CHAPTER XV

MARRIAGE

The eastern Sumbanese words for ‘to marry’ or ‘to be married’, for a man and a woman respectively, are *lalei* and *mangoma*; and the phrases *līi lalei, līi mangoma* (*līi*, ‘way, matter, etc.’) designate the entirety of rules, institutions, and procedures involved in legal marriage.¹ Cohabitation, whether within or outside marriage, on the other hand, is called *kanoma*, ‘to look after’, also meaning ‘to prepare, make ready’.² But whereas *kanoma* can thus refers to the more substantial aspects of the relation of man and wife, properly speaking only *lalei* and *mangoma* imply a recognized, legitimate union that constitutes an alliance. Conversely, I heard of several cases where a marriage had been legally contracted but the spouses had not subsequently cohabited or even consummated the union; but this does not detract from the alliance. In this way, then, the Rindi are able to distinguish legal marriage from informal unions which have not been legitimized; and whenever I use the term ‘marriage’ it is to the former that I refer.

The topic of marriage (or alliance) prestation forms the subject of Chapter XVII, while the various ways of contracting a marriage are described in Chapter XVIII. Here, then, I shall mainly be concerned with the concomitant institutions of marriage in Rindi. It is appropriate, however, first to outline the rules and other factors which govern the selection of a spouse. The extent to which Rindi marriages conform to these rules is considered in Chapter XIX.

1. Rules

Marriage in Rindi is governed by several rules of differing status. First, with regard to relations between descent groups, it is prescribed that the transfer of women in marriage be unilateral. It is also said that a wife should be taken from an established wife-giver and, especially, from the clan of the mother’s brother. But this is not
insisted upon in every case; and provided a marriage with an unrelated
group does not disrupt existing ties of alliance in general, 3 and
established relations with one’s own group are otherwise perpetuated,
the Rindi maintain a neutral attitude towards unions of this sort.
A new alliance is called a ‘newly cleared path, newly risen hill’ (ànda hili [or bidi] lota, palindi hili [or bidi] hura). 4 The phrases also refer
to an additional increment of bridewealth (minimally one horse and
two metal pendants) which the new wife-giver can then demand.
After the initial marriage, the social classification is of course adjusted
to accommodate the new relation.

Before a wife is taken from other than the mother’s natal clan,
the mother’s brother should be informed and his agreement secured,
though it was said that so long as other marriages maintain the
alliance, he would not usually object. There is no mandatory fine
payable if a woman of this group is not married; and a man cannot
force his ZS to marry his daughter. Nevertheless, I did hear of a
traditional procedure, called ‘to draw water from another spring, to
gather wood from another forest’ (taku wai hau mata, ohu ai hau omangu),
whereby one might formally approach a long established
wife-giver to secure, by way of an exchange of prestations, his approval
for such a marriage. If the wife-giver does not wish to give his
consent, I was told, he may then alternatively offer his daughter in
marriage with a relatively low bridewealth. The procedure seems only
to be followed, however, when the wife-taker is particularly concerned
not to endanger an alliance of long standing and was said not to be
necessary in the case of ‘new affines’ (bidi kalembi).

With regard to category, on the other hand, marriage is prescribed
with a balu (MBD, etc., m.s.; FZS, etc., w.s.). There is, however, no
standard idiom in which the rule is formulated, and the prescribed
category of wife is in fact more commonly specified as the daughter
of a tuy a (MB, etc.). 5 Sometimes the Rindi also say a man should
marry an ana polangia, i.e., a closely related balu from the mother’s
natal clan and, in particular, the genealogical MBD. But this expresses
a preference concerning relations between lineal groups rather than
a categorical prescription, and marriage with other women classified
as balu, whether or not they derive from the mother’s brother’s group,
is equally in accordance with the rules.

The most preferred type of marriage in Rindi is thus that between
genealogical MBD and FZS. Indeed, the extent to which they favour
marriage with the MBD (and, arguably, the incidence of such unions;
see Chapter XIX) suggests that ‘preference’ does not adequately describe it; and that it is perhaps more accurately characterized as a rule enjoining that if a MBD is available to a man, he ought to marry her. Before all other women of the mother’s clan, therefore, the genealogical MBD is designated as a man’s tanggu, ‘rightful share, portion’. Since it is held that elder siblings should marry before younger ones, where there are several women of the preferred genealogical type, the most appropriate spouse is the eldest available daughter of the mother’s eldest brother.6

In the more general view, the closer the genealogical relationship between a man and a balu, the more preferred she will be as a marriage partner. However, given the strong preference for marriage with the genealogical MBD, it is evident that if the closest available woman is a distant relative, a man’s chances of marrying her are reduced, since it is then more likely that she will be taken by another person, from among ego’s agnates or another of her father’s wife-takers, who has a stronger claim to her. It sometimes happens, though, that a wife-giver with relatively few women available, in order to maintain various alliances, will divide a group of sisters among several different wife-taking clans.7 As I have previously shown, differences in (formal or informal) class standing within a descent group are another factor which contribute to the preference for marriage with a woman from the mother’s brother’s clan, and with the genealogical MBD in particular, and, at the same time, limit the possibility of marriage with other women who, with regard to both existing alliances and category, would otherwise be eligible as spouses.

In some societies that practise asymmetric alliance, the preference for marriage with a MBD or another woman of her group applies only to the eldest of several brothers; but I found no rule of this sort in Rindi. While it is judged sufficient to maintain an alliance if just one of a set of brothers marries someone from the mother’s natal clan, therefore, the others are not thereby precluded from taking wives, including a MBD, from this group, though for the reasons mentioned above, statistically speaking, younger brothers will have less chance of doing so than older ones. A similar rule in some societies (e.g., the Karo, Singarimbun 1975:154) is the prohibition of marriage with the BWZ. The marriage of two full brothers to two full sisters, however, is not uncommon in Rindi, and I never heard that it was in any way undesirable.8

While women other than balu are ordinarily prohibited as spouses,
it is also permitted in Rindi to marry a female *dawa* (WBD, MBSD, etc., i.e., a *dawa* on the wife-giving side) provided there is no one in the first descending genealogical level from ego eligible to take her as a wife. This seems, then, to be what Lévi-Strauss (1969:120) has described as a ‘privileged union’. A *dawa* is especially suitable as a spouse when the mother’s group has no *balu* available; and a woman in this category makes a good second wife when the first is elderly and requires help in domestic tasks. Polygynous unions involving a *dawa* thus have a regular incidence in Rindi. A woman who marries a *kiya* (FZH, etc.) is said to ‘hang onto the tail of her *mamu*’s (FZ, etc.) skirt’ (*kanderungu kiku laü mamu*), as she follows her FZ in marriage. Since the woman is from a wife-giving clan, such a marriage does not in any way alter the existing alliance but, on the contrary, reinforces it. In this regard, it is also worth pointing out that in several other societies that practise asymmetric alliance (e.g., Purum, Needham 1962:77; Kédang, Barnes 1974:266; Wailolong [East Flores], Barnes 1978:146) WBO and MBSD are included with MBD in the prescribed category of women.

The prohibition of marriage with women in the category *anawini* (Z, FBD, MZD, FZD, FFZDD, etc.) is most strictly enforced in respect of members of ego’s own clan and those of his immediate wife-takers. The closer the genealogical relation of a woman in this category, moreover, the more firmly do the Rindi disapprove of the marriage; thus among patrilateral relatives the genealogical FZD is especially proscribed. I was also told, however, that FZDHZ (or FFZDD, ZHIZHZ) as well, should not be married, and that a union of this sort was equivalent to marriage with FBD or FZD. As I shall later elaborate, this is consistent with the dislike the Rindi express of alliance cycles, and the part played by the bride’s mother’s brother at her marriage. I found no cases of marriage with these genealogical relatives in Rindi.

Although the Rindi say marriage should not take place between the children and descendants of female agnates married into different clans, only in the case of genealogical MZC, and possibly the children of other closely related women (e.g., MFBDS and MFBDD), does this seem to be insisted upon. Thus where the mothers and grandmothers of the descendants of two sisters derived from other (wife-giving) clans, marriage is usually allowed. Nevertheless, the fact that the female forbears of two lineages were siblings was used in one case I encountered to argue against one group taking a wife from the
other. As noted, lineages that have taken wives from the same other
group classify one another as 'brothers', *angu palu hu*, which in this
context may be glossed as 'co-affines'. This fact appears also to have
some bearing on the previously noted disapproval of marriage with
a woman from the group of wife-givers of one's own wife-givers, i.e.,
a *yera kawini*, since by this arrangement ego and his own wife-givers
implicitly come to be related in the same way as the children of
sisters. It should be stressed, however, that this attitude mainly
concerns marriage with the specific line from which ego's own MB
and MBS regularly take wives. Thus, with regard to entire clans, a
group may contract marriages with more distant agnates of the
MBWB; and alliances with clans that give wives to another wife-giver
are by no means uncommon in Rindi. As mentioned earlier, moreover,
evén marriage with the closest wife-givers of one's own wife-givers is
permitted when the latter cannot provide a spouse. The union is then
described as *tu pingi*, 'to place, use the trunk' (i.e., the wife-giver's
wife-giver), or with the phrases *kapola wihi anana, hàmu wihi inana*,
'the child's (i.e., the own wife-giver's) legs are covered in sores, (but)
the mother's (i.e., their wife-giver's) legs are fine'. In this situation,
the woman might be taken directly, or a procedure known as *anangu
banda*, 'to have, use animals in the place of children', whereby the
wife-giver obtains a woman from his own wife-giver with a payment
of bridewealth, might be adopted. When the latter arrangement is
followed, the payment may be provided entirely by the wife-giver or
partly by the wife-taker (see Onvlee 1973:101). But in either case
the bride is considered to be taken from the wife-giver and not from
her natal group; so the original alliance is perpetuated.

When the wife-giver cannot provide a *balu*, it is also possible, by
way of *anangu banda*, to marry a classificatory 'mother' (*tambaru
paina*), though informants s tressed that the woman must be a distant
relative and that the union should be ritually cooled. While I am not
sure how distant the relationship need be, certainly a genealogical
MZ and probably MFBD would be ineligible. Marriage with women
in this category from another wife-giving clan (that of the FBW or
father's second wife, for example), however, seems to be somewhat
less problematic. Unions with distantly related women classifiable as
*àp u* (PM) or *umbuku* (CD) from wife-giving clans appear usually to
be possible. In this case, as to some extent with other women who
can be reckoned to belong to normally prohibited categories, the
marriage is treated as one that involves a previously unrelated woman.
This situation underlines the point touched upon in the last chapter, that the categories of relationship reflect not so much genealogical ties as prevailing patterns of alliance, and so to a degree can be altered to accord with changes in these. Stated otherwise, where a woman can be reckoned to be related in one way genealogically, and in another by virtue of alliance, greater emphasis tends to be placed on the latter.

2. The Arrangement of Marriages

The Rindi regard marriages contracted for economic advantage or because of physical attraction, which thus do not take proper account of existing alliances, as undesirable and likely to fail. Although a wife-taker may be poor, it is said, one should yet provide him with wives: 'one should not be tempted by people with golden valuables and tall horses' (àmbu itaya na marara bandana, na majangga njarana). Marrying for the wrong reasons, or contracting marriages in an irregular manner, is also thought to entail the risk of becoming involved with witches. Either the new wife-givers or the new wife-takers might turn out to be witches.

Unless a severe disability (e.g., insanity) absolutely prevents it, everyone in Rindi is expected to marry. Prolonged or permanent spinsterhood, however, is rather more tolerated than is bachelorhood; and there were more mature spinsters than mature bachelors in Rindi. Spinsters are (relatively) most numerous among noblewomen, who were often said not to have married because a man of the appropriate rank and alliance status could not be found. Although poverty is sometimes a factor, e.g., with orphans, this seems not always to account for some men never taking a wife; and in two of the instances with which I was most familiar, the main reason seemed to be simply that the men had no desire to do so. Bachelorhood certainly often leads to impoverishment, however.

As young people in general are considered too immature and too much influenced by romantic and other extraneous factors to select a spouse for themselves, marriages arranged by parents are the norm in Rindi. A person is thus expected to comply with his parents' wishes, especially when the marriage proposed for him is with an established affine. In the case of a daughter of a friend of mine, who attempted to elope with a lover shortly after her parents had arranged to marry her to her FZS, the girl's actions, in respect of the threat they posed
to this long standing affinal connexion, were publicly decried as a ‘source of disorder (literally, ‘dirtiness’)’ (pamarihaku wàngu), and ‘something that threatened extinction’ (pambuta wàngu). We are thus reminded of the vital nature of the alliance tie. Of course, the wishes of parents and children do not always conflict. Not only will young people know who is and who is not an eligible spouse, but from an early age the parents will encourage their attentions towards persons of the appropriate category. It is the parents, however, who should have the final say.

Sometimes children are betrothed in infancy, by way of an exchange of alliance prestations known as tiwalungu wiri bara, ru karaki, ‘to hang up a white sign of prohibition, a forbidding leaf’.10 The phrases, I was told, also refer to a string of beads tied to the girl’s right wrist to show she is spoken for. If this is done, it is not necessary formally to request the bride and thus to make a further prestation when she reaches marriageable age. Should the woman later be taken by another group (e.g., by way of elopement), then the wife-taker must be compensated by the interloper for all the goods previously given to the woman’s group, a practice known as ‘replacing the goods, exchanging the horses’ (hilu banda, njepa njara).

Though occasionally the young groom himself first raises the question of his marriage, the initiative lies with his parents. They must then communicate their intentions to other clan members and secure their agreement before a proposal is formally made to the bride’s group. The groom’s mother, too, should agree to the union, and on the wife-giving side the agreement of the bride’s mother’s brothers as well as her own agnates must be obtained. Parents of a reluctant bride may attempt to induce her to accept a proposed marriage by offering her gifts: decorated textiles, beads, and armbands, i.e., articles of the sort used as counter-prestation. Forced marriages do occur (see Chapter XVIII, Section 5), and physical coercion is sometimes employed to prevent a woman from eloping. Thus, in the case mentioned just above, after the girl’s initial attempt to elope she was detained in the house, where her feet were placed in wooden stocks (tangga). Though this measure was perhaps somewhat extreme, it was widely recognized as appropriate in the circumstances; and she was released only after the police intervened. It was also suggested that the girl quickly and forcibly be married to her FZS, but this was never done. At the same time, however, the Rindi appreciate that marriages contracted against the wishes of one of
the spouses are likely to prove unsatisfactory and, in particular, to result in separation. Similarly, with elopement the parents often later acquiesce in view of the young couple's evident determination to marry. Indeed, the eastern Sumbanese display a general reluctance to intervene in matters where strong emotions are involved; and the forcible separation of lovers is claimed to be a common cause of suicide. Nowadays, moreover, to contest an elopement usually requires the intervention of government and legal authorities, and this can involve a protracted and sometimes costly procedure, the outcome of which is often less than satisfactory for the woman's group.

Unions that go against the wishes of parents, therefore, occur with some regularity in Rindi. These are called patidungu, 'to place, carry (something) on the head', which in this context, I was told, may be glossed to 'to do something which one has been told not to do'. The term seems also to suggest the idea of taking a burden upon oneself. While not all unions counted as patidungu involve categorically prohibited spouses, informants stated that marriages which do can be initiated only in this way. If the woman's group subsequently refuse to go along with the match, then no bridewealth is exchanged; so it is never legitimized. In one case I know of, the father of a girl who had run away to live with a lover swore never again to have contact with her and, on the threat of their separation, he forbade her mother to do so as well. The girl, he said, would be regarded as stillborn and no reconciliation would be possible, even if she later left the man. Though this attitude seems not to be unusual, some people thought it rather extreme, claiming that in the same situation they would be inclined to acquiesce and accept a bridewealth. This is indeed possible, provided of course that the spouses do not belong to strictly forbidden categories (e.g., MBS and FZD) or to different social classes. But when there is no reconciliation, a patidungu union cannot be considered a legal marriage, and it does not constitute an alliance.

Despite the concern that their children marry correctly, parents in Rindi are not particularly cautious about premarital attachments of young people. An exception to this is the nobility, who are especially concerned that their daughters do not become involved with men of lower rank (see Kruyt 1922:506-7). While it is sometimes viewed with disdain and recognized to entail certain risks, therefore, Rindi parents grudgingly accept premarital sex as inevitable.11 Young couples meet privately, usually outside the village in the evening — the river's
edge being a favourite rendezvous — though occasionally a young man will surreptitiously enter a girl's sleeping compartment and spend the night with her there. Whether the parents intervene once they know of such an affair depends upon whether they would object to the prospect of a marriage. If they would, a dispute might arise with the girl’s family appearing as the offended party. So long as the relationship is not incestuous or adulterous, however, all is normally resolved once they are satisfied that the attachment is effectively broken. I never heard that virginity was valued in a wife; it is certainly not expected.

Illegitimacy is not uncommon, particularly among the lower classes, in Rindi. Premarital pregnancy, therefore, does not always lead to marriage, though there were a few cases where it apparently had done. Especially among the nobility, I was told, unmarried pregnant women may undergo abortion, but I do not know how often this recourse is tried. The low regard in which illegitimacy is generally held in Rindi is suggested by the phrases *ana njuraku*, ‘child of an illicit affair’ (see Chapter XVI), and *anakeda la wuku rumba*, ‘child from the thick of the grass’, both of which refer to a bastard. The second phrase indicates that the infant as it were springs from the wild (see *rumba*, ‘grass, weeds’, as a metonymic reference to the wild), and hence that it is conceived outside the bounds of social order. This idea is further expressed in the reference to an unmarried mother as someone ‘already gored by a (wild) pig, torn by a monkey’ (*mbàda kaünanya wei, hirananya buti*). While some men consider marrying such a woman to be a slight to a man’s honour and virility, others see it as advantageous, since one would then also obtain the rights to her children.

3. Polygyny

There is no formal limit to the number of women a man may marry in Rindi, and the same rules govern the marriage of a second wife as that of a first. Apart from demography, the incidence of polygyny is restricted mainly by economic factors. The first wife, however, must give her consent before a second is taken; and on several occasions this was mentioned as the reason a man had not taken another wife. The requirement also applies to the inheritance of widows, insofar as a sexual relationship is contemplated.

Of a total of 1,324 men listed in Rindi genealogies, 307 or
23.2 per cent had more than one wife. Of these, 75.2 per cent (231) had just two, 17.6 per cent (54) had three, and 7.2 per cent (22) had four or more wives. The highest number I recorded, in the case of a forbear of the noble clan, was eight. Since some of the men were long dead, however, it was not possible in all of these cases to tell whether the wives were living at the same time. Among noblemen, the incidence of polygyny is about twice as high as among other classes: thus 42.3 per cent of the 52 noblemen recorded in the genealogies had more than one wife, whereas among commoners and slaves the proportion was 22.6 per cent (of 1,272 men). Information concerning the relationship between two or more of the co-wives in 291 plural marriages is set out in Table 10.

Table 10. Relationship of Co-wives in Polygynous Unions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full or half sisters</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>14.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classificatory sisters</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full or classificatory mamu (FZ) and dawa (BD)</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More distantly related agnates</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total: same clan</strong></td>
<td>89</td>
<td>30.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members of different clans</td>
<td>202</td>
<td>69.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>291</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of plural unions involving full or half sisters calls into question Kruyt's (1922:494) statement that such marriages are uncommon on Sumba and that a woman will not usually allow her husband to take her sister as a second wife. It is however forbidden to marry twin sisters, since then the 'life force(s)' (ndewa) of the two women would conflict, and one would die. Accordingly, while two brothers may marry twin sisters, after one of the men dies the other may not inherit his widow. By contrast, there seems to be no problem in a widow being inherited by her deceased husband's twin brother.

One motive for taking a second wife is to provide the first with domestic help. But this applies more to the lower classes than to the nobility, since the latter have slaves to carry out such labours. Older men of lower rank, on the other hand, often take a young second wife for just this reason. Among the higher classes, moreover, co-wives are often housed in different villages, one typically remaining
in the clan's principal settlement while the others live in subsidiary hamlets close to the husband's fields and pastures.

Childlessness, both absolute and relative, is another reason for plural marriage. Thus, in the 307 polygynous unions, nearly one quarter of the first wives and about the same proportion of second wives were without children.\textsuperscript{18} If we add to these the number of wives with only female children, the figures become appreciably higher. Among the plural marriages contracted by noblemen, one half of the first wives and 54.5 per cent of second wives were either absolutely childless or without male offspring. The figures thus appear quite high, although it should be recalled that the eastern Sumbanese birth rate in general is very low. Conceivably, the advantages of maintaining alliances with several different clans simultaneously is also an incentive to polygyny, as Leach (1961:84) reports of Kachin chiefs (for Sumba, see also van Dijk 1939b:195). Yet when it is recalled that in over 30 per cent of plural marriages two or more of the wives were from the same clan and nearly half of these were sisters, it seems this factor may be somewhat less significant in Rindi than in similar societies elsewhere.

Relations among co-wives are normally governed by marriage order. Thus when the women live together, it is usually the senior wife who heads the household, though I was told that when the highest ranking wife, often the man's preferred spouse (e.g., his MBD), is not the first to be married it is nevertheless she who is considered the chief wife. In my experience, however, relations between co-wives are normally amicable and do not show any marked pattern of deference or subordination. A man's obligations to his various wives and to their natal groups is in each instance fundamentally the same, and is not affected by the order in which the marriages were contracted.

4. Widow-Inheritance

A man's agnates are obliged to maintain his widow, and it is expected, when she is still fairly young, that one of them will take her as an inherited wife. Normally the inheritor, who need pay no additional increment of bridewealth for the woman, is the dead man's eldest surviving brother or else another of his brothers or close agnates of the same rank as he.\textsuperscript{19} But in any case, the person must be of the same genealogical level as the deceased or, failing this, a distantly related individual of the second ascending or second descending genealogical level.\textsuperscript{20} It cannot be anyone the dead man called 'father'...
(ama) or 'child' (ana). The rules reflect once more, then, the principle of the equivalence of alternate generations found elsewhere in Rindi ideology. The widow herself has a say in whether she remarries or not. If her children are old enough to provide for her, it is not necessary that she do so. When at least part of the bridewealth has been discharged, however, she is obliged to remain with her deceased husband's clan. As a mark of respect, I was told, a woman should wait a year or two after her husband's death before remarrying; otherwise it might be said that she did not care for him.

Although she is spoken of as his wife, a widow is not fully considered the spouse of the man who inherits her.21 He does not 'marry' (lalei wàngu) her but rather 'looks after' (kanoma) her. Thus, if the second husband is buried in a separate grave from the first, the widow should be buried with her original husband. Nevertheless, any children the man has by the widow are legally his own, and my suggestion that they might yet be considered the issue of the dead man was greeted with amusement. On the other hand, if the bridewealth for the woman is not paid or fully discharged before her husband's death, it rests principally on this man to complete it, and by so doing the deceased's wife and children come to be considered his own (see Kruyt 1922:505).

Kruyt (1922:505) states that if a deceased man's agnates are unwilling to complete the outstanding bridewealth, the widow's natal clan can reclaim her and her children and marry her to another party. The Rindi, however, claimed this would be possible only if no bridewealth at all had been given for the widow, which accords with the rule they articulate that bridewealth may not be received twice, i.e., from two different groups, for the same woman. Evidently, then, the point is that the deceased's agnates should make good the debt. If they are unable to pay, the debt is inherited by the woman's children (see Kruyt ibid.).

Though the Rindi insisted that it was a breach of custom, there were nevertheless several cases where a widow, after her husband's death, had returned to her parents and subsequently entered into an informal union (patidungu) with a man of another clan. A man who thus takes another clan's widow is said 'to rest (his head) on a worn-out pillow, to lie on a faded mat' (nulangu mbora nulangu, napungu mbora topu). To resolve the matter, he must make a payment of horses and metal valuables to the dead husband's group. This, however, is not called bridewealth but is spoken of as a funerary prestation.
(dàngangu, ihi ngaru); thus he does not actually marry the woman. Two alternative procedures were described to me in Rindi. The first, a more traditional practice said no longer to be feasible, is called ‘to enter with the foundation of one’s house’ (tama dàngu watu umana) and requires that the man formally become a clan brother (angu paluhu) of the dead man. Thus, he must thereafter contribute to corporate clan affairs as would an agnate, and any children he may have by the widow are considered members of the dead husband’s clan. The other arrangement, which entails a higher payment, is called ‘to enter with half (the body)’ (tama dàngu hapapana). The new husband then holds fewer obligations towards the clan of the deceased and can consider children he has by the widow his own, though her first husband’s agnates still have a claim to a share of bridewealth received for his daughters. In both instances, therefore, the anomaly of a woman being consecutively the wife of men of different clans is rationalized by redefining, in some degree, the clan affiliation of the second husband. This, then, underlines the principle that a woman once legally married cannot later be formally transferred to another clan.

5. Divorce and Separation

Before discussing the possibility of divorce in Rindi, it is necessary to distinguish it from separation, which by contrast to divorce does not, in itself, entail a legal dissolution of the marriage contract or the alliance between the two clans. Separation, which has a regular incidence in Rindi, is called wàrungu, ‘to discard’, ‘to lose something’, ‘to leave behind, abandon, desert’, and ‘to forget, neglect’. The action can refer to either spouse. Separation normally follows a serious breach — and usually a major row — between spouses. I never heard of separation by mutual consent. The most frequent cause was said to be the wife’s adultery, which accords with my own impression, though other failings of the woman as a wife or mother were mentioned as well. A wife might reasonably leave her husband, I was told, if he fails to provide adequately for the family, for physical maltreatment, taking another wife without her consent, falsely accusing her in public, or if he should commit adultery. These grounds reflect the recognized rights of a Rindi wife. Whoever is judged culpable, however, it is normally the wife who
leaves her husband, by returning to her parents. A speaker must then be sent to the wife’s father to ascertain that she is there, discuss the reasons for her leaving, and request his assistance in reconciling the couple. When agreement is reached, the speaker, with other members of the husband’s group (though not the man himself), returns to collect the woman. On this occasion an exchange of alliance prestations is required, and the wife’s father slaughters a pig. Should the matter prove more serious (particularly, it seems, when the husband is judged to be the one in error), higher prestations may be demanded and both parties must slaughter pigs. The woman’s father then also gives his daughter two cloths, in order to induce her to return to her husband.

Sometimes, because the husband’s clan does not attempt to recover the woman or she proves to be unreconcilable, a couple remain permanently separated. But even in this situation, I was told, it is not usual for the husband to request the return of the bridewealth given for the wife; nor would the wife-giver normally agree to this. The alliance between the two groups is thus not affected; and as I myself have witnessed, each continues to act towards the other in the way expected of affines (at one another’s funerals, for example). An estranged wife, moreover, should be buried with her husband. In other words, she remains his legal wife.

However, I did hear of circumstances in which it would be possible to reclaim the bridewealth, namely when the estranged wife is subsequently married to another man, or when a man ‘steals’ (wahi) the wife of another. In the second case it is the offender who should make good the bridewealth, and it seems likely he would also be required to pay a fine, as Kruyt (1922:509) states. Both the bridewealth and counter-prestation goods are then simply returned, the transaction being accomplished without ceremony. Yet I was also told that by reclaiming bridewealth, the husband’s group forfeit all rights to the woman’s children, while according to another opinion, if the couple have children the prestation cannot be returned. It is probably for this reason that while there were several cases in Rindi where estranged wives had remarried, or at any rate begun to cohabit with, men of other clans, I never heard of one instance in which the bridewealth had actually been returned. Although the legal dissolution of a marriage is apparently possible in this society, therefore, it seems rarely to occur.

Rindi marriages practices thus very closely approximate the complex
of institutions which Needham (1970:257) suggests are 'significantly coherent' in the context of prescriptive alliance: '...arranged marriages, corporate involvement of descent groups in marriage payments, widow-inheritance, sororal polygyny, and absence of divorce'. The question of descent group corporateness with regard to marriage was discussed in Chapter XII. Divorce with the return of bridewealth, though formally possible, is unusual and infrequent in Rindi; and the fact that it does not follow automatically from the estrangement of spouses is consistent with the distinction between individual marriage and group alliance that is fundamental to this sort of system. The other three institutions — arranged marriage, widow-inheritance, and sororal polygyny — are straightforwardly characteristic of Rindi. The exchange of masculine and feminine prestations when a marriage is contracted, which Needham (1970:259) also mentions as typical of asymmetric alliance, is similarly well attested, as I shall further illustrate in Chapter XVII.

6. Incorporation

It is the general rule in Rindi that a woman and her children, whether or not the latter were born in wedlock, belong to the clan that has paid (or contracted to pay) bridewealth for her. There are thus two categories of persons who do not belong to their fathers' clans. One is the offspring of an unwed mother, who, so long as she remains (legally) unmarried, are counted as members of her natal clan. The other case concerns the children of a man who, on the agreement of both parties, marries a woman without paying bridewealth and himself thereby becomes affiliated to the wife's group. This institution is known as lalei tama, 'to marry (and) enter', or 'to marry into (a clan)'. Although it may be occasioned by poverty, as I illustrate just below this is not the only reason such an arrangement may be resorted to.

Regarding the way bridewealth crucially affects a woman's incorporation, I was told that it is always preferable that a man's own father (or elder brother, where an inheritance has yet to be divided), rather than a more distant agnate, provide the principal portion of the prestation, since in the latter case the other party could claim rights to his children. Sometimes, though, this is done deliberately, as, for example, when a nobleman without heirs requires a classificatory brother's son to succeed him.

The offspring of unions which, though not recognized by the
mother’s group, are nevertheless of a permanent nature (i.e., *patidungu* unions), are ordinarily considered to belong to their fathers’ clans. After one of the spouses dies, or if they should separate, however, the mother’s clan can claim one half of the children as members. The practice is called ‘fee for the stallion, replacement of the sow’ (*kahewa njara mini, hilu bai wei*), which phrases indicate that the children who go to the mother’s group are regarded as compensation for the unpaid bridewealth while the father’s clan retains the others in recognition of his having raised and provided for them, and, possibly, of their biological paternity. Occasionally a woman who has thus been informally married is later legally married to someone else. Where there are children by the first union, it is then the woman’s legal husband who can claim rights to them. However, since the Rindi seem also to regard biological paternity as significant, the situation of such children is often somewhat equivocal; and in cases I encountered they were ordinarily spoken of as members of their genitor’s clans. In one instance, moreover, a dispute concerning the affiliation of a boy born of an informal union had been settled by the former government raja of Rindi in favour of his biological father, although his mother, shortly before her early death, had legally been given in marriage to someone of another clan. The headman of the clan from which the boy later took a wife, however, still insisted to me that he belonged to his mother’s legal husband’s clan, even though it was the young man’s biological father who had paid the bridewealth for his wife.

In circumstances such as these, it appears that biological paternity is taken into account also in selecting the child’s spouse. Thus one man, whose legal father belonged to the clan Katinahu but whose genitor was a Tidahu man, married his genitor’s MBSD from the clan Matalu, the principal wife-giver of Tidahu. While formally he belongs to Katinahu, which clan paid the bridewealth for his wife, therefore, for the purpose of marriage he was evidently counted as Tidahu, the more so since Matalu is actually a wife-taker of Katinahu. In fact, when giving me their genealogy, Matalu first identified him to me as a Tidahu man, though on later questioning they claimed to have been mistaken in this. It seems, then, that biological paternity is not entirely ignored in favour of legal paternity in Rindi. The point to be appreciated, however, is that for the Rindi, the two should coincide, so that where they do not a child’s identity is always in some degree ambiguous.
Legitimate children cannot be adopted into other clans, and orphans are provided for by their father's agnates. Children with parents still living, though, may be fostered (radangu, 'to raise, bring up') by (relatively) childless persons who would benefit from their labour. Foster children (ana radangu or ana payila; payila is 'led' or 'pulled [away]') are normally obtained from clan mates, but failing this it is also possible to approach affines, including married daughters. In the latter case, the child's clan affiliation does not change, though a man may inherit from foster parents who have no children of their own. When a foster child's own father is still alive, I was told, it is he who is responsible for the principal marriage payments. If he is an agnate, however, the foster father is expected to contribute to the wider exchange of prestations. Sometimes a boy will go to live with his MB on the understanding that, should his work prove satisfactory, he may later marry the man's daughter with a reduced bridewealth; and by a similar arrangement, a couple may foster a young WBD, who will eventually be married to their son (see Chapter XVIII, Section 4).

As noted just above, in certain circumstances a man's clan affiliation can change upon his marriage. In each instance, this follows from the fact that, on the agreement of the parties involved, bridewealth is not paid for his wife by, or on behalf of, his own clan. One circumstance in which such marriages occur is when a man without sons invites one of his sister's sons to succeed him and hence perpetuate his lineage by marrying his daughter. Should the mother's brother be childless, he may then obtain a wife for the sister's son by way of anangu banda (see Section 1 above). A similar procedure, followed when a noble lineage dies out, is that called 'to make the moon rise, to make the fire flame' (pahunga wulangu, paroka epi). A man from the extinct line's wife-takers or, if this is not possible, another person of the appropriate class standing, replaces the extinct group and inherits their property: he goes, as they say, 'to guard the house, to attend the graves' (dai uma, tutu reti), an idiom which refers to succession in general. With the inheritance he then marries a woman from the extinct lineage's wife-givers or, if such a woman of child-bearing age is available, a widow of the extinct group. The children of the marriage may either all be counted as members of the extinct group or divided equally between this group and their father's natal clan (thus in the same way as the offspring of a patidungu union that has been dissolved).
When a lineage is thus brought back into existence by a wife-taker, their marital alliance cannot continue owing to the man's agnatic tie to his natal clan. I was told, however, that it may be resumed in the generation of his great-grandchildren, or, as this was also expressed, after four generations. The appearance of four in this context calls to mind several similar rules that concern marriage, e.g., that whereby a lineage may rise in class standing by consistently marrying women of a higher rank during four generations (see Chapter X). As with the temporal arrangement of component rites of life cycle ceremonies (see Chapter IX, Section 11), then, in these cases the number appears to define a period of time necessary to complete a radical change of status.

7. Marriage among Slaves

While, in respect of category, members of the slave (ata) class in Rindi are bound by the same rules of marriage as the rest of the population, they are not required to marry outside the clans to which they are attached. As regards institutions of marriage and incorporation, therefore, their position is obviously different from that of the higher classes and so requires separate comment.

As noted, with certain slaves, in particular the ata memangu belonging to the nobility, it is preferred that they take wives from within the clan. This is reflected in Table 11 (Section (a)), which concerns unions of 395 ata men and 243 ata women in Rindi. The extent to which the preference is followed, however, is more clearly shown when one considers only the marriages of male slaves attached to the noble clan, which constituted just over 90 per cent of the total of male slave marriages. In this case, moreover, nearly 40 per cent of marriages outside the clan involved ata ngàndi, slave women who accompany a noble bride, and thus concerned male ata rànja, who by contrast to other slaves are obliged to marry exogamously, in the same way as the nobility. The results obtained when marriages with ata ngàndi are subtracted from the total are shown in Section (b) of Table 11.

The fact that slaves often marry persons attached to the same clan, however, does not entail that they marry close agnates; and in none of the cases where marriages had taken place between two families was it possible to trace an exact agnatic relationship between them. While marriage between slaves of the same clan does not take place
between clearly defined or independent groups, therefore, the genealogical evidence indicates that the minimal unit of exogamy in this instance is a line comprising at least three generations, which is the extent of genealogical knowledge of most slaves.

Table 11. Marriages of Slaves in Rindi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(a) All marriages of slaves</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouses from the same clan</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>35.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spouses from different clans</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>64.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>638</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| (b) Marriages of male slaves of the nobility |        |            |
| Wife taken from within the noble clan       | 133    | 48.2       |
| Wife taken from another clan (excluding ata ngàndi) | 143 | 51.8 |
| Total                                       | 276    | 100.0      |

| (c) Endogamous marriages of slaves of the nobility |        |            |
| Spouses from same lineage of the noble clan     | 132    | 64.7       |
| Spouses from different lineage of the noble clan | 72    | 35.3       |
| Total                                          | 204    | 100.0      |

In accordance with there being no change of corporate group affiliation in such circumstances, when slaves marry within the clan, no bridewealth need be exchanged. In a sense this also applies when ata ngàndi are married, since the total marriage payment received for the noble bride is reckoned entirely to compensate the wife-giver for the loss of these women, and they are therefore incorporated into the wife-taking clan at the marriage of their noble mistress rather than when they themselves eventually marry. Marriage between slaves belonging to different named lineages of the noble clan also requires no bridewealth; but in this case the couple remain obliged to the lords of both groups. With regard to lineage, therefore, the affiliation of their children is equivocal, though it is usually reckoned to follow that of the father, at least when the family resides in a house belonging to his lineage. This seems to be related, then, to the preference for keeping internal slave marriages within the lineage, which, as shown in Section (c) of Table 11, is followed in about 65 per cent of cases.
Traditionally, I was told, when a slave married a woman from another clan, the marriage was arranged by his masters, who also paid at least part of the bridewealth. The gift was then divided between the woman’s lords and her own father. Evidently, however, this mainly concerns the higher ranking slaves (*ata bokulu*) of the nobility, since to obtain a wife (or indeed a husband) for a lower ranking slave (*ata kudu*) could formerly have been done by straightforward purchase (see Chapter X). At the present time, by contrast the situation regarding slave marriages is somewhat variable, which apparently is largely due to the fact that slaves are now able to act independently of their masters, the traditional right of the latter to marriage payments received for slaves not being recognized by the government. Thus nowadays a slave might retain the entire bridewealth received for his daughter; and I also heard reports of slaves paying bridewealth entirely on their own account. In fact, while I was in Rindi, one marriage was thus contracted between slaves belonging to different lineages of the noble clan. This, however, took place without the knowledge or consent of the nobility of the wife’s lineage; and I was assured that they would have objected strongly had they been aware of it. Indeed, the masters of slaves still exercise a good deal of influence over their marriages; and it seems that in many cases the traditional arrangements are still observed.