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MALAY KINSHIP TERMS AND MORGAN'S MALAYAN TERMINOLOGY: THE COMPLEXITY OF SIMPLICITY¹

INTRODUCTION

In 1871, Lewis Henry Morgan described the Malayan "system of relationship" as: "the oldest form of consanguinity and affinity now existing upon the earth" (1871, p. 453) and the simplest terminology among "the several families of mankind" (*ibid.*, p. 453). This essay will examine the Malayan elements of Malay kinship terms, studied during the writer's stay in the northwestern Malay state of Kedah during 1967-68, in order to reassess Morgan's attribution of extreme simplicity to the pure form of those terms. Such an effort seems warranted since it is this very simplicity that has rendered terminologies falling broadly within the confines of Morgan's Malayan category less interesting to social scientists than other terminological systems that appear to yield more useful clues to cultural and sociological analyses. Students of formal semantic analysis have tended to confine themselves to complex and exotic terminological systems and only in rare cases (e.g., Goodenough, 1965 and Schneider, 1965) have they even approached the relative simplicity of Western kinship terms. Social anthropologists

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also have tended to neglect kinship terms when these terms have not accorded with sociological analyses otherwise derived. Malayan terms, especially when found in societies lacking corporate unilineal descent groups on the African and North American prototypes have accordingly been subsumed in other kinds of studies and rarely been the subject of independent research. In re-evaluating Morgan's ideal typical analysis of the Malayan system in the Malay context, the author will attempt to show that the so-called Malayan terms may be of critical significance in the understanding of wide areas of social life in societies generally characterized as "Malayan" (or Hawaiian, following Murdock, p. 223) and in other societies as well.

MORGAN'S MALAYAN TERMINOLOGICAL SYSTEM

Morgan's analysis of the Malayan system, found in *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity* (1871), consists of two elements: a synchronic presentation of terms and their dimensions of contrast and second, a statement of the consequences of the terminology for the long-term evolution of human patterns of family structure from the earliest men to the present. Hence, Morgan presented both a synchronic and a diachronic analysis of the terms. Basically, Malayan terms were part of an extremely primitive and basic fund of human knowledge concerning biology. As long as men could conceive of biological categories of relatedness, genealogically defined, they would encapsulate them in terms. Sex and relative generation were basic to the most primitive systems. The extreme, *classificatory*, merging of all relatives of one generation into two basic categories defined by sex in all generations implied an elementary knowledge of dependency and deference in very early human history and the carrying over of infant helplessness into more mature patterns of respect. The system also implied a rudimentary knowledge of human sexual behavior and its reproductive consequences.

In his diachronic, evolutionary analysis, Morgan assumed that ancient men lived in closed groups of blood related individuals and that these men tended to be violent and selfish. Once he could distinguish and see the evils in matings between close blood relatives, man abandoned the custom and established more elaborate social practices which brought unrelated men and women together in jurally sanctioned marriages (1871, p. 490). Morgan did not, as did McLennan, attribute the birth of the *descriptive* distinction between lineal and collateral kin to the

desire of a man to take possession of his own offspring and to pass his own property on to them (McLennan, pp. 74-146). Rather, Morgan assumed a gradual enlightenment of mankind coinciding with greater enlightenment in technological spheres.

Morgan's theory was essentially negative. He was prey to the conceptions of his own day in which investigators found what was old in what was lacking and often in what was simply different from 19th-century standards of "civilized" society. Many of his elaborately orchestrated polemical explanations of the cognitive validity of early kinship terms were based upon early man's lack of knowledge, thus ancient men lumped together categories that enlightenment would have demanded be distinguished. His assumption that technological simplicity and genealogical ignorance necessarily accompany one another was central to his thesis and this view must be rejected by modern social science.

Morgan's negativism led him to choose the most isolated of the Malayo-Polynesian peoples as his ideal type Malayan terminology. He picked the Hawaiian and Rotuman terminologies for display in *Ancient Society* (pp. 428-32) because they were the most classificatory terminologies still in existence, to the best of his knowledge. While not ruling out the possibility that there might still be a surviving example of the Malayan terms on the Asian mainland, Morgan indicated that he could not find one through his contacts in that area of the world. He found the terminologies of island Southeast Asia too elaborate to be classified as Malayan, even though general cultural and linguistic resemblances between Malayan and Polynesian peoples indicated that they were indeed historically related. This led Morgan to the bizarre conclusion that there was not any remaining Malayan people who had a Malayan terminology and that the Malays themselves had a bastardized, lexically agglutinated, set of terms assumed to have been adulterated by "descriptive phrases" (1871, p. 451).

His search for the most primitive kinship system led Morgan to take as given that a kinship terminology, genealogically defined, is the highest expression of the social thought of a people. This assumption has been thoroughly discredited by anthropologists and linguists, but the assumption that what is not there is not known, or is, at least, not significant, still exerts its spell in the study of the relationship of kinship terms to social structure. For Morgan, the negative implications of simplicity were found in the development of the human mind and the expression of this development in all of the spheres of culture, the social as well as the technological. A second assumption that has known a long

and continuing history in anthropological writings concerning kinship is that terminologies are *essentially* genealogical and that "descriptive phrases" elicited from informants are somehow not properly parts of a terminology. For Morgan this meant that they did not provide worthwhile clues to the long view of human cultural evolution. For later anthropologists, these phrases have appeared to be hopelessly unpredictable and less useful than a lexical corpus of terms, semantically partitioning the genealogical domain.

This essay contends that Malay kinship terms do meet Morgan's requirements for a Malayan terminology in that the terms are generational, allowing for sexual distinctions in one or more generations and for distinctions of relative age in ego's own generation. This essay also contends that there are three semantically distinct senses in which Malays use these Malayan terms. First, they are part of an ideology of consanguinity, or biogenetic substance, which recognizes generational, sexual and relative age differences between relatives by blood. Second, they prescribe a code for conduct that applies regardless of consanguineal relationship, having much in common with McLennan's concept of classificatory terms as salutations (McLennan, p. 273), which will be called extra-genealogical. Third, the Malayan terms denote the closest relationships in Malay society, being defined by reciprocity, giving and all other manifestations of affection between persons, which the writer will designate as supra-genealogical. Finally, the essay will suggest that the third sense in which Malayan terms are applied is the primary one and that the others are extensions of this third sense that are required by religious and moral law. This conclusion appears warranted by the general unwillingness of informants to use Malayan terms in those situations in which there might be some implication of motives that would subvert an independent, individual relationship defined in the supra-genealogical sense. Malay peasants are ashamed to use Malayan terms in public situations where such motives might be construed to be present, but especially in the parental-filial case: the traditional, and potentially conflictful, nexus of property transmission in Malay peasant society. For this reason, Malayan terms tend to be appended by an extremely complex variety of kinds of marker-affixes indicating that the individual in question is "like a..." but not a definite representative of the Malayan category. The writer will suggest that the simplicity of the Malayan system, divorced from the complexity of Malay usages in day to day life, may be of extreme antiquity, if not for the reasons that Morgan suggested.

MODERN MALAY CONSANGUINEAL TERMS AND THE MALAYAN TERMINOLOGY

Research experience in modern Malaya makes it extremely difficult to present one Malay terminology, but genealogical elicitation revealed a basic system of terms that could be amended by affixes, used as lexical markers, that fit Morgan's Malayan criteria. The writer found, however, that the Malayan terms applied on more than one level: on the level of elicitation of a Malay taxonomy of a finite genealogical domain and on a broader social plane. Morgan's effort assumed the universal connection of genealogical knowledge and social practices and mores, and that the former would dominate, or at least, exert an important influence on the latter. The society that the writer observed was part of the peasant component of a complex, developing nation of Southeast Asia. Blood ties were surely important sources of solidarity and sentiments but terms for genealogical kin were also used in situations that were clearly not genealogically determined.

The initial interviews that the writer conducted were overtly genealogical. This tying of the frame of the interview to the facts of reproduction had the utility of isolating a limited, "factual", area of enquiry and left aside the more difficult question of the relationship of genealogical to nongenealogical uses of the terms. But there were other problems as well. Not all informants appeared equally knowledgeable about genealogical relations. The author tended to accept the word of older informants, regarded by villagers as authoritative, and this had the effect of producing a larger number of genealogical distinctions than would have been elicited had he accepted the lists of those informants expressing little interest in and scant knowledge of the topic. In addition to the number of terms, knowledgeable informants produced more eloquent analyses of them and, as it were, did some of the work of the anthropologist for him. The following diagram illustrates, in conventional genealogical form, an eloquent corpus of Malay ways of talking about blood relations. It was elicited in an area of Kedah that has been isolated from the rest of the sub-continent until the post World War II period; hence some of the terms are not considered standard Malay ones, but the system of contrasts that they reveal would not be unfamiliar to informants from other parts of the peninsula. The diagram is merely conventional and not representative of the way that any informant pictured the system (see below, also Banks, 1972a).

MALAY CONSANGUINEAL TERMS WITH AFFIXES INDICATING DEGREES OF GENEALOGICAL RELATEDNESS *

DATA DERIVED FROM SIK, KEDAH 49

* Terms in parentheses are interchangeable, save as distinguished by sex in the diagram. Sexual distinctions in the second ascending generation are not mandatory (see text)

Let us consider the Malayan features of this set of terms. One could reduce the corpus to a set of generational terms with sexual distinctions marked mandatorily in the first ascending generation, and age marked in ego's generation. Optional marking of sex of relative may be made in all generations either through use of generation specific marker-affixes or through the addition of the lexemes *laki-laki* for males and *perempuan* for females, as in all of the descending generations. In ego's own generation the sexual distinction is optional since only the basic term *abang* is marked as male while the other two basic terms, *adek* and *kakak* are unmarked. Note that sex need not be marked in the second ascending generation since broadly, a *chai* may be called *tok*

TABLE No. 1

Malay Malayan Consanguineal Terms (Kedah)

	+2 and above
datok (tok)	G
	+1
bapak (pak)	G ♂
	+1
emak (mak)	G ♀
	0+
abang	G ♂
	0+
kakak	G
	0—
adek	G
	—1
anak	G
	—2
chuchu	G
	—3
chuchit (chitchit)	G

Key:

G generation

♀ female

♂ male

+ generation above ego if followed by numeral superscript; greater relative age if following numeral superscript (see text)

— generation below ego if followed by numeral superscript; lesser relative age if following numeral superscript

chai and is a kind of *tok* or *datok*, its synonym. The basic terms do not mandatorily distinguish second from third ascending generations, for a *tok nenek* is simply a kind of *tok* or *datok*. The only necessary components of the terminology are thus generation, sex and relative age, much as in Morgan's Hawaiian example of the perfect Malayan set. The above table gives the basic Malay version of a set of Malayan terms.

Further semantic distinctions would involve optional marker-affixes which enable informants to make distinctions between lineal versus ablinal consanguinal kin, of collaterality distance, sex and generation. The affix *penakan* indicates ablinality and may be used in any generation but ego's, being mainly applied in the first ascending or first descending generations. Informants mark degrees of collaterality in all generations and regardless of sex or relative age by the marker-affix *pupu* which is itself prefixed by the number of degrees distant from the presumed zero degree of lineal kinsmen from ego. Children of one's parents' siblings are at one degree of collaterality distance (*sa-pupu* for one *pupu*) while the children's children of one's parents' parents' siblings are at two degrees of collaterality distance (*dua-pupu* or two *pupu*). Informants may thus distinguish degrees of cousinship in their own generation much as American-English informants do, but the concept of collaterality distance as expressed in the marker-affix *pupu* is applied theoretically in all generations and not simply in ego's own. In generations above and below ego, the same Malayan term is applied to the broader generational category into which the designated kinsman falls, using marker-affixes for collaterality distance when an informant wishes to be more precise. Informants apply the marker-affix for the degree of collaterality between the highest lineal linking consanguineal kinsman at the same generational level as the designated kinsman to describe the degree of collaterality between themselves and that designated kinsman and, reciprocally, the marker-affix for the degree of collaterality separating themselves from a same generation consanguineal linking relative to indicate the degree of collaterality between themselves and a designated kinsman in a descending generation who is lineally related to the same generation kinsman. Hence, one's FMFBs would be designated as *tok penakan sa-pupu* which informants would explain as being "the *sa-pupu* of my *tok*" (*saya punya tok punya sa-pupu, jadi, sa-pupu saya punya tok*) while, reciprocally, their FBdss(d) would be designated as *chuchu penakan sa-pupu*, ex-

TABLE No. 2

Common Marker-Affixes for Malayan Terms (Kedah)

panggilan pangkat	title indicating order of birth within a sibling group
pupu	degree of collateral removal from a consanguineal
penakan	ablinal; applied in a generation other than ego's
nenek; moyang	higher than third ascending generation consanguineal
betul	lineal consanguineal relative
tiri	step kinsman: through the marriage of a lineal kinsman to someone other than a lineal kinsman
menantu	a person married to a blood kinsman of lower generation
mentua	a person married to a blood kinsman of higher generation
ipar	a person married to a blood kinsman of the same generation; the blood kinsman of a spouse
angkat	a supra-genealogical kinsman
besan	the relationship of a person to the parents of the spouse of his child

plained as "the *chuchu* of my *sa-pupu*" (*saya punya sa-pupu punya chuchu, jadi, chuchu saya punya sa-pupu*). The affix *penakan* is generally omitted when the degree of collaterality is one or more. *Tok penakan sa-pupu* is commonly glossed *tok sa-pupu* and its reciprocal as *chuchu sa-pupu*. This shortening is regarded as obvious since all *pupu* must be nonlineal relatives, regardless of generation. Alternatively, the degree of collaterality may be omitted by simply calling the designated relative a *tok penakan* or a *pak penakan*, etc. depending upon generation from ego, *penakan* in this case indicating that the relative in question is a consanguineal though a nonlineal one.²

Viewed relationally, one can formulate translation rules for collaterality distance for relatives in the various generations with respect to a given ego:

² Nonetheless, one must disagree with writers, such as Downs (1967, p. 136), who characterize Malay terminology as Eskimo simply because appended, longer, utterances are used for collateral and ablinal kin than are used for lineal consanguineals. Downs appears to neglect the generational applicability of terms simply because lineal *bapak* and *emak*, for example, may be distinguished from collateral *bapak* and *emak* by use of marker-affixes.

- Generation ⁰ degree of collaterality reckoned from ego to the designated kinsman
- G ⁺ degree of collaterality reckoned from ego's ancestor of the same generation as the designated kinsman
- G [—] degree of collaterality reckoned from the designated kinsman's ancestor of the same generation as ego.

These rules accord well with Malay informants' descriptive statements about how they calculate their consanguineal closeness or distance from a given alter.

Order affixes within sibling groups provide a further element of complexity to the analysis of Malay terms for consanguineals. These affixes, which have been the subject of one article (Hodgson, 1967) and of lists in Malay and Indonesian dictionaries by other authors, appear to vary considerably around the Malay peninsula and in other areas of insular Southeast Asia where they are found. The author's interviewing experience in hill regions of Kedah revealed a simple system with four order-titles (*panggilan pangkat*) being the simplest version collected and being applicable with finality once the occupants of the order-titles reach maturity: *sulong* (shortened to *long*) meaning the eldest; *tengah* (shortened to *ngah*) meaning the middle; *kechik* (shortened to *chik*) meaning little; *bungsu* (shortened to *su* or *chu*) meaning the youngest, in that order. Other versions, from other areas of Malaya include as many as eleven terms. These marker-affixes are applied immediately after a shortened form of the generational Malayan term. These marker-affixes are only applied within sibling groups lineally related to ego and are not applied to collateral sibling groups, as for example, the children of one's father or mother's brother or sister. The sibling group within which one most commonly hears the use of order affixes or *pangkat* terms, is in the first ascending generation. *Paklong*, *Pakngah*, *Pakchik* and *Paksu*; *Maklong*, *Makngah*, *Makchik* and *Maksu* are commonly heard about Malay villages and are used with an ease and comfort that does not accompany the use of personal names. Virtually all informants could give *pangkat* terms for all of the siblings of their fathers and mothers as they could for all of their own siblings, although they could rarely do so for the sibling groups of their second ascending generation lineal kin. It is said that if one does not know the correct order relations within parental sibling groups, one will not be

able to properly address or refer to one's *sa-pupu* of the same generation, since one is expected to refer to and address same generation *sa-pupu* as elder or younger in accordance with the relative birth order of one's own parent and the parent of the *sa-pupu* in question. If one's own parent is older than the parent of the designated *sa-pupu*, one should address the *sa-pupu* as *adek*, regardless of one's age in years *vis-à-vis* the age of the *sa-pupu*. Informants said that these respect usages should be applied to the degree of *tiga-pupu*, using knowledge of the relative ages of *tok nenek moyang* with respect to each other to calculate relative age terms, but this is rarely if ever done since people generally do not, nor are expected to know the birth order within a sibling group two, much less three, generations removed from themselves. These informants said that young people do not conform to proper practices today and can't be expected to since they have less time to think about such matters because of the importance of the money economy and its inroads into leisure time, and the ability to be hospitable.

The simple, formal analysis of Malay terms for consanguineal kinsmen has emphasized how little information the Malayan terms, unappended by marker-affixes, provide. Consanguineal terms are always generational. Sex may or may not be distinguished, being conditioned by generation and more general factors of context. Marker-affixes for relative age are applied to sibling groups and not to individuals, save as they create sibling groups, as within one's own group of siblings. Reckoning of the precise degree of consanguineal distance between oneself and a given alter involves the addition of lexical affixes which narrow the much broader possible denotation of the general, Malayan, terms by specifying collaterality distance. One might readily conclude that, in Malay society, the use of Malayan terms is an indication of lack of genealogical knowledge since, for example, *bapak sa-pupu* is a subset of the more general category *bapak*, being modified by collaterality distance. One might then look at the Malay use of marker-affixes as an attempt to add greater genealogical precision to an extremely broad set of categories. Morgan himself would probably have found this interpretation quite congenial.

MALAY KINSHIP TERMS: SOCIAL THEORY AND SOCIAL PRACTICE

One easily finds Malay exegeses of these terminological equations in theories of consanguinity and of the moral order that should be realized

in human society. Possessing a simple peasant social order, with little economic differentiation or commitment to sexual inequality, Malays see their theories of the way the world is, that is, how people are substantively related, as generally in harmony with the way that the world *should be*, or, how people should and do behave towards each other. Two kinds of reproductive stuff combine to produce offspring who mate with individuals of the opposite kind of sexual stuff to further perpetuate lines of substantial, biogenetic, inheritance which pass onward and diverge as they do, the more generations separating two individuals from common ancestors, the less substantial inheritance they share in common. One informant explained the concept of *pupu* to me by showing two lines that he called siblings and indicated to me that each set of lines that he drew under them would indicate one *pupu*, so that the children of siblings are *sa-pupu* or one *pupu* to each other; the children of *sa-pupu* are two *pupu* to each other (*dua-pupu*) and so on. Each additional *pupu* indicates that another reproductive generation has passed and that the substance shared in common by the relatives is correspondingly weaker, halving in each generation with the in-marriage and mating of unrelated individuals. The progressive weakening of reproductive stuff is revealed in the terms used for the members of the line descended from a sibling group in the third ascending generation. The nonlineal relatives in that sibling group will be called *tok moyang penakan* while their children will be called *tok sa-pupu* in the second ascending generation and *kakak* or *adek tiga-pupu* in ego's own generation. Since, however, increasing collaterality distance occurs through the mutual falling of substance in *two* lines and not in *one alone*, the children of one's *tiga-pupu* are still *tiga-pupu* (*anak tiga-pupu* in this case), the terminology indicating only a change in generation with respect to ego, the collaterality distance marker-affix remaining the same.

The general symmetry of the terminology which disregards sex of linking relatives and the tracing of degrees of relationship to sibling groups agrees well with the Malay ideology of equity in distribution of affect and material wealth from a pair of parents to a group of siblings. One *may* specify that a given kinsman is on one's mother's or father's "side" but this is not mandatory or as usual as the use of other marker-affixes. This principle of symmetry applies in the terminology despite its apparent disagreement with Muslim religious law which gives greater inheritance rights to males and would appear to imply less ramification, and possibly different terms, for kinsmen descended through females than for those descended through males.

Informants explain this apparent disparity between the letter of the law and practice, expressed in the terms, by appealing to the spirit of the law and of a religion that would give equity to all. In theory, one should give equal life chances to all of one's children. The Malay way of achieving this is through the giving of equal property to each child when possible, property symbolizing the will to give though not proving its existence. It is interesting to note that while there is some interesting symbolism of reproductive inequality of the sexes and of sexual differentiation of life styles in society, there is no indication of this in Malay consanguineal categories (see Banks, 1972a).

One may find a general moral significance in the emphasis upon siblingship in the terminology. Traditional religious ethics enjoin respect for older siblings by younger siblings and indulgent nurturance and responsibility for the young by those older. A similar and greater degree of emphasis is placed upon the respect for senior generations by junior ones. Parents are the epitome of the pattern of behavior that should operate between the first ascending and first descending generation, being responsible for the training of their children and according them stable and secure livelihoods in the period of transition to adulthood. Fathers should be more stern and gruff than mothers since they have final responsibility for growth and moral development while mothers may be softer and more lenient. The importance of filial links is illustrated in the prescribed use of parental birth order in establishment of the use of relative age terms for individuals outside of one's immediate sibling group.

Terminological recognition of differences in age and generation have an extremely general significance. Muslim ideology is said to enjoin patterns of respect between generations, this especially when there is a known blood relationship involved. One may thus explain the importance of generation in the Malay terms and invoke the psychological and presumed interpersonal symmetry of relations between grandparents and grandchildren to explain the use of separate terms for grandparents and parents, children and grandchildren. The use of these terms outside of the lineal degrees appears to be the result of extensions, by means of jural norms, of psychological and behavioral norms from close consanguineal degrees to more distant ones, the affective and behavioral norms becoming weaker as genealogical distance grows. Moral injunctions to treat all genealogical kinsmen of the first, second and third ascending generations according to specified codes of conduct appear to be of extremely limited applicability considering the limitations of

present-day genealogical knowledge. It was rare for informants to know any names in their second ascending generation save lineal kin and it was not uncommon for an informant not to know all four of his grandparents. If one is to gloss the term *bapak* as father and *emak* as mother, then these appear rather weak terms indeed outside of lineal degrees in the absence of any corporate form of solidarity that would make lineal father equivalent to collateral father in some socially defined context. Indeed, lack of knowledge through acquaintanceship might make a man and his *bapak penakan sa-pupu* as strangers even if they lived nearby each other.

PROBLEMS IN THE NONGENEALOGICAL USAGE OF MALAYAN TERMS

The way that Malays use kinship terms reveals the inadequacy of a genealogical model as sole explanation of the corpus of Malayan terms. Malayan terms are used as terms of respect for all individuals regardless of genealogical affiliation, once a broad sense of an individual's general as well as relative age is known by a given actor. That one should especially use terms of respect for blood relatives does not, of itself, indicate that these terms are basically consanguineal, i.e. that their denotative meaning falls within that domain. When one hears a Malayan term used in referring to a consanguineal relationship it is used simply because Malays think it impolite to speak of anyone with whom one has a social relationship or with whom one should have one without specifying his generation to one's own. Codes for conduct are parts of custom, of expected moral standards of village communities, and Malayan terms are used widely: extra-genealogically.

When collecting genealogies in Malay villages or in more general interviewing one finds that an easy comfort resides in the use of generational titles in reference to other individuals. A man of age twenty-five or above and who is married (and usually also has children) will be called *Pak-* followed by a sibling order term used as genealogical or extra-genealogical order-title by individuals within and without his generation. Men and women of his own age and their children will address him by his given name or, since this could indicate excessive intimacy or disrespect, they may use a relative age term, if they are in the same generation. Relative age terms vary with assessed ages between actors within and without the genealogical frame. Often two *sa-pupu* will use relative age terms as if they were siblings despite the birth order

of their genealogically related parents, the nongenealogical superceding the consanguineal usage. A woman of a man's own generation will call him *adek*, since to call him *abang* (elder brother in other contexts) would imply disrespect and suggest sexual intimacy between them, for *abang* is also a husband term. Application of relative age terms in accordance with the birth order of parents between non-consanguineals does not apply since these usages are avowedly consanguineal and are called *ikut pangkat* (following birth order) or *ikut keturunan* (following the order of birth of their parent's respective consanguineal lines).

Terms like *Paklong*, *Paksu*, *Pakchik* or *Maklong*, *Maksu* or *Makchik* (for *bapak sulong*, *bapak bungsu*, *bapak kechik*, respectively, etc.) do not necessarily represent the position of the individual in question in his sibling group. They are order-titles that may simply be status names derived from respectful or not so respectful familiarity that develop from habitual usages for given individuals. Proper titles may come from affinal connexion as well as from rank within one's own sibling group. A woman who is called *Makngah* by people who knew her before her marriage and who is married to a man who is called *Paksu* by people who know him will be called *Maksu* by his relations and friends, that is, by everyone who calls him *Paksu*. The man, called *Paksu*, may not have been the youngest in his sibling group at all but simply have gained the title through patterns of behavior, the most intimate of adults being accorded the title *Paksu*, commonly, when it is affixed extra-genealogically, and the most stern, *Paklong*, for traditionally the eldest child should be the strictest, especially when that child is male. In the area of the writer's residence, it was considered polite to address an adult stranger as *Pakchik*. The writer is reminded of his own title of *Pakda* (for *bapak muda*, lit. young father and rarely used in the area) which he protested because he was actually the youngest member of a sibling group of three. Acquaintances informed him that he could be called *Paksu* (the correct sibling order term), but that his blood kin were not in Malaya to give this usage power. They chose *Pakda* because it seemed appropriate for a young, brash, sometimes impetuous man, who appeared to bridge two age groups.

The use of ablineal and collaterality affixes mark terms as specifically consanguineal and provide a means of concealing the possible existence of a close, supra-genealogical, relationship. In normal life the distinction between consanguineal and nonconsanguineal usage is not made, nor is the use of sibling order terms an easy key to consanguineal facts. The affixes *penakan* and *pupu* are used when specific genealogical infor-

mation is sought, otherwise, statements like "He's my *Paksu*", suffice. These affixes might establish greater distance in some cases where one might think, from observed behavior that two individuals were in a parental-filial relationship, or greater closeness when one identifies as a *bapak penakan* someone who is really at the distance of *satu-* or *dua-pupu*. Informants commonly avoid the marking of relationships as genealogical in address since generally, genealogical statements make relationships more distant, specifying the exact biogenetic degrees of relationship in terms of the fortuitous facts of parenthood and siblingship.

In similar fashion, there are other nongenealogical marker-affixes that may be applied to the basic Malayan set of terms. These affixes specify the conditions under which a dyadic relationship was created or under which it is being maintained. Representative examples are: *angkat* (social relative; nongenealogical); *tiri* (step-relative); *ipar* (same generation relative by marriage); *mentua-menantu* (relative by marriage in a different generation). These affixes also tend to create a distant, purely circumstantial quality to the relationship in question. And, as with the consanguineal affixes, there is a tendency not to apply them in the presence of the individuals to whom they apply. The general principle is that one should not, by use of any kinship term, make a social relationship appear more distant than obligation would require or so close that the term seems to be used ostentatiously.

One conspicuous feature of the pattern of observed terminological usages outside of the context of genealogy is the general reticence on the part of Malay actors to use Malayan terms unmodified by sibling order affixes or by other genealogical markers. Early writers tended to regard it as part of a general secrecy with respect to genealogical relationships that also expressed itself in an unwillingness to mention given names, either one's own or the names of one's close kinsmen. The present writer would suggest that there is considerable disparity in the kinds of reasoning underlying these superficially similar kinds of reticence. Modern informants say that taboos on naming individuals are passing away in the modern period along with the weakening of beliefs concerning the power of evil spirits to make reprisals against individuals related by blood to others who have made and broken agreements with them. The unwillingness to use primary, Malayan, terms for relationships bespeaks a more basically social taboo.

Malayan terms have a more specific, supra-genealogical significance in addition to being part of elaborate and widely ramified genealogical systems and of conventional respect usages. One does not have to be

the genealogical father or mother of an individual to be one pole in a dyadic relationship with him or her in which one party is child and the other parent. The supra-genealogical denotation applies to all of the primary Malayan terms: grandfather, grandmother, grandchild, etc., and indicates the closest of social relationships possible in rural Malay society. The terms indicate intimacy, giving and general concern and caring between the individual occupants of these roles. Islamic law specifies codes for conduct between categories of consanguineal kin, particularly filial kinsmen, indicating that for Malays, the highest social philosophy seeks to make Malayan kinship roles coincident with consanguineal categories, but, as one might expect, this coincidence is far less than perfect. Genealogical fathers and mothers may not take a truly selfless interest in their offspring and these children may, through poverty or simple preference, choose to live with siblings of lineal kin or simply with friends of the same generation as their parents. These other, chosen, individuals are given the primary relationship terms in intimate situations. A child who has been raised by a couple other than its recognized biological parents is addressed by the same terms by which his blood parents should address him. The child will call the couple *Mak* and *Pak* in return. For example, if a child's social mother were also its biological *mak penakan* and were called *Makngah* in her own sibling group, then this woman's husband would, by social convention be called *Pakngah*, but this usage would not normally apply save in gatherings having a specifically genealogical focus. The child would be ashamed, it is said, to call her social father by any other term than *Pak* and her social mother by any other term than *Mak*.

Informants are often reluctant to discuss these "special cases" for several reasons. There is a certain unwillingness to admit that the religiously mandated social order, in which social and genealogical categories should coincide, does not always apply. When a person is *de facto* adopted by a set of parents other than his biological parents his actions demonstrate the failure of his biological parents to provide for him emotionally, materially or both. Furthermore, one should not emphasize or speak glibly of relationships that unusual circumstances have created, because these circumstances are thought of as heavenly and fated. Finally, when blood relationship corresponds with social reality, there are strong moral sanctions against breaches of religiously defined codes for conduct. Parents must provide for the future livelihoods of their offspring and offspring must care for their parents when they grow old and are no longer able to support themselves. Religious as well

as local opinion cooperate to clearly define social responsibilities on both parties to these dyads. When social kinship applies without similarly close biological bonds, such jural constraints are not as strongly present. The permanence of the relationship must depend upon the moral character of the individuals involved in the relationship who, to be sure, will be rewarded by God for assuming parental-filial roles in the absence of specific and strong jural obligation, but the elements of fate, uncertainty and the sense that such relationships are born in sentiments, supported only by the religious injunction of generosity, suggest reserve.

Differences in behavior between parents and children in relationships in which the Malayan terms are clearly divorced from their genealogical locus as opposed to cases in which the social and genealogical coincide is generally minimal, depending upon the financial situations of the biological or social parents. If, as is common, a child has a relationship with a set of biological *and* a set of social parents, then the one with the more favorable financial situation will be expected to be the largest contributor to the marriage and post-marital stability of the child. Both sets of parents should have some role in crucial decisions with respect to a child's rearing until marriage. One must note, however, that the generally similar patterns of unwillingness to use Malayan primary terms even in cases in which the biological and social facts of paternity and maternity coincide, indicate that beyond jural constraints and their presumed moral expressions in the world of sentiments, all relationships should be dealt with cautiously. No relationship is considered to be automatically permanent or to have an automatic expression in terms of gifts of property or in the general category of helpfulness that Malays call *tulong menulong*.

The parental-filial case is the most common and easy example of purely social kinship not based upon any genealogical fiction, but other dyadic categories may also be divorced from a biogenetic framework. Grandparental and sibling relationships may also be called supra-genealogical. In the former case, the relationship of *pakwa* or *tokwa* is significant. This is a special relationship between an older man and an infant which should and may widen out into a bond that is exactly like that between a lineal grandparent and his or her grandchild. There is usually, in Kedah, a short rite (a tying of string around the wrist of the infant) that initiates the relationship at a time of the child's illness. Informants state that they try to keep up relationships with their *tokwa* as long as possible, and these older individuals should be like extra grandparents.

Although in theory it is said that sibling relationships can be supra-genealogical, it is less likely that they be so considered unless the individuals in question were reared in the same house. In a sibling relationship across sexes that is nongenealogical villages often suspect that gift giving between members of the dyad has been motivated by a desire for sexual dalliance. A man and woman reared together although not related by blood may marry in Islamic law but they would be ashamed to do so, even if they had only resided together for several years. In same sex cases, it is difficult to identify sibling behavior divorced from general comradery, however, it is common to hear talk of the behavior between a pair of age mates as if it were indistinguishable from that between blood siblings, even including the elements of responsibility of age for youth.

It is important to note that in these cases of the supra-genealogical usages of Malayan kinship terms, there is no ultimate conflict seen in the use of identical terms for genealogical and nongenealogical kin. An individual may have two fathers, two mothers, more than four grandparents, etc. What is important is the demonstrated code for conduct that is supposedly generated by the spirit of gift giving between them. However, a man who has *only* nongenealogical kinsmen is said to be in a kind of perilous psychological situation since he will generally believe that his abandonment (and he will generally conceive of himself as abandoned) reflects upon the quality of his hereditary endowment. Cases of what Westerners call "true adoption", in which a child does not know the identity of his blood parents, are considered somewhat tragic since the only reason that one would hide the identities of the biological parents of a child from him would be if he were the offspring of an improper union (incestuous, extra-marital, etc.). In this kind of case the social parents should try their best to conceal the circumstances of his adoption from the child and the very fact that he has been adopted.

In summary, there is a general unwillingness to use emotionally charged words about social bonds before third parties, and one may spend considerable time in a Malay village before one hears the terms *pak* or *mak* used in address. Malays are unwilling to overplay or pre-judge the closeness, intimacy or affection involved in any social bond, especially if such closeness implies possible material benefits, for this might produce conflict and jealousy within the ranks of those similarly related to the kinsman in question and might also create bad faith between oneself and that kinsman. It appears that the Malayan terms in their primary senses transcend genealogical "denotata". If one states

that Malay kinship terms are extended to distant degrees of blood relationship, this only means that Malays recognize that biogenetic substance so extends and ramifies, and that Islam enjoins strict codes for conduct upon genealogical kin although it rewards gift giving and the development of kinship sentiments with or without blood relationship. Hence, the view that Malay kinship terms are genealogical categories extended outward to distant degrees of blood relationship and to nongenealogical relatives is a simple statement of a religious theory of society in which it is thought convenient that men control their sexual urges through marriage and that they love and take responsibility for their legal and biogenetic offspring. Moral law expresses the hope that close, Malayan, supra-genealogical relationships will coincide with genealogical facts, but the law merely provides a framework for ordering a human social potential that was presumably present before the law was instituted. This law is isolable and inconsistently realized in Malay society. To argue that religious law *is* Malay society, or *is* Malay kinship, would be similar to arguing that American domestic relations law *is* American kinship.³

One older informant thought the use of the term *angkat* for every instance of social, nonbiological, kinship to border upon the obscene. People should not speak of such important matters glibly, he said, insisting that a father is a father and that is that. There is no *penakan* or *angkat* involved at all. He gave me cases of most unlikely situations in which close relations developed when the normal course of events would suggest guarded distance, as in step- and in-law relations. This informant suggested that, in his experience, genealogical interpretations of Malayan terms were much too weak behaviorally to indicate that nongenealogical usages were simple extensions or connotative, metaphorical usages of categories defined in biogenetic substance. Even though blood and behavioral categories normally coincide in Malay society, he said that a more general theory of social behavior applies to both, and this more general theory made collection of genealogies of limited use. People do not like to flaunt their generosity or their love, he said, wishing the writer all the luck in the world in penetrating the elaborate series of *pangkat* usages in public and in private and the frequent avoidance of use of any term at all. Basically, he concluded,

³ Failure to take full account of extra- and supra-genealogical usages of terms that are also incorporated in a genealogical framework has produced a completely different, if somewhat truncated and arid, analysis of a similar Malayan set of terms, used by a nearby people: the Semai (Dentan, 1970).

the Malay system is very, very simple, but Malays complicate it to allow themselves to incorporate a large number of people in a familiar, properly respectful, framework that allows considerable room for nuance.

SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS

Morgan assumed that there is a close relationship between a kinship terminological system and the social order of which it is a part. Morgan also assumed that terminological simplicity was a survival of social simplicity in an age during which men did not have established institutions for the fixing of jural paternity. Morgan's conjectural historical treatment of terminological systems has been, in the main, rejected by modern social anthropologists, but his basic equation: that simple consanguineal terms equals simple society has been replaced by a general neglect of careful treatment of terminological usages in societies with extremely simple, generational, Malayan, systems, as in Hawaii or, indeed, in Malaya (e.g. Djamour, 1959). If kinship terms, genealogically defined, have not been much of a clue to social reality then anthropologists have looked elsewhere.

In this essay, I have attempted to show that Morgan was incorrect in discarding Malay kinship terms as an example of a Malayan system. Morgan argued that if a terminology distinguishes between lineal and collateral kin it may not be Malayan, but this argument appears to founder on Morgan's own example of a Malayan system in Hawaii, for he did not indicate that Hawaiians did not know who their fathers were, but simply that they did not have a special term for father's brother, mother's brother, etc. One could argue equally forcefully that Malays do not have such terms either, but merely distinguish between categories of father with a special vocabulary of measurement affixed to the basic Malayan terms.

This essay also suggests that biogenetic relatedness is only one factor determining Malay kinship terminological usages. Culturally, for Malays, there is a clear distinction between individuals related by blood and others and the fact of blood relationship strengthens codes for conduct defined in local conceptions of religious obligation, but more subtly applied in day to day life. A man does not cultivate a warm relationship with his father's brother simply because there is a blood relationship between them, but, rather, the fact of siblingship between his father and the man in question makes it extremely likely that a special relationship will develop between the younger man and his father's brother.

This kind of relationship could easily develop even if there were not a blood bond between his father and this man, but it is certainly true that the majority of close, first ascending generation type bonds do combine blood and affectionate closeness. These two factors may be seen as supplementing each other since shared blood is said to give individuals an interest in common, if not in land, in keeping up the "family name". By itself, the genealogical marking of relationships says very little about the content of said relations save what general "savvy" would suggest, phrased in probabilistic terms.

Use of the same terms of reference and address for genealogical and nongenealogical relations is at first confusing to the outsider. Rather than saying that a given man is his uncle (i.e. *bapak penakan*), it is more likely that a man will say that it is his *Paksu* or *Paklong*, and then give the individual's name. This leaves the outsider in a fog that only long residence in an area will clear, for it would be considered impolite to make direct enquiries into the actual circumstances of the initiation of a relationship. What would have at first appeared to be an extremely simple system actually becomes quite complex when one recognizes that public usages may have origins in a wide range of circumstances.

The positive significance of the simplicity of Malayan terms in the Malay case appears to reside in their specification of the kinsmen who, granted the panorama of likely needs and outcomes in society, are most concerned for those individuals who use the terms in reference and address to them. Rather than being used so infrequently because they tell so little about the operation of Malay society, one may conclude the opposite: that they tell so much about the real workings of interpersonal networks that they are not so quickly revealed. The Malayan terms then, when used, are the best clue to and indication of the real flow of kinship obligation and sentiment in Malay society. That these terms are defined as supra-genealogical does not suggest that genealogically recognized relationship is not also an important clue to the same things, but, in a society where much of the flow of kinship sentiments is expressed in the form of gifts of landed property, before death, for it is a Malay's nightmare to die intestate, kinship must be viewed by all as a process and not simply as a fact ordained by a theory of reproduction supported in inheritance law. Some of the most vicious quarrels, accusations and threats concern the erratic (from the perspective of Muslim law) making of gifts to blood and nonblood kinsmen.

One may go further and suggest that in many societies without a complex division of labor, kinship terms must be viewed as part of

a total social vocabulary, and that systems of reckoning biogenetic bonds are only one part of the body of social theory that justifies and explains social action. This is not to say that there is lesser emphasis placed upon ascription in Malay society than in some other peasant or primitive societies (e.g. African or Melanesian), but rather that ascription, as conceived in Malay culture and in cultures like it, is broadly based ideologically. There need be no elaborate ceremonies to incorporate social sentiments and obligations into an ideology of blood through formal adoption. Instead, one may look to ideologies of fate (*nasib*) in the Malay case or some more general principle like *mana* to account for the imperfect fit of ideology and kinship, defined by informants as interpersonal expressed through often complex forms of affectionate gift giving.

For Malays, kinship simply develops between persons. Certain conditions maximize the likelihood that Malayan kinship relations will grow, but no single set of conditions are thought to ensure kinship. People are too complex. Their motivations are never predictable, even though, for Malays as for ourselves, attempts at such prediction are an important topic of local gossip. Kinship is not conceived as an achievement, even though examples of difficult relationships that succeed sometimes make it appear so. Rather, it is part of an individual's total life experience, his birth into and development in the social world around him. Religious ethics encourage Malays to work hard in human as well as financial, political, educational and moral endeavors, but the wide range of factors affecting interpersonal success or failure lead to the conclusion that kinship is preordained, much as are the circumstances of birth and genealogy, real and socially recognized. Viewed from the broadest possible cultural perspective then, Malay kinship, and the lexical systems that Malays use to talk about it and interact through, are facts of life similar in kind to the facts of biogenetic relatedness.

The relationship between jural systems and the culturally defined facts of reproduction as expressed through kinship terminologies are well known. Morgan's over-ambitious attempts at grand reconstructions of the social history of mankind have been succeeded by more limited investigations in modern and late-premodern societies, making use of the cautious tools of ethnohistory and careful reporting. The works of Eggan (1937, 1966) and Spoehr (1947) being notable examples among many others, with more recent and adventurous excursions by Lounsbury (1965) and Scheffler and Lounsbury (1971). In this essay I have attempted to show the need to go beyond the genealogical

referents of terms and ask, as Schneider has suggested in several papers (1965, 1970, 1972), how each culture, in a given epoch, categorizes social relationships and how it builds a vocabulary, or terminology, around this set of categories, and finally, how informants use terms to tell or talk about the applicability of the categories in real situations. I have attempted to show some of the ways that Malays accomplish this in the present essay. Elsewhere, in a more extended treatment which makes use of quantitative data, I suggest that the Malayan system appears to be maintaining its lexical integrity although the kinship content of the Malayan categories seems to be undergoing rapid change (Banks, 1972).

In surveying the Malay evidence, it would appear that Morgan's claims for the antiquity of his Malayan system may not be so easily dismissed once one discards Morgan's conjectures concerning the overriding significance of genealogy in the course of human societies toward civilization. The supra-genealogical content of relationships symbolized through Malayan terms is the most basic expression of kinship in Malay society. The only distinctions made within the system of terms concern sex, relative age, either inter-generational or intra-generational, and suggest likely codes for conduct appropriate and typical between very close persons in a small number of categories. Lévi-Strauss (pp. 84-97) and others have looked at the transition from natural pre-human modes of interaction to cultural modes as involving the creation of symbols of social solidarity based upon reciprocity, the elements of which transcend consanguinity and rationality defined in terms of action made to elicit a specific behavioral response (reward). If the pan-human scope of such symbols be a clue to their antiquity, then Morgan may, if only partially, be vindicated.

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