. Traditional leadership was affected by these upheavals, yet as late as 1986 I conversed with a man accredited with a traditional title of authority, *tomoq*.⁵⁾ Kabutað, a man of Tannan Village, retained the charisma sufficient for authority to be exerted irrespective of any lineage preeminence. There was still a call to be made for a *tomoq*'s magic.⁶⁾

The word *bunun* gives expression, additionally, to something actually enveloping human beings. *Bunun šidoq* is a gloss denoting a "Bunun family." The Atayals to the north stand out (for my informants) in contrast as the *Qalavan šidoq*. But on this inclusive level of identification, communality remains on the level of the inclusive unit or "tribe." It comprises the stock of Banoað and its present-day sub-group lines. The Takibanoað stem line is associated with the original locality of the Bunun tribe. The cadet lines identify the following

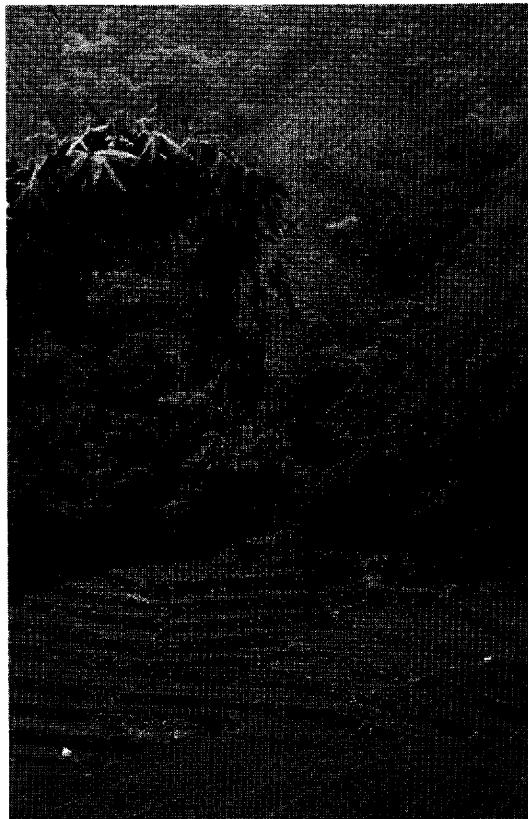


Figure 1

sub-groups: the Ishbukun, the Takibakha, the Takitudu, and the Takivatan.

With patrifilial descent from an ancestor (*xodas lainad*) appended as a distinguishing membership condition, the widest obligating unit is that of the clan. This is a *taštu šidoq*—"oneness of family."⁷⁾ Clans duplicate across the boundaries of Bunun sub-groups. Thus, for example, the Malašlašān *šidoq* of the Takibakha recognizes counterparts among the Takitudu *šidoq*, viz. those with the matching name Tamalašlašān *šidoq*; the Matolayan *šidoq* recognizes the Baribayan *šidoq*. My observation agrees well with that of Utsushikawa, Mabuchi and Miyamoto (1988 [1935]:09): *šidoq* is a term of inclusiveness, from clan to tribe. In my view, no alliance across sub-group boundaries is implied, however, by clan confluence across sub-groups. On the other hand, clans of the Takibakha and the Takitudu used to think in terms of mutual exclusion by regarding each other's territories as grounds for taking heads.⁸⁾

Utsushikawa, Mabuchi and Miyamoto (1988 [1935]:109) identify a Taiwanese "tribe" in terms of jointness, such as territoriality, hunting, cultivation, and in rules and statuses for ritual and marriage.

A "oneness" defined as *atsaŋ* makes a term for inclusion in virtue of original residence. It mitigates the centrifugality of agnatic lineage fission. Besides, the Bunun reserve a semantic category for non-agnatic membership in a co-residential unit: *vaivit atsaŋ* (the lexeme *vai* denotes partition). The Bunun, then, have their own way of recognizing coalescence through a descent principle quite apart from coalescence through a co-residential unit as it actually appears on the ground.

It is important to add, however, that exemplars of "jointness," including that of territory, do not *ipso facto* amalgamate attachments into of territorial groups. In the retrospect, they might only have yielded the social coordinates for quite limited integrated action—as in the more famous case of the Nuer—in response to a threat that might have been sensed as external (cf. Verdon 1998 [1982]).

The *lumaq*, "house," however, solidifies such relationships on the ground. When patrifilial descent and the realities of residence coalesce, the category is pronounced *taštu lumaq*, "oneness of house" (cf. also Mabuchi 1974a:69; Okada 1969 [1942]:128). For a comment on "house" as a comparative category, see Røkkum (2002).

Houses (*vaivið lumaq*) hold entitlements to hunting territory. Identification emerge with an act of branching, with—ideally—an equal division of a deceased man's residence and property among his sons. But division is sometimes delayed. In the latter instance—with the lapse of one generation—the house expands its collateral range: a group of cousins are de facto co-parceners.

Relations in the *lumaq* are complemented by a license for translating

affinity into consanguinity. Some men swap their own agnatic identity for that of their wife, as the case might be, as one way of dispensing with outsider status or for making a choice in matters of inheritance. For the Bunun as for the Japanese, uxori-local residence grants, although on a case-to-case condition, the possibility of incorporation into a lineage through a female link.⁹⁾ Such adopted husbands are identified by the term *šito'unun*. Affinity, then, slips quite easily over into kinship.

In a sense, agnatism can be said to obtain for the Bunun, yet not as the ideological crux of an ancestor cult. I recognize no artifices for making a tally of genealogies. Identities of father-son links are retained only for just a few generations. Or what may be even more significant, Bunun kinship terminology does not easily affix any priority to agnatic ancestry. In a genuinely bilateral fashion, sibling terms bifurcate to the cousin range and parental terms to that of uncles and aunts. My observations fall in line with those of other authors (e.g. Chiu 1962); kinship terminology is Hawaiian, generational, or modified generational, to follow Mabuchi (1953). I notice that “father,” *tama*, is embedded in “uncle,” *pantama'un*, while “mother,” *tina*, is embedded in “aunt,” *pantina'un*. Such bilateralism does not, however, rule out an agnatic bias in parenary action. Another Taiwanese people, the Yami, are also bilateral in validating social relationships as kin relationships, yet biased toward agnatism for parenary purposes.¹⁰⁾

3 A Society of Sameness and Difference

The Bunun of a village whose official name is Tannan (Figures 2 and 3), and which is situated in the rear of the mountains cresting Sun-Moon Lake in central Taiwan, recognize themselves as predominantly Takibakha (one of the five sub-groups), with one moiety division.¹¹⁾

I entered a village with one Catholic and one Protestant church, and where the visual impression of the settlement revealed few traces of an original material culture.¹²⁾ Before long, however, I was brought into a cognitive domain where the relationship contexts were sustaining a moiety arrangement.¹³⁾ I found it quite surprising that the indigenous views on relatedness prevail even with the loss of quantities of semiotic resources such as calendrical arrangements, festivals, and architecture. A paradox of this sort invites a query on what people can express and uphold through narrative devices single-handedly, and why these—the mental things—may in fact prevail while the far more manifest material and expressive cultural items wither.

In my impression, the more enduring effect of an original idea of division pertains to hunting territories, claims to which can no longer be upheld. The trunk clans of each moiety (Meitayan and Matolayan respectively) observed a division line across the territory.¹⁴⁾ Infringement causes “lots of noise,” as one



Figure 2

informant put it. The peace can be restored, however, by passing on to the offended clan the four legs of the animal killed while trespassing.

Tannan is predominantly Takibakha in house composition. I recorded four houses, identified as Tašnoan of the Takivatan sub-group, positioned in the village through uxrilocal marriages. At the time of my fieldwork they had not yet been grafted on to the Takibakha moiety configuration. Two other



Figure 3

localized clans share the same marginal status. These are the Takibunbun and the Takimutsu. So when affinal relationships are brought to attention, we notice some influx of outsiders. Male informants stressed that they had purposely sought to get a wife from outside the sub-group, from within a more distant locality, to avoid having to deal with the in-laws within their own neighborhoods. With the traditional type of dispersed, hamlet type of residence, a considerable geographical distance from one's in-laws might have been quite common, irrespective of any preference for marriage *within* the sub-group.

Bunun sub-groups relate to each other in the kinship idiom; their separation I was told, is the outcome of normal parcenary activity, e.g. within the ancestral houses of Noađ, Bakha, Bukun, and Vatan. Other informants also maintain that the separation, as with reference to locality and dialect, is fortuitous, mentioning an array of incidents emanating from the past. The following story recounts the origin of the Takibakha as a simple matter of chance:

Two brothers were preparing for the harvest of millet. In order to get a good sample of the ripening ears of the grain, one of them had to cross a stream. A sudden downpour caused the stream to swell, and he was unable to get back home.

The two brothers pondered the situation of separation. How could a harvest be saved when the [ritual] bone clappers were no longer within reach? The man who was stranded on the bank exhorted his brother: "Use two stones!"

The name Takitudu refers to the stone clappers. The group branched off from the Takibakha.

The difference between the two Bunun sub-groups, the Takibakha and the Takitudu, is rather slight, for it is just an outcome of a chance happening. Nevertheless, the implication is sufficient to be publicized as a *term* for difference: original sounding bones remain with a senior branch. The association is distinctly one of metonymy; it prevails, cementing a societal preeminence for one line as the originators of cultural objects that can serve succession practices by their imitations. For duplicate sounding stones remained with a junior branch. Another account introduces the essential quandary of kinship:

Long ago, the Takibakha were obligated as "one family" not to allow marriage between themselves. It was realized, however, that by *adopting* outsiders as branch founders, there would be no violation of the rule.

This is the issue: How can sameness be combated so as to make marital relationships possible? Linked only by fosterage, two remote ancestors of the Takibakha were distant enough for their offspring to exchange spouses in the descending generations. One of the stem lines thus coming into existence is

known as Takiboan or Meitaŋan, the other as Tanabotsol or Matolayan. In fact, among the Takibakha there is a positively formulated rule: marriage *must* be contracted only between families which, in genealogical terms—real or idiomatic—descend from either of the two eponymous ancestors.

Marital relationships are optional for a certain number of clans, each of which belongs to one of the moieties, Takiboan or Tanabotsol. The names pinpoint a contrast by which a non-kinship criterion counterpoises the agnatic criterion so as to establish a principle of cognitive differentiation and exchange as a social practice. Two trunk lineages are recognized as differentiated in terms of fosterage. Each attracts a collection of exogamous clans. The outcome is an arrangement based on a moiety principle. Either of these halves presents a *taštu qaidan*.¹⁵⁾

People of Atayal (the archenemy) and even Han-Chinese extractions partake in arrangements relevant to moiety bipartition. The “one family” idiom is inclusive enough to be put to use in this way (cf. Røkkum 2002 for a similar observation on a plurality of attachments defining a “house society” in the South Ryukyus). When agnatic descent in isolation, however, gains precedence as a criterion of membership, a clan can in principle claim a status as stem or branch. Purified kinship, in this sense, is good for encoding a temporal depth, otherwise not well depicted through the origin stories.

Most clan members know the name of the relevant group of ascendants, i.e. a parent clan with a different name than their own. Identities of non-agnatic ancestors—the outsiders who become founders of separate cadet lines—are not merged with those of the two founding genealogical lines. A notion of “oneness” is in this line of reasoning centering on descent kept apart from a notion of “likeness.” My record of these differentiations in terms of cadet

Table 1 Takiboan/Meitaŋan

Clan name	Original name	Relationship status			Moiety ban on			
		stem	branch	adoption	marriage		sex	
					yes	no	yes	no
Takiboan	Takiboan	×			×		×	
Meitaŋan								
Ušungan	Meitaŋan		×			×		×
Malašlašān	Meitaŋan		×		×		×	
Šoxnoan	Meitaŋan		×		×			×
Taškulupan	Malašlašān		×		×		×	
Tašvaloan	Meitaŋan		×		×		×	
Taštamolan			×		×		?	?
Qalavaŋan				×		×		×

Table 2 Tanabotsol/Matolayan

Clan name	Original name	Relationship status			Moiety ban on			
		stem	branch	adoption	marriage		sex	
					yes	no	yes	no
Tanabotsol	Tanabotsol	×			×		×	
Matolayan								
Taštaloman								
Tiláuan								
Tašbaxoaðan			×		×		×	
			×		×		×	
Noanan	Matolayan		×		×		×	
Taškavan	Matolayan		×		×			×
Toŋtsuan	Matolayan		×		×			×
	Taskavan			×	×		×	

status is displayed in Tables 1 and 2.

Notorious for their wiles, founders are anti-heroes as much as they are heroes. Bunun commemorative practices settle not just with what is illustrious but, equally, with what is haphazard (cf. Røkkum 1998a). So whether one belongs to one or the other kind is precisely as fortuitous as that of ancestors being carried away by unsolicited circumstances. The Bunun do not “classify” in the strict sense of the Durkheimian and Maussian usage (Durkheim and Mauss 1963 [1903]). Rather, more recursively, they find not a slot, but a lot (in life) for themselves, in fact, to the extent that the “oneness” bifurcates into a sustained duality. This is a shared destiny of likeness, with those who are *unavailable* for marriage and one of difference, with those who are *available* for marriage. The synchronicity of classificatory action does not apply here, for it is not just the cognition of sameness and difference, but the *experience* of being joined together by some atavistic action impinging upon the present which matters. Such experience remains caught up in narrative matter.

4 Moiety Creation (i): A Pact with the Moon

The perception of a difference through the narration of stories about the Takiboan/Meitayan and the Tanabotsol/Matolayan supports the moiety arrangement of society. This is one story I listened to:

A long time ago humans and animals mixed freely. Women got all sorts of offspring, birds and hairy creatures without eyes and noses.

The world was scorched by the relentless heat from two suns, and almost unin-

habitable for humans. When one sun was about to set, the other ascended. What a strange age! A single grain of millet, cooked by the rays of the suns, yielded a bowlful. Only a few humans were left when something peculiar happened:

A little boy who was being taken care of by his father was left for a while on a goat-skin [deer-skin in another version]. In the father's absence he died from exposure to the scorching sunlight.

The father decided to avenge the loss of his son. He planned his revenge, then, in the meantime, he planted a tangerine tree. As it became tall and bore fruit, he prepared for his task, scaling the highest mountain in view. Here, as the suns were passing right above the summit, he aimed his bow and arrow.

The man who challenged the twin suns belonged to the house of Meitājan. The arrow which darted off from his bowstring hit one of the suns in the eye. As a result, it was partly blinded. Light faded. One of the twin suns then changed into what is now the moon.

This new luminary in the sky made a finger sticky with saliva, managing thus to trap its adversary. It confronted the Meitājan man with the words:

"Why did you blind my eye?" The man answered, "You killed my son!" Whereupon the celestial body exclaimed:

"Even though I have only one eye I will not kill you if you enter into a pact with me. You shall treat me as a god. At each full moon you will know that the time is ripe for the worship."

The Meitājan man assented. He was allowed to descend into a river.¹⁶ Since that time people live by this vow:

<i>Mat'sak ka Takibakha</i>	I am a Takibakha.
<i>Mindus'a to masamo</i>	All things are divided in two.
<i>Tameitasa</i>	Firstly,
<i>masamo pašidai taštuhulan</i>	those of the same kind
<i>Tasmeidusa</i>	do not marry.
<i>Masamo ma'un pinunhulan</i>	Secondly,
	Those of the same kind eat together.

This rule, which I gloss *lex bunun*, constructs a crucial illocutionary utterance for the Bunun. It underpins society arrangements. With such an accidental creation of day and night, confusion in mating behavior ended. People made marriages. A rule was agreed upon in order to assure a distance wide enough to make an entry for truly human offspring. It follows from the account that people also experienced the need to congregate for the sake of cooking. Thus the story introduces a twofold practice: regulations for mating and for food

ingestion.

The account of the twin suns informs us of the empathy of a filial relationship. An appended adage introduces a still wider area of co-participation—in society—by including, as an assertion, an idea of the reciprocities of affinity. Two crucial ideas are contained in a rule applying to all members of the Bunun people: the *taštuhulan* and the *pinunhulan*.

The former formulates a proscription: those who are of the same kind must not be joined by marriage. The latter formulates a prescription: those who are of the same kind must join in a meal of meat and seed millet taken from the first harvest. An elder of the Meitanjan clan was entrusted with the task of sprinkling the meat from a slain domestic or wild pig with millet, then announcing the *pinunhulan* effect on the participants in the meal.

Bunun recognizing their mutual kinship as originating with a *hulan* declaration would attend the moon festival (*luts'an boan*) dedicated both to the full moon and to the crescent moon. In the warm month preceding the millet harvest, a taboo was put in place concerning the simultaneous ingestion of salty and sweet food (sugar cane, sweet potatoes, and, sometimes, corn). Opposite tastes were not allowed to mix in single mouthfuls. Condiments, such as ginger and pepper, were not affected by this ban, however. Furthermore, perspiration was not allowed to be wiped off the body. Such imposed alterity of a seasonal interval invoked the use of metaphor to juxtapose vegetal and animal life: ears of millet were spoken of as the ears of wild animals.

The woman responsible for drying the choicest millet from the first harvest was given the title “keeper of ritual,” *liškađa luts'an*. Subsequently, in the early hours before dawn, a pig had to be killed. Blood gushing forth from the slit throat soaked a mound of carefully dried millet. A prayer was recited by the *liškađa-an* to the sky god (*dīqanin*): “I have brought you millet in bales / I have killed a pig, and presented it to you / Please give us bountiful harvests in the future.” Then—with the aiming of words onto the head (neck) displayed on a tray—followed the articulation of the *pinunhulan* imperative of sharing meat / not sharing women. A similar effect accumulated with the sprinkling of the millet upon the meat consumed during this season. Wives, but no sisters, were allowed to join.

The end of the harvest season brought an end to such meals. In one account, I learnt that the conclusion was much awaited. For having to prove one's hospitality to someone by offering sacrificial *hulan* meat was tantamount to rejecting the option of future marriage partnerships.

Kinship is comprehended by the Bunun only through the vehicle of such generative acts. And if stable over some generations, a “common blood,” *tasađ tiquts*, can be recognized. Blood is implied in this Bunun expression of kinship, yet—in comparison with our *consanguinity*—not in isolation as a first principle stipulating what emanates from the veins of our bodies. It is

instead the social partnerships themselves—by means of illocutionary acts—which impinge upon our bodies: in acts of transfer, in ritualized alimentation, and in consequential blessings or curses.¹⁷⁾

For the Bunun, the infused matter-upon-bodies is unmistakably beneficial only where kinship is already brought into effect, that is, when people knowingly join in a meal in recognition of a joint *hulan* issue. Otherwise, it is instrumental in conferring, as it were, kinship on the participants, and that may, in any event, be a quite hazardous thing. Marriage is prohibited among those bound by the vow of sharing / not sharing. Yet as I was told, sexual liaisons between moiety members were—and still are—tolerated if at least one of the respective ancestors of the lovers entered the clan order precisely in terms of the *pinunhulan* partnership-through-commensality (*paquavið*) principle.¹⁸⁾

It can be easy as that to make kinship. Still today some feel reticent about accepting a dish of meat out of fear of accidentally accruing kinship. To be on the safe side, I was told, it is recommended to ask the host if it can be assured that this is not *pinunhulan* meat. For the Bunun, accepting meat from a person of the wrong kind is analogous to marrying a person of the wrong kind. Both infringements engender misfortune.

An accumulation of relationships through time for the Bunun—as for the Yami (Røkkum 1991)—is aided by a symbolic artifice: rams' horns draping the interior wall-boards of a house.¹⁹⁾ Rams' horns are accumulated vestiges of previous prestations of slain livestock.

In former days—before the entry of missionary activity—a mound of seed millet used to be set up at a ceremonial site during the cold season. A prayer was recited as the precious heirlooms of the clan—an assemblage of rams' horns—were pulled through a heap of millet. The event was preceded by great hunt; its outcome was celebrated with a sumptuous party. I was told that formerly among the Takibakha, the *pinunhulan* idiom received its most succinct expression in events relating to head-hunting. Old men of Tannan reminisced that groups of kinsmen congregated around collections of skulls, which had been taken out for the occasion from their storage places in stone-wall niches. With this attention to heads of vanquished enemies, one and every member to this party of headhunters would reassert his belonging as one of *taštu šidoq*—oneness of clan (cf. Mabuchi 1974a:69)—and as one reasserting a vow to the moon.

It follows that what identifies a people and its sub-groups is not a positive emblem of jointness, but rather one of genuine differentiation and its magical underpinnings, literally expressed in this way by a Takibakha informant: “The Bunun people join in the same taboo.” (This was said to me in Japanese: 「ブヌン族は同じ『フラン』に入っている」) This differentiation unfolds with the following clan exemplars for the “pact with the moon” moiety (*taštu qaidan*):

Takiboan (the Meitangans of the past): A pact with the moon. Cf. above.

Meitangan (Meitianan / Mitianan): To keep record of the number of heads when distributing meat, a family in the Takiboan line began to use chips of the *meitangað* tree as tallies. People commented upon this as a rather naive practice, and began to talk of the family as Meitangans.

Ušugan: This name identifies a branch of two brothers descending from the Meitangan house. Their offspring became so numerous that they could not be fed in the ordinary way. Chips of bamboo were added to the cooked meat in order to add substance to the dishes. These were handed out in the name of Ušug, the senior of two brothers. He adopted the role of cutting the bamboo and administering the distribution. His name evokes the duty of *ušon*—dividing and dispensing meat.

Malašlašān: The clan name reminds one of the sound *mexzak mexzak* that could be heard when a very short-tempered ancestor reputed for terrorizing his neighborhood as he sharpened his weapon on a whetstone. He was ultimately thrown out from his own house. The present Malašlašāns have been bound to the moiety arrangement through an affinal link.

Šoxnoan: The ancestor was a loner and a master of foul play. After being “found” in the woods and taken care of by the Meitangans, instead of showing his gratitude, he hit upon pranks like filling their beer jars with excrement (in another version he exchanged the millet in their trays with meat). A viable relationship between Šoxnoan and Meitangan became a reality only after those who had taken offense retaliated by filling a jar in the perpetrator’s house with cayenne peppers. (In the alternative version, he begged for his life promising to exchange meat for millet.) The man was allowed to go back to the woods, but not for a solitary life. He received a wife from the Meitangans. This saved a relationship, but, fearing the effects of the *pinunhulan* taboo, not its replication by any other conjugal union.

Taškulupan: A branch of the Malašlašān line.

Tašvalōan (*valo*, a creeper): During a battle with the Atayals, a man joining the Meitangans became so infatuated with a girl of the enemy camp that he promised to join their side, if necessary, to save her life. He made the vow tangible by constructing a bow using *valo* vines. The Tašvalōans are grouped together with the Meitangans, though not as agnatic descendants. For that reason—on account of an imputed distance—they are allowed to have sexual liaisons within their own moiety division. (In another version, the Tašvalōans simply make up a splinter group of Malašlašāns; in yet another, they originated with the Takitudu subgroup.)

Taštāmolān: The lexeme *tamol* of the family name is equivalent to the noun

meaning “(millet) ferment.” A Meitajan man was haunted by dog excrement. What he thought to be a heap of fermented millet, turned out to be dog droppings. He tried, somehow, to throw them away, but they would invariably return into the middle of the road, where he had first spotted them. A voice emanating from the excreta demanded a treatment as a human. Out of the heap a boy was born who was accepted as a foster-son of the Meitajan family. (In another version, the Taštamolans just originated with the Takivatan sub-group, and should not be entitled to membership in the moiety arrangement.)

Informants of this story stress that the Taštamolans thus did not descend from the Meitajans, and would in terms of descent be unaffected by *taštuhulan* magic. However, the mutual feelings of closeness are formalized by ceremonial meals. Both families are thus united under the *pinunhulan* rule. Various disasters will occur once the ban on marriage is neglected.

Qalavaŋan: The Qalavaŋan ancestor was an Atayal. He became a Bunun after being adopted into the Takitudu sub-group. One branch settled among the Takibakha. They are not partners to the *hulan* of the moiety order.

5 Moiety Creation (ii): A Millet Thief

With the appearance of the following characters, moiety arrangements are well in place:

A long time ago people in the Matolayan family became aware of a thief hiding in their granary. Whatever they tried, he somehow managed to slip away just as they were just about to catch him. Only when five or six men hid themselves inside the millet at the top and bottom of the shed could the hunt be brought to a successful conclusion.

Opinions were in favor of killing the prisoner. But the elder of the family objected. So eventually they decided to assure his well-being as a member of the family. He was given the name Qalats, meaning “poor man.” Soon he was joining in the hunting expeditions.

Qalats never missed a shot; somehow he was able to attract game by imitating their voices. And no one could contest his strength. But one of the young men of the family still bore a grudge against him. He would have to face a challenge in order to prove his right to life. He had to perform a quite extraordinary feat of shooting with bow and arrow. Qalats passed the test. Now the Meitajans realized how wrong it would have been to execute him. They agreed instead to provide him with a wife, from the Šoxnoan. Qalats sired seven boys and seven girls.

Tanabotsol: Millet thief (cf. above). They are closely linked with the *Taštalomans*.

Matolayan: One man who went to visit the lowlanders learned to appreciate the taste of beans. Employing stealth, he tried to get a sample, first by concealing them in the hair, next by concealing them in his ears. Finally he managed to get away with one bean undiscovered, by hiding it under the foreskin of his penis. There it sprouted, and back home up in the mountains he amassed a fortune by exchanging beans, e.g. one bean for one chicken. The Matolayans are identical with the Tanabotsols.

Taštaloman: The story is similar to that associated with the origin of Ušungan in the Takiboan moiety. The *taloman* lexeme in the family name is included through an association with chips of the *talon* bamboo. The clan ancestor was a man skilled at smoke-drying meat with skewers cut from *talon* bamboo. The descendants continue to be joined by the *talon* association and by a perceived branching (through two brothers) from the Matolayan clan.

Tila'uan: The ancestor made foul play with people. His name evokes an association of someone snatching water fetched from the river.

Tašbaxoaðan: A man of the Matolayan family sired a goodly number of offspring. With such a large number of lineages converging in him, he became a clan ancestor in his own right. The Tašbaxoaðans are close to the Matolayans.

Noanan: One man of the Matolayan family once tried to seduce a beautiful girl, using a false identity: "My name is Noanan." The alias was discovered, however, yet preferred to the factual name, by the community, as a lasting indication of his true character.

Taškavan: Taškavan is a nick-name originating from the circumstance that the family has been "found" by the Matolayans. A man from the latter family once tried to cut a tree which emitted sounds like the weeping of children. Only with a specially sharpened tool was he able to accomplish his task, as the tree somehow had the ability to close every cut he made in its trunk. When it finally gave way, eighteen children tumbled out. They prayed for their lives, and the Matolayans threw away their tools. Descendants of the eighteen children have a collective status as being adopted into the Matolayan clan.

Toŋtsuan: These are people of Han Chinese origin, found and adopted by the Taškavans after escaping through a crack in the trunk of a tree. This occurred as an ancestor had the strange experience of a being incapable, whatever the force he applied, of indenting the trunk with his axe.

Within each moiety, there are some relationships with absolutely no license for sexual contact. These pertain between the Matolayans and the Taškavans, *kaviað*—friendly—relations.

6 Dual Exchanges

The origin stories, as we now have seen, ascribe prominence to two founder lines of the Takibakha sub-group. The respective trunks differentiate through their cadet lines; one is senior, the other is junior. Further differentiation, whether by branching or by accretion, is clearly defined as incidental, recalled in terms of the incongruities of the coupled events. Lineage identities originate from the idiosyncrasies characteristic both of cultural heroes and anti-heroes. Some ancestors stand out as fairly mischievous. Others excel in fecundity, associating themselves with the extraordinary in organic matter. I assembled the bifurcating categories in Tables 1 and 2 above.

Clans intimately joined by the strictures of the *hulan* taboo have been put in the same rows. They may or may not, however, be genealogically close. The Taštaloman and the Tila'uan for example, do not even share the knowledge of a converging genealogy. What they know, however, is that they have been jointly affiliated with the Takibakha in the former location high up in the mountains. The tables discriminate between "two kinds." To repeat, a "kind" is a dual creation: one, extracted through descent from patrifilial links; two, extracted through commensality through dyadic links. Let me now enlarge upon the second alternative:

An exchange of meat for meat entails a return *in kind*. Distribution of surpluses from hunting and domestication of animals is itself a paraphrase on the relationship. It involves meta-understanding.²⁰ Among the Takibakha, as among the Yami on an island off the southern tip of Taiwan, the choices of meat and the preferences for particular cuts are in a very tangible sense the constitutive elements in a communicative process; they adduce signs to social relationships.

Some Bunun are of the opinion that past incidents of children ignoring the ban on meat consumption between members of opposite moieties ought to have consequences for present practices. The more orthodox among the opinions on this matter were in favor of observing a marriage ban between the families of Taštamolán and Taštaloman—precisely on that account. Not only was an accidental exchange of meat supposed to have taken place, what is more, the two families had subsequently initiated a practice of presenting meat to each other after successful hunting trips.

One of the more characteristic traits of indigenous Taiwanese may be found in this practice of affixing identities by dramatizing contrast and equivalence, then affixing boundaries on a case-to-case basis. In one case I recorded, links of affinity duplicated a clan-name across alternating generations, in violation of a rule that such coincidence only may take place beyond a span of three or four generations. However, with the duplicating clan-names

having different sub-group loci, the reigning opinion in the neighborhood was that ample distance was still very much in evidence.

A far more disputed case in the village shows the following characteristics: One man divorced a woman of a legitimate union, then he re-married a second cousin of a clan within his own moiety. His new wife was a woman well within the range of classificatory sisters. This marital behavior is conceived of by the community as invoking eerie retributions, with the rather unhappy living conditions of the family taken as its proof.

For quite obvious reasons, it may sometimes be difficult to find an eligible spouse at all in a society where the rule of marriage concerns exclusion rather than preference.²¹⁾ According to several middle-aged and elderly informants, child marriage or child betrothals were frequent until the end of the Japanese period. Sometimes, the girls would be taken to the family of the prospective groom, to be brought up there. But what was done to make an assurance of a sufficient *distance* between prospective partners in terms of genealogy and exchange history would in many cases cause a feeling of emotional closeness, with girls trying very much to resist marriage to a boy who had been like a brother to them.

7 Dual Obligations

To repeat, a rule of metaphoric equivalence, established by the *hulan* magic, holds a possibility for non-agnatic relations to become obligatory the way agnatic relations are. The most prominent act of equalizing ties and obligations is that of serving choice cuts of meat sprinkled with millet in a ceremonialized exchange. Informants on this issue say that the gloss of address on such occasions is quite non-discriminatory even when the initial loyalties have an agnatic base. Any senior of the parental generation—patrilineal or matrilineal—is addressed with an honorific prefix, *man-*, as in *man-tama* (honored father) and *man-tina* (honored mother).

Uterine kin (through an ego's mother) are explicitly covered by the *hulan* magic; in fact, their guardianship is a requirement for luck in hunting and other important activities. A headhunter's machete was regarded as an important heirloom. As part of the celebration, it was passed on as a present to his mother. I was struck by the emphasis of some informants, saying that their true origins are on the maternal side. However, no networks of female-linked relatives seem to make their presence felt inside the agnatic clan. Indeed, there is a prohibition against repetitive marriage unions.²²⁾ Instead of replicating a uterine link through further marriages, the Takibakha attempt to alternate between the eligible clans—if not in a systematic manner—when looking for eligible spouses. It might even seem that they differentiate between (a) an extraction, as the bilateral descent converging with the individual and encom-

passing both the paternal and maternal sides, and (b) another extraction, as the unilineal descent which is relative, not to individuality, but to the collectivity encompassing rights to hunting territories, fields, livestock animals, trees, and houses.

In-law relationships are identified by the term *mavala*. The Takibakha deploy yet another term, *tanqapo*, to emphasize the uterine link qualified by a woman's genitress role. She links her own children to a maternal category thus identified, as *tanqapo*.²³ In the latter respect, through the uterine link affirmed by herself by giving birth to children, she makes available for the agnatic family an important category of matrilineals. A brother of hers can claim some special attention from a son of hers.

The term *mavala* is itself an honorific, according to some opinions. Its articulation predisposes a certain tenseness, a consciousness of one's own pose. In some comments, the inclination is felt as soon as a man is married. He knows that as soon as a child is born, the relatives through the resultant *maternal* link have the right to expect still more decor from him.

Affinity evolves into kinship. An incest taboo comes into play even where the apical relationship is a conjugal rather than a filial relationship. Sex is not only expressly forbidden between members of clans connected through a uterine link; even an allusion to it is a taboo in its own right. Obscenities of whatever kind are forbidden in the presence of affines and uterines. No allusion to sex is tolerated. In the words of one man: "*Tanqapo* daughters are like our own...it would be a sin even to think of it. Only with those to whom you are not related as kin may you engage in nonsense talk. You will never have any early notice of such things, but you'll be sure to know why when the retribution begins to effect." On this account, any slip of tongue during a drinking party must be apologized for the next day. A compensatory offering of a chicken and some beer would be a proper token of one's change of heart. Reflecting on this topic, an informant voiced a concern. He might be killed by some magic if his *tanqapo* came to know about his loose talk at the moment of the conversation with me.

The *tanqapo* are the keepers of a magic essential for either success or failure in hunting and farming. No matters of inheritance are involved in the relationship between uncle and nephew, yet there is little doubt that the former enjoys a privileged position as a senior, and that he may expect a confirmation of the unequal standing through the behavior on the part of the nephew set out here:

The presentation of a sow enables the nephew to raise his own pig-herd. The gift is reciprocated with a number of piglets from the first litter. The pig will initially be presented to the sister. It is expected that she in turn will hand it over to her son, the hog raiser. This act of gift-giving is itself a paraphrase on the formal characteristics of the relationship: the uncle may legitimately

expect a return from his nephew which in terms of value is larger than his own original gift.

The partners in such prescribed transactions among the Bunun belong to opposite moieties, and the relations between their respective clans are characterized by an even higher degree of formality than obtains between clans within the same patri-moiety.

Among the Bunun, a uterine nephew honors the senior status of the uncle in his style of address. Misdemeanor invites retribution. Yet I recorded no cases of transfer of property, or succession to positions of authority, along this nepotic line. Still, I noticed a similarity in behavioral style with what obtains in matrilineal societies, where such transfers *do* take place. Quite contrary, then, to the license of the avunculocate, it appears that in the case of the Takibakha Bunun the relationship to a maternal uncle rather calls for privileged *respect*.²⁴⁾

8 A Show of Skulls and Jawbones

Leu (1990:268–70) writes of a lasting spiritual bond between a maternal uncle and nephew as that of a guardianship. Good luck in hunting is granted by the honoring of a spiritual linkage to maternal kin. My own record from Tannan village matches Leu's observation. Sharing game with the *tanqapo* is mandatory. In effect, personhood as the social construction of individuality embraces a quite specific relational premise: its maturity is contingent on the apical status of a uterine link being socially recognized. Specifically for a male Bunun, the benevolence of a maternal uncle is what affects the integrity of his interior life. A young man relies on the uncle's blessing for success in shooting game with bow and arrow. The latter's intent acts upon the hunter's luck whether materializing as a speech act or not. It has an illocutionary force of its own (cf. Rappaport 1999; Robbins 2001). Such force indexicalizes itself as a divination through dreams.

Success in hunting hinges on the gift of meat being revealed in a dream. Hunting trips are canceled unless prefigured by a dream the night before. If no indication of sharing a meal arises in the dream, the hunter will miss his aim. The fuller the imagery in the dream, the better the chances of returning home with plenty of game. Hence the crux of kinship—sharing or not sharing—integrates fully with personhood itself. A relational set is interlaced with a mental construct.

I was told by one man that his father induced dreams by magic (*pašpaš*). After a failed hunting trip he would invoke the spirits (*xanitou*), telling them how his son had been crossing the paths of game animals without sensing them. He would fetch a bamboo basket, and after having cleansed it with much care, place hairs from each type of game in its bottom. He would incant the

appearances of each animal: "This is a wild pig, this is a...take a good look! Please help him when he again makes tracks for the mountains."

As soon as the invocation was finished, the son would go to sleep. As he awoke the following morning, the father would ask: "How was your dream?" My informant recounted that he had seen people threatening him with guns. But as he had said to his father: "I was a faster shooter. They stumbled, one by one." His father replied: "Now go to the mountains. Your deerskin will be filled with meat."

Meat from a hunting trip thus initiated with the help of a boy's father would be shared with many kin on the maternal side, but the head is reserved exclusively for a mother's brother. In one elaboration: "Those people always get the most tasty parts of the animal." The head is a trophy just like the jawbones of wild pigs. It is a trophy, with one particular analogy in mind: "Wild pigs kill people. They are our enemies. We fastened wild pig's jawbones to stone walls in the same manner as we would deposit enemy skulls."

Otherwise, among the Yami of Lan Yü Island (Røkkum 1991), the head and neck remain with those mounting the feast. As I witnessed in 1979, the host reserves the choicest part of the head—the jawbones—for himself. Yet at the culmination of a meat-sharing event, the Yami, unlike the Bunun, inscribe rules of reciprocity in a bilateral network of kin; this makes a specified ego, the feast-giver alone, a centric actor.

Now, what I am observing is an instance of a constant flux across a moiety barrier, as those marriageable in one generation becoming un-marriageable for the next and ensuing three generations. Only with that separation "can the blood be returned" (*šokis valai*). Here is an instance of "restricted exchange" de Castro (1998:357) finds by way of Gell (1975) a qualification of Lévi-Strauss' claim that marriage systems may turn affines into kin. The "allies" for the New Guinean Umeda, as for the Bunun, are precisely those among whom a wife is no longer available, at least not for the next few generations.

A *practice* of kinship, thus, for the Bunun consists of a dual mode of *matching exchanges with kinship*: (a) as the transfer of meat from game animals between any partners to a ceremonialized encounter, and (b) as the transfer of meat, initially, in a wedding, then, after the birth of a son, in an avuncular relationship. A similitude of food and sex thrives, here, on the level of true physicality. Bodies are prototypical in this sort of knowing, and it is their coagency, by both sexual acts and the culinary acts resulting from hunting exploits, which matters to the Bunun. This, I submit, puts into play a sign exchange of likeness and difference: of the sharing of meat as being *tantamount* to mating.

9 Conclusion

Kinship is recently being pinpointed as embedded in nurturant behavior (see e.g. Carsten 1995). It dwells in many aspects of relatedness: food, sex, place belonging, to mention a few. In Stone (2001), chapters by Stone, Lamphere and Galvin exemplify a recent approach to the study of kinship, one which dismisses altogether a dichotomous orientation of the biogenetic versus the social, citing instead versions of views of *substance sharing*.

Schneider (1968) opened up for such study of the local *accounts* of what, in these recent contributions, is defined as substance sharing. One might well wonder, however, if—as the argument goes—the biogenetic view subsists on *an idea* of reproduction, wouldn't a view sustaining *an idea* of substance sharing run the risk, likewise, of institutionalizing itself in the research paradigm as another *pre-conceived* idea? In both scientific and indigenous vocabularies semantic linkages have a weight of their own, on the mind. So with a particular attention to “substance sharing,” kinship instantiates itself; then it would be almost impossible *not* to find its exemplars.

For the Bunun, kinship is as much a matter of not sharing as of sharing. Relatedness is not the diffusion of an experience, as through repeated commensality acts, but more acutely in their experience, what takes them along a borderline between difference and sameness. Such experience is grounded in metaphor. Food *and* sex—meat *and* mating—are the matters of real substance sharing here.

The Bunun ethnography places kinship not in a domain of its own, but along tracks in the collective memory of origins and in the tracks of ceremonialized food exchanges in the present. Myth—in its multiple readings—preserves the key speech acts for such performative kinship matters. Hence I am attentive to the *illocutionary* content of Bunun culture: to what makes kinship in words and deeds.

But relatedness is not *secondary* to the concerns of origin, reciprocity and sharing / not sharing. It prevails, in fact, at the forefront of daily anxieties. People suffer quandaries when trying to come to grips with such paradoxes of living as an uxori-local choice of residence coming at odds with an agnatic preference for succession rights. For the idea itself—of sharing—accrues not from acts and experiences in their raw state, but from what is already, as attested for by the origin myths, a sign artifice.

This is a vital sign. Even with categories of blood relationships (*tasað tiquts*) and solidaric groups honoring such relationships, the equivalence, when invoked, produces fresh instances of kinship, as when immigrants carrying other ethnic identities become moiety members. Similarly, as Evans-Pritchard demonstrated for the Nuer (Evans-Pritchard 1940), whereas the neighboring

Dinka are distinctive others, the idea itself of a cumulative extension of relatedness as one traces ancestry farther and farther back in time is one of vast inclusiveness.

Let me compare with the Dunang (Yonaguni) islanders of the South Ryukyus: Some are drawn into the ambit of kinship of an origin house, simply by living in adjacent house plots, others join simply by happening to cross nearby sacred paths on annual festival day when island priestesses walk in procession. An indexical transport makes people obligated to honor House ancestors *as if* they were kin. Such is the force of the imaginary when made to work for society that what is otherwise *apart*, even an anthropologist doing fieldwork in such sites, becomes *akin* somehow: There were some voices on the island in favor of myself having to return each year to honor some House ancestors (Røkkum 1998b; 2002).

Godelier, Trautman and Tjon Sie Fat evaluate recent developments in kinship studies:

We are talking about kinship as a set of *representations* and issues that mark bodies, that embed themselves in these bodies; they do this by representing a transfer, between the sexes and generations, of material and spiritual substances and forces, that are joined by the ranks and powers transmitted in some societies through kinship. (Godelier, Trautman and Tjon Sie Fat 1998:388, emphasis added)

The Taiwanese ethnography introduced in this essay subsists on representations. Kinship can be known by the Bunun only as a transfer interjoining bodies by food and sex, with one sort of reciprocity and its limitations.²⁵⁾

I find no set principles, either for classification or for moiety arrangement among the Takibakha Bunun, only an unfolding of images, each with a characteristic sign activity of its own. The Bunun trace this imagery back to their clan origins. Members of named clans partake in what is truly *incidental*, narrated with much circumstantial detail, not as what they are in the present by having been begotten by one or the other eponymical ancestor, but as the inheritors of a momentous chance happening once and forever affixed to the characters of these ancestors. The present is equally marked by the incidental. Moiety arrangements have to adapt themselves to what is contingent on the aleatory, accepting entries of strange outsiders, even from ethnically separate origins (aboriginal Atayal and majority population Han Chinese).

Yet happenings in the present sometimes split what was joined in the past. *That*, however, presents no problem: new identities can be forged by adoption or uxori-local marriage.²⁶⁾ Recollecting their past, the Bunun can truly cultivate some serendipity (cf. Røkkum 1998a) behind their jointness—just as they, in the opposite sense, can feel the strictures by regulating taboos (*hulan*). (1) Humans affiliate with each other through the consumption of animals caught in hunting expeditions. (2) People already joined by consanguinity and affinity

are obligated to honor relationships through meat exchanges. (3) But the positive act of meat exchange makes a negative act for renewing affinity with another union.

The Takibakha Bunun recite, in their mythic accounts, a duality with an arrangement of clans as its experienced ramifications. Myths inspire imageries and parallels, of people of the present judged against the strange and idiosyncratic characters counted as clan ancestors. Quite unlike Australian totemic images, i.e. of animals, plants or celestial phenomena extrinsic to human society, the mythic associations introduced in this essay—not even the arrow and the moon—are sufficient to provide any crisp terms for the comparison of one clan or moiety with another. Such fuzziness, I hold, arises when attention lingers on the issues of meaning, probing for one or another answer. I suggest that this is more characteristic of an *eidetic*, imagist, predisposition of humans than the *classificatory* predisposition—of contrasts between natural and cultural series—which in Lévi-Strauss (e.g. 1963) attests to a Maussian heritage. For the images I have introduced do not yield terms either for positive identification or reciprocity. Only a *restriction* put upon reciprocity in the sharing of meat can assure a success of human mating. The success lifts the restriction, true, but it imposes just another one: that of even more mating.

The *hulan* taboo sets terms for permissible commensality *and* sexuality by presenting any of these acts as a reading of the other. It follows that for the Bunun the incest taboo covers both food and sex, kinship and affinity. For it is not either the closeness or distance *as such* which matters, as in a descent construct where one speaks of “marriage inside or outside a permissible range,” but, rather, its representation—by illocutionary acts, both in speech and behavior.

When Durkheim made “the religious life” a topic for studying life in society, he was actually realizing such influence of signs and images. Unfortunately, this attention to cultural representations in ferreting out social identities was neglected by the empiricist Radcliffe-Brown as he made the Durkheimian perspective available for a British *social* anthropology.

Signs and images perform well as ideals, in their positive readings, but with more difficulty as prohibitions, in their negative readings. One can easily speak of the sharing of substances as essential to kinship, but with more difficulty, as what—under given conditions—is an obligatory non-sharing. On that account, the Durkheimian and Maussian views can, with some justification to my mind, be characterized as overly idealistic.

While the Trobriand ethnography interpreted by Mauss (1954 [1923–24]) makes us cognizant of a positive will, of giving, as a vehicle for communication in a wide geographical area of islands, the lesson from the Taiwanese ethnography in this essay is one of a human capacity for the double entendre of illocutionary acts which communicate language-like: of keeping attention to giving *and* withholding as a moral obligation. A negative image of the “not so”

in sharing translates into a simple rule underpinning activity in society: a *lex bunun* corresponding to a cultural prototype. *That*, however, remains a very crisp category.

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Notes

- 1) My accent on communication rather than on function agrees with Gellner (1987:21–22). In his sympathetic review of Durkheim's insight, "categorical concepts, on which all others depend, require ritual if they are to be sustained."
- 2) Utsushikawa, Mabuchi, and Miyamoto (1988 [1935]:109) identify a Taiwanese "tribe" in terms of jointness, such as territoriality, hunting, cultivation, and in rules and statuses for ritual and marriage.
- 3) The term "illocutionary" refers to the performative quality of expressions. Cf. Austin (1975 [1962]) on the comparability of speech acts and ritual acts and Rappaport (1999) and Robbins (2001) for recent advances in this semiotic approach, and specifically, on the indexicality (in Peirce's sense) of performative ritual acts.
- 4) The fifty years of Japanese colonial administration of Taiwan was an important epoch for Japanese anthropology. In Matsuzawa's view, it was one of richness (Matsuzawa 1988), just to mention the establishment of University research facilities at the Taihoku [Taipei] Imperial University in 1928. I infer from her recount that the scientific purpose underlying the intention of surveying nine tribes was that of reconstituting the past in a view both on oral tradition and migrations (cf. Utsushikawa, Mabuchi and Miyamoto 1988 [1935]). Notwithstanding her observation that the achievement in Taiwan did not instigate much recognition of Japanese anthropology internationally, I find here a striking parallel to Western anthropologies equally thriving in the colonial experience (cf. e.g. Asad 1973). And if referring specifically to the voluminous contribution by Mabuchi, the experience stimulated an anthropological disciplinary orientation (cf. e.g. Mabuchi 1952) both in Taiwan and Japan. If the Taiwanese endeavor, nonetheless, did not quite succeed in profiling a *Japanese* anthropology, part of the reason might be this: A reconstructionist preconception justifying a *survey* of a population of nine

ethnic groups might have been somewhat at variance with orientations within anthropological genres ("cultural" in the US, "social" in the UK) which, at the time (around 1928), were *distanting* themselves from that particular empiricist stance. Besides, in France, van Gennep's laborious paradigm for *surveying* a folkloric region (Savoy) and *reconstructing* the past through folktales gained merely scant attention as an alternative to the Durkheimian sociological paradigm. Even with the empirical demands set by decades of fieldwork by Franz Boas among Northwest Coast Indians, and even with his *somewhat* reconstructionist orientation in an outlook on linguistic matter and history, the effort was in fact influential in bringing about a paradigmatic shift from a study of "cultures" to (a generalized concept of) "culture" (Kuper 2000). It goes without saying that a contemporary *critique*, either of kinship or culture, must take notice of the preconceptions hosted by anthropological genres. Judging from the title of Matsuzawa's essay, then, I gain the impression that the masters in a Japanese anthropological tradition enjoy a somewhat more steady standing than their counterparts in the traditions just mentioned.

- 5) In one opinion, this was a term retained by the Japanese administration. The term preferred by my informants for this role of charismatic leadership is *liškaḏa-an*.
- 6) Three kinds were recognized: *pašpaš* (imprecation), *mamomo* (inflicting or healing illness), and *matimba* (black magic).
- 7) Mabuchi (1974b:18) adds to a similar observation: the term classifies other entities than humans as well.
- 8) In the reminiscence of some elderly Takibakha, many headhunters' feasts were foiled by Japanese policemen, with the partakers dispatched to prisons or into the mountains for hard labor in the lumber trade. Kaneko (1999), cognizant of a longstanding taboo against topicalizing headhunting customs among Taiwanese aborigines, broaches it as a subject for analysis in a seminal essay. She portrays the practice as a traditional way of dealing with the death of an enemy, in use by a disadvantaged population experiencing a loss of adaptive means—in a situation resembling guerilla warfare.
- 9) I experienced that opinion sometimes rules against such choices as e.g. when one woman married to a man from the Takitudu sub-group of the Bunun was making at the time of fieldwork, without any noticeable success, a plea for bequeathing to her uxori locally married husband the moiety affiliation of her own father.
- 10) We would be mistaken in assuming, deductively, that kinship calls for certain symmetries *sui generis*, so in the present study I am describing, rather, some culture-bound practices *embedding* it, rather. In a previous study of the Yami (Røkkum 1991), I was only able to grasp a culture-bound version of bilaterality by taking note of an appeal for a maximal number of workmates to join in clearing new water taro land, and by taking note of one way of honoring the ensuing attendance by offering select delicacies from a slaughtered pig. Godelier (1998:393) writes: "kinship terminologies, in themselves, say *nothing* about the existence of descent rules that may govern a society or about their nature, that is, whether they are patri-, matri-, or bilineal or undifferentiated." The Falkenbergs, in *The Affinal Kinship System* (1981) convincingly dismiss the Radcliffe-Brownian thesis of a fit between terminology and social phenomena which can be made to fit into "models."
- 11) Takibakha is also recognized as a dialect of Bunun. Cf. *Ethnologue* on "Languages of Taiwan": <http://www.ethnologue.com/show_country.asp?name=Taiwan>, accessed on March 8, 2002.
- 12) Huang's observation (1989) that a Bunun concept of the person survives despite the entry of Christianity agrees well with my own observation of epistemological continuity through biblical usage of indigenous categories. My view is that many Bunun cultural idioms have survived a demise of festival organization.
- 13) The Bunun were first japanized, then sinicized. In the same vein, they might now be globalized. The present study observes the case of a rather quick integration of a minority people within a modern society with a globalizing economy (many informants report on the associated traumas), yet a vexing issue lingers: that even with the loss of such important bulwarks of traditional culture as festival organization and material culture, there remains an

- unmistakable disposition to interact with the world through indigenous paradigms. This agrees very much with my experience in Japanese society: The parameters of globalization are not necessarily the parameters of—the predominant—Japanese way at looking at things. The present study raises the issue of a hegemony of semiotic images in cultural self-representations.
- 14) I apply the term “moiety” to mirror a preference among my informants to attribute their belonging to *either* one *or* the other original clans, and implying from this differentiated belonging that marriage is proscribed for the one and prescribed for the other. Outside the range of marriage by my informants in Tannan, but still within the Bunun people, there can be other arrangements than this bipartite entity, of course. My usage of the term “moiety” here mirrors previous usage by Mabuchi (1974a, e.g. p. 40).
 - 15) *Qaidan* is a term for oneness irrespective of level of integration, overriding even the moiety divisions themselves in the inclusive view of a tribal sub-group.
 - 16) Compare with another record of a myth of twin suns in Suzuki (1979:125).
 - 17) In a study of terms for indebtedness among the Japanese (Røkkum n.d.), I argue likewise: A Japanese concept of the person settles, not with the human body as such, but with its situation in relationship contexts.
 - 18) Huang (1989) includes the role of pig meat in wedding arrangements: (i) of the meat of at least two pigs being presented for equal distribution among the agnates of the bride, and (ii) with the wedding finalized: the wife going into seclusion for a month in the granary of her husband's father, ingesting *only* the meat & grain provisions he presented to her in a welcoming ritual. In Huang's description (Huang 1989:184), he manipulated a pig's head above her head as part of this act of including her into a kin group.
 - 19) Among the Yami, I used to sleep in a privileged spot right beneath an assemblage of horns. Such a comparative view of the Bunun and the Yami elucidates an aspect of fieldwork: making sense by reflecting upon what makes similarity or difference. I compare aspects of one society (the Bunun) with another (the Yami), highlighting the contrast rather than possible affinities between one group and other of the Bunun. I agree with Herzfield (2001) writing of *comparanda*, not as typological registrations, but as the anthropologist's placement of observation in contexts where his/her own interest highlights one or the other aspect. I see this as a valid approach for anthropology.
 - 20) We owe this insight to Mauss (1954). The flow of prestation in gift-giving and in conspicuous hospitality makes an ongoing comment on the relationships involved. I have tried to describe a pattern of such acts of signification in an essay on the Yami (Røkkum 1991). A difference can be noted in comparison with the Bunun. Whereas the Yami slay, in one instantaneous outburst of hospitality, a pig that has been raised for several years to reach as many partners as possible, the Bunun may present meat more stylistically in dyadic transactions. Mabuchi (1940), in a somewhat functionalist vein, emphasizes the accompanying aspect of solidifying both agnatic and affinal relationships.
 - 21) Mabuchi (1970) offers an interesting comment on the question of terminology.
 - 22) Cp. Feil's account of agnatism among the New Guinean Tombema-Enga (Feil 1984:58). The present, Taiwanese ethnography, differs from the African model as do the New Guinean alternatives of non-exclusive agnatic descent and indistinct clan boundaries. The prominence of maternal kin is not an instance of—mere—“complementary filiation” (Fortes 1953), as affixed to a domestic domain, itself detached from a politico-jural domain. The Taiwanese ethnography, rather, actualizes the possibility of a comparable validity of two mutually inclusive types of affiliation.
 - 23) Nihira (1977:77) provides an etymology of the word: “root,” “stump.”
 - 24) See Radcliffe-Brown (1952: chap. 1). Mabuchi (1953) writes of lasting and obligating qualities (caution and respect) of matrilineal relationships. Somewhat unexpectedly, then, he also finds indulgence to characterize the same relationships. Another issue is that of the descent status of married women. Mabuchi is preoccupied with the regular observances made by a woman to her natal family. In other words, the bond is allowed to continue through her life span. I agree. For, in my opinion, she is simply acting on her status as a *sister*. Mabuchi stresses that, as a matter of fact, the married woman has become a member of a clan other than that of her birth.

But is obligating descent status allotted simply by what in Africanist anthropology has been taken as *group membership*? Even some patrilineal arrangements in Africa may in fact favor a retention of some sort of natal group affiliation for a married woman. In my own observation both among the Bunun and among the Ryukyans, women easily accommodate themselves to two types of affiliation: (a) one granted by marriage highlighting a role of wife and obligations to the husband's group, and (b) one retained as a sororal link, highlighting a role of sister with a far broader social implication than that of the single sibling link. Cf. critique of lineage theory by Feil (1984), Kuper (1982), and Southall (1986).

- 25) I note that Stone (2001:6) includes a category of "transfer" in a view on alternative approaches: "Could shared substance and/or other kinds of transfers be used to construct a cross-culturally valid analytical category of kinship?"
- 26) Adoption is prevalent among Malayo-Polynesian speaking peoples. Silk (1998) argues in favor of this as having a supportive role for kinship, including adjustment of family size.

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