

LORD, ANCESTOR AND AFFINE: AN AUSTRONESIAN RELATIONSHIP NAME*

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I

The impulse for this essay derives from my curiosity about a feature in the ethnology of the Solor Archipelago. The social organization on these islands implies asymmetric alliance, where affinal relatives must be distinguished according to whether they are givers or takers of wives. The categories of the relationship terminology maintain this difference in kinds of affine in each community, so that the expression for wife-givers is never exactly the same as that for wife-takers. Lamaholot is the language spoken throughout most of the archipelago; and it is divided into several sections (see Vatter 1932: 275). The relationship terms of this language vary somewhat by dialect, but in any case each community may employ them in slightly different ways from other communities even within the same dialect area. Nevertheless the structure of the relationship system is the same in each district, ordered that is by an asymmetric marriage prescription and a rule of patrilineal descent. In Lamaholot ideology and behavior, wife-givers are superior to wife-takers -- an inequality which is clearly marked by the ceremonial and spiritual supremacy of givers over takers and by the obligations of service and deference which the takers owe the givers.

There is a commonplace name for affines in Lamaholot, pronounced in the various dialects as *opu*, *opung* or *opo*. The closely related Kédang language on the island of Lembata renders the same term as *epu*. The common root is PAN *e(m)pu. The comparative variety in the kinds of relatives which these cognate word forms designate provides my puzzle. In most communities on Lembata, *opo* or *epu* applies to the superior wife-giving lines. But in other places, such as the village Nobo on Adonara, *opu* means a member of a wife-taking category. It is an interesting matter how the word *opu* could have shifted from one side of the affinal opposition

to the other, as indeed it must have done historically during the population movements which lie behind the variations in Lamaholot language.

Additional grounds for attention to the problem are added by the relationship systems at the peripheries of the Lamaholot area. In the extreme west, the villagers of Wailolong, east Flores classify wife-taking males as *opu pain*. *Belake* is the reciprocal of *opu pain*, but "*opu*" may be attached to "*belake*" in the synonymous, expanded phrase *opu belake*, the wife-giving relatives (Barnes 1977a: 143-148). The Wailolong distinguish wife-givers and wife-takers as "male" and "female" relatives respectively. Some Lamaholot communities even label wife-givers as *opu laké*, which translates literally as "male affines".¹ *Belake* is both etymologically and semantically close to *laké*, male; and it is rendered by Arndt (1937) as meaning generally in Lamaholot language man. Leloba, a village at a distance of a very short stroll from Wailolong, classes wife-takers as *opu wain*, which again literally means "female affines" (Ouwehand 1950). It is quite unclear from the sources available to me what *pain* means. I am tempted to link it to *wain*, but I think this may be a mistake and I must say that I took away from my brief visit to Wailolong the impression that the villagers did not themselves do so. The glosses "to air", "to dry in the sun" (Leemker 1893) do not illuminate the matter; but the sense "to come here" for *pai* (Arndt 1937) may very well explain why in Wailolong *opu pain* designates wife-takers -- these persons being the ones who must come to fetch the bride and thereafter attend upon their wife-givers in various ways.

In any case the meaning of *pain* is a side issue for present purposes. Wailolong usage might almost, though I suppose not exactly, be described as placing affines of

either kind within a broad category called *opu* which is then qualified by adjectives specifying the kind of affine intended. At any rate, *opu* does appear in the names for both wife-givers and wife-takers; and it is this point that provides comparative interest. It is worthwhile observing here that the phrases just reviewed cover not only biologically male relatives but women as well. The Wailolong refer to women born into the lineages of wife-takers as *opu kesin*, in this case "small affines". This category of women is strictly prohibited for marriage in the asymmetric system.

On the coast of the islands of Alor and Pantar, at the eastern border of the Lamaholot region, the population speaks a language (sometimes called Bahasa Alor) which is understandable to Lamaholot speakers (van Lynden 1851: 332, Watuseke 1973: 340). The relationship system of these people is not however asymmetric. Instead, it is ordered by rules of symmetric marriage prescription and patrilineal descent (Barnes 1973). In keeping with the nature of the prescription, the terminologies do not distinguish affines as wife-givers and wife-takers. Since direct exchange is possible in a symmetric system, wife-givers and wife-takers may be the same persons, and they occupy at any event the same terminological position. Speakers of Bahasa Alor place all male affines of Ego's genealogical level (and sometimes those of other levels as well) in the relationship category labeled by the word *opung*. This usage, it may be worth making explicit, is of course reciprocal.

The evidence so far presented may be summed up as follows. Affines are distinguished terminologically as two kinds or they are not so distinguished, depending on whether the marriage prescription is asymmetric or symmetric. In the symmetric systems of Pantar and Alor, Ego refers to wife-giving males and wife-taking males of his own level as *opung*. In the asymmetric systems of the Lamaholot, the distinction in kinds of affine is crucial, and the difference is shown by separate labels for wife-givers and wife-takers. In some districts the superior wife-givers are *opu* or *opo*; but

in some it is the inferior wife-takers to whom these terms apply. Often *opu* is a constituent both of the label for wife-givers and of that for wife-takers. If, as has been suggested (Needham 1967: 46), symmetric prescriptive systems precede asymmetric ones and turn into asymmetric systems when they undergo change, there would be a ready explanation for the circumstances of Lamaholot social classification. The Lamaholot, according to this point of view, were once, like their neighbors on Pantar and Alor, symmetric, but then they evolved into the present day pattern. I have referred to this possibility before (1977a: 152-153), and I have reserved judgement, given the very slight evidence available about Lamaholot social change.

Whether or not the hypothesis is true, there are other ways of considering the puzzle and other things to learn about it. For example there is an analogy between on the one hand the practice of associating two varieties of affine by choice of relationship words and on the other hand the custom of classing persons of both the second ascending and second descending genealogical levels under the same category. I have been led to make this seemingly farfetched comparison by the evidence itself, as I will soon show. For the moment, I wish to fill out the ethnographic picture by one further report. In the language of Kédang, Lembata it is not just male and female wife-givers whom the Kédang call *epu*, but also all members of either sex of the second ascending genealogical level. For the second descending level there is no term at all (Barnes 1974).²

II

Although comparative linguists have identified **e(m)pu*³ as a relationship term in the reconstructed proto-Austronesian vocabulary, the derivatives of this root are notable for the variety of places in which they appear in particular systems. Dempwolff (1938) glosses the proto-Austronesian root as ancestor, grandfather (*Ahn*) and grandchild (*Enkel*); and he

compares it to **pu*, lord. Among the examples he lists from individual languages are Tagalog *impó*, grandmother, *apó*, grandson, *apo* grandfather, Javanese *ěmpu*, principal node of a tuber, Ngaju *empo*, parents-in-law, and Ngaju *t-empo*, owner.

The association of second ascending and second descending genealogical levels is familiar and has been given prominent attention by anthropologists and linguists. Fischer (1966: 258) attests that relationship terms for grandparents and grandchildren are identical or nearly so in many Indonesian languages.⁴ As he observes Toba Batak terms of reference for grandparents and grandchildren are akin. *Ompu*, which also means master, owner, forefather, ancestor, and main root of tumeric, applies to grandparents and others of their level, while *pahompu* reciprocates it; the vocative of *ompu* is used by an elder person for a very young child when there is a sufficiently great separation in age between them (Warneck 1977, s.v. *ompu*; Vergouwen 1964: 33; van der Tuuk 1861: 31). A similar connection is found between the names for grandparents and grandchildren in some European languages. German *Enkel*, grandchild, derives from the same root as *Ahn*, ancestor, grandfather. Benveniste (1969: 235) claims there is a classificatory reason for this situation, namely an idea in many societies that a newborn child is a reincarnation of an ancestor. Since the child would not be the reincarnation of a still living grandparent, this theory would need to rest its case on the word's sense of "ancestor", while the application to living persons of the second ascending level would be less relevant.

From repeated instances of the classificatory feature in question, Radcliffe-Brown (1941: 9) derived a structural principle called "the combination of alternate generations" and attributed an extreme development of the principle to Australian tribes. More recently, Louis Dumont (1966: 328) has spoken of "the ubiquity of features which bring together, in terminology as well as behavior, grandparents and grandchildren" and of "a universal tendency to group together alternating generations,

a tendency which would have found its perfect development in Australia". He goes on then to suggest "the evolutionary surmise that alternating generations are more primitive than a continuous flow of generations". I will compare this view with another evolutionary theory later. For the moment it may be observed that the tendency in Dumont's hypothesis is only a tendency. Evidence for it occurs in an overt form only in some societies, so that it cannot be determined whether the tendency is really universal, and the hypothesis is correspondingly awkward to test.

III

A number of kinds of explanation for the pattern of use of derivatives of **e(m)pu* suggest themselves. It is not my intention to speculate how Lamaholot idiom actually came to have its present form, since I lack the special linguistic competence which would permit me to undertake this task. What I should like to do here, other than recommending these matters to the attention of those persons who can do something about them, is to underline one aspect, the significance of which an ethnographer might appreciate sooner than would a lexicographer or a student of comparative grammar.

One explanation that historical linguistics might put forward is that the relationship system of the reconstructed proto-Austro-nesian language classed grandparents with grandchildren and that parallels in present day languages are survivals of that period. To this suggestion I will only say that it is definitely out of my area. A question would remain to be resolved whether affines were classed together under a common term shared by grandparents and grandchildren. These issues raise the further problem of what the overall structure of the hypothetical original system might be. Milke (1958) has attempted to reconstruct the proto-Melanesian relationship terminology, which in his interpretation is cognatic; and indeed in his system **tumbu* designates both the second ascending and the second descending levels, but not originally af-

finer. As opposed to Milke, Blust (in press) now argues that the early Austronesian social organization was characterized by prescriptive alliance. Linguists may be left to resolve this dispute.

Alternative kinds of explanation possess a certain independence from the historical one, and they may be taken up now. It could be that affines and relatives two levels removed are treated in a similar way for no more interesting a reason than that they are relatively unimportant. One of Murdock's principles for social classification is immateriality (1949: 136-7; see Leach 1961: 52), where a sufficient basis for differentiation is lacking. "Immateriality appears chiefly with respect to distant relatives." This principle seems not to be relevant here on two grounds. On the one hand, most of the terminologies in question are classificatory, so that almost every category applies to some persons who are distant and of very little day to day concern. Secondly, grandparents and wife-givers at least have very special kinds of importance; and what prompts us to look for explanations is that they are terminologically associated with persons who are their structural inferiors.

Another suggestion is that the common term is actually a name for the relationship rather than a name applied as it were homonymously to two separate but reciprocal categories. This interpretation was actually put forward in connection with a Melanesian derivative of the radical by Rivers (1914: 2: 200) who commented about cases in which grandparents and grandchildren employ the same word for each other that, "Such a usage, so strange to ourselves, would be perfectly natural if such a term as *tumbu* come into use originally as a collective term expressing the relationship between two or more persons, and only came to be used secondarily as a term of address or as a means of denoting individuals". Whether or not it is right,⁵ Rivers's supposition has the merit of directing our enquiries toward the nature of the correlative relationship.

In a passage which is now not very often discussed, Radcliffe-Brown (1940: 209) listed

four modes of alliances: (1) intermarriage, (2) exchange of goods and services, (3) blood-brotherhood or exchanges of names or sacra, and (4) joking relationship. Many societies he observed (p. 201) link grandparents and grandchildren in a tie of friendly equality; and sometimes an actual joking relationship exists. The explanation he offered is that grandchildren replace their grandparents. Fischer (1966) has referred these generalizations to the Toba Batak, where grandparent and grandchild do enjoy an intimate relationship, but where there is no joking relationship between them. At any event the Toba terms *ompu* and *pahompu* are classificatory and apply to a broader range of persons than may be expected to share in the emotional warmth of grandparenthood. Then too as Fischer points out (p. 263) *ompu* is a term of respect and not, therefore, obviously suited to express the postulated sentiment. "This again shows that the *ompu-pahompu* terms do not prove the existence of a typical friendly relation between the two." Furthermore, in reference to the societies adduced by Apple (1956), Fischer concluded (p. 258) that identical terminology does not always coincide with friendly relations and that "there is no correlation between the existence or lack of authority on the one side and discrepancy or identity of the grandparent-grandchildren terminology on the other".

It is Hocart who originally proposed the line of investigation which it is my main intention to advance in this paper, when he wrote (1923) of Fiji that cross-cousins are "'gods to one another' -- that is to say, related as ancestor and descendant, or god and worshipper". Mauss (1928, 1969: 120) noted with regret that Hocart's explanation had not met with the recognition that it deserved. According to Fijian experts, *tauvū* is composed of the reciprocal prefix *tau* and of *vū* which means not only God, but also ancestor, stem, bottom, basis, root, cause and apparently also ghost (Hocart 1913: 101; Cappel 1957). *Tauvū* literally means having the same *vū*, root or founder. *Tauvū* actually designates however a relationship between two Fijian groups who are linked by intermarriage and who therefore "ex-

ercise in their mutual relations certain principles of appropriation and ill-manners", that is, a tie of privileged familiarity or a "joking-relationship". Here two of Radcliffe-Brown's forms of alliance coincide. Hocart rather loosely justifies his characterization of Fijian cross-cousinship by this interpretation. "Now if a man is a representative of his mother's gods or ghosts, he is a god to his cross-cousins, and since the relationship is reciprocal, his cross-cousins are gods to him." This conclusion does not display a pristine logical coherence, at least when Fijian idiom is rendered in this way into English. Let me bolster the impression that there may be something to it by recalling that a Kédang *epu puén* or "trunk MB" is spoken of and regarded as God (Barnes 1974: 247-250) and that the same figure for the Lamaholot may be described as a "second God" (Barnes 1977a: 150). For the patrilineal Kédang, the MB is an affinal relative, a superior wife-giver, but he is also a special representative of that category; for through the gift of his sister he has presented Ego's patriline with new life, the means of continuing its existence in a new generation, as well as transmitting through his sister the very blood which flows in the veins of his sister's children. The sole relevant contrast between Fiji and Kédang is that between symmetry and asymmetry, a comparison which validates Mauss's generalization (1969: 122), "that joking relationships correspond to reciprocal rights and that, generally, when these rights are unequal, they correspond to a religious inequality".

IV

Fijian *vū* derives according to Dempwolff from PAN **pu*, master or lord.⁶ Dempwolff compares this root with PAN **e(m)pu* and with a cognate **tumpu*, ancestor or master. In fact, according to Milke (1958: 227) **tumbu* derives from **e(m)pu* through the addition of the prefix *t*. It is spread throughout Oceania, where it is often applied to grandparents.

Milke and Dempwolff follow the lead of

Rivers who in 1914 traced many of these different senses. The most frequent derivative forms in Polynesia and Melanesia are *tupu* and *tumbu*; and they apply frequently to the grandparent -- grandchild relationship (Rivers 1914 v. 2: 180). But Rivers was puzzled by the fact that *tumbu* is sometimes employed for other relatives as well.

Tumbu, which is used in Florida and the Bugotu district of Ysabel for the mother's brother, is evidently the word used elsewhere in Oceania for the grandparents. Other systems of the Solomons supply an intermediate link between the uses, for in Bugotu *tumbu* is applied to the mother's brother of the father.

Rivers continues (p. 181), "If the Solomon terms had alone been known, one would have been inclined to suppose that the use of the term *tumbu* for the mother's brother is primary, and its use for persons of the older generation a later extension of connotation due to the process of generalization". But, in view of his comparative study, Rivers holds that its original meaning must have been in fact grandparents and its use for MB a secondary development.

I do not wish to take up Rivers's outmoded attempt to explain how this shift occurred. Instead, I will only remark that in my opinion there is no need to conclude that the original meaning was grandparent, or any specific relative for that matter, and that there might be more to learn from Rivers's conviction (p. 179) that, "the essential root of the general Polynesian word for grandparent is *pu*".

According to Brandstetter (1922: 14), Indonesian expressions for lord, ruler, chief and king are fashioned usually by means of the roots *pu* and *tu*. Brandstetter declares that the original meaning of *pu* is to provide for (*sorgen*), to protect (*hegen*) and that it is to be found in Tagalog *po* and Old Javanese *pu*, master; Silayarese *opu*, king; Totemboan *e'mpu*, title of a priest, and so on. In his interpretation, the direction of action is from the ruler to the populace in words derived from **pu*, while in those derived from **tu* the converse is true. Dempwolff on the

other hand omits *tu from his reconstructed vocabulary and also leaves out reference to any verbal significance of *pu.

Nevertheless, whatever etymological connection can be established between *e(m)pu and *pu, it seems possible that the former root is not to be understood primarily or exclusively as a term of relation. Totemboan e'mpu is a priest, but e'mpun' is God, from which the verbal form mae'mpun, to pray, is produced (Brandstetter 1925: 22). Slaru ebu means both grandparents and the supreme being, while Fordatese ubu is the supreme being and ubun the grandparents (Brandstetter 1936: 11). In Karo Batak ěmpu is the master or owner of something. The vocative form of the word ěmpung occurs in names of address for the gods and for ancestors. It is not a separate relationship term for grandparents but is usually combined with nini (grandfather) and is found as nini ěmpung, the forefathers or gods. All second descending level relatives, however, are kempu (Joustra 1907, Singarimbun 1975: 202-206).

Kapita (1976: 87) has recently drawn attention to unpublished views by Professor Dr. L. Onvlee interpreting the Sumba name for divinity (and for ancestral spirits) Marapu as consisting of a relative prefix ma, a second relative prefix ra and a root pu. The latter is found also in the general Indonesian honorific empu, represented in Sumbanese umbu, grandfather, and apu, grandmother.⁷

The interpretation described by Kapita may be compared with an earlier one published by Lambooy (1937: 437), which differs only in the explanation Lambooy gives the particle ra -- an issue irrelevant to this discussion.⁸ Lambooy adduces several examples from eastern Indonesian languages where the name for God is composed of a derivative of *e(m)pu and a second word, such as in Kisar Opo Lere (lere means sun) and Tanimbar Ub(u) Lero (lero again means sun). Lambooy observes that the Sumba use of umbu and apu for grandfather and grandmother respectively (actually for male and female members of the second ascending level) means that the people of Sumba refer to them or address them by exalted titles implying respect.

It is not the case in his view that the words for grandparents have been extended to gods, but the other way around. In detail Lambooy's argument would have to be improved (the connection between umbu and marapu is not so direct as his phrasing would suggest), but in general I think he is right. Comparatively the connotations associated with the historical products of *e(m)pu have not been restricted to a specific social relationship and it is perverse to say that the primary meaning of this hypothetical original word was grandparent.⁹

V

I should like now to draw attention to one last example, a "mourning-usage" of the Penan of the interior of northwestern Borneo (Needham 1954). Penan class all relatives of the grandparents' genealogical level as təpun but address them as pu. Persons of the same level as grandchildren are referred to as ayam. When a grandchild or some other relative of this level suffers a loss or injury, he may be addressed as tupou. Tupou is however in its more general application a death-name signifying that the person addressed has lost a grandparent.

The same words come into play as terms of mourning, when they may apply to affines or other blood relatives within a restricted domestic group in connection with the death of a member of that unit. The author illustrates this practice in Figure 1.

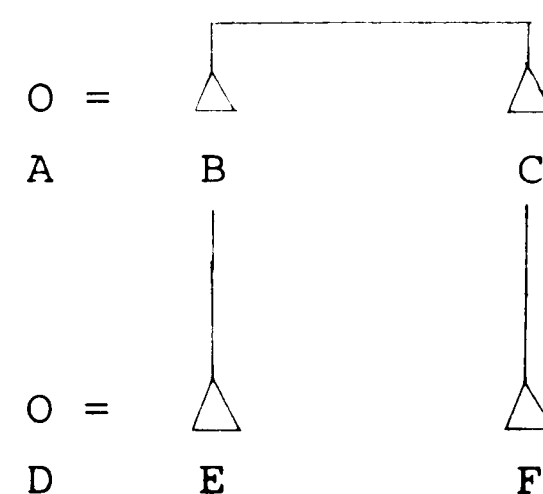


Fig. 1. Penan Mourning-Usage (after Needham 1954)

If B, the father of E, dies, then B's siblings address E as tupou and refer to him as ayam, grandson. E addresses C as pu, grandfather,

and refers to him as *təpun*. E also addresses the surviving parent (in this case, his mother, A) as *pu* and refers to her as his *təpun*, grandmother; while she in return addresses him as *tupou* and refers to him as her grandson. F, who is nephew to A, also addresses her as *pu* and is addressed by her as *tupou*. If E has a wife, D, she is counted as a child of A and B and is included in the same terminological usages as E (Needham 1954: 263-264).

It is interesting that the affinal relatives A and D are brought in, in this way. It is worth underscoring too that in these cases the words in question are applied to persons of adjacent levels and no longer to those at one level remove. The same mourning usage occurs when a child dies, in which case his surviving siblings address their parent as *pu* and are addressed by him as *tupou*. If the children have spouses, they too are called *tupou*.

It may be noted that Penan relationship terminology is a cognatic one in which distinction of age or genealogical level is of primary importance and thus one of a quite different form than the lineal and prescriptive systems considered at the beginning of this paper.

Needham reports (p. 265) that the sentiments of pity, sympathy, or comfort which might be expected to be associated with a special term of address for a bereaved parent are not associated with the normal Penan uses of *pu*, nor does the term express intimacy or deference. The idea that *tupou* reminds a man that he is nearing his grave and that he will be replaced in the family by his son might be consistent in instances where it is the man's wife who has died, but it does not fit the case where it is in fact the man's child who dies (p. 166). Needham remarks that other interpretations which occurred to him, but which he does not specify, seem not to be correct.

VI

So far I have set forth several very different examples taken from widely scattered locations. Many more instances can be drawn upon; indeed I have more material of a like sort in my own notes; and I do not doubt that more is to be learned. But in a preliminary and explorato-

ry article such as this one there is no real purpose in amassing repeated or parallel demonstrations of the same empirical points. It is to be foreseen that readers might doubt whether all the idioms cited are truly linked to a common etymological source. It is unclear to me whether Penan *tupou* belongs in this discussion, and it may be left to one side, since I make no argument that it does. More difficult is Fiji *vū*, since Dempwolff interprets the dictionary entry as actually combining two separate roots.¹⁰ Some doubt still obtains concerning a few of the examples so far adduced, and this doubt awaits resolution by means of the special competence of a professional linguist. Nevertheless, I have attempted to make sure that in most cases my examples carry the authority of Dempwolff or Brandstetter, two experts whose reconstructions were based on detailed studies of the sound laws involved.¹¹

With the foregoing reservations taken as given, it may be said that this family of relationship terms displays the same variety as do the social systems in which they occur. The social relationships designated do not in many instances necessarily have anything to do with "kinship", since they are sometimes those of lord, ruler or priest. The words sometimes apply to the living and sometimes to the dead, and whether they denote the living or the dead they sometimes point the analogy between divinity and the status of human persons in certain social roles. As names for categories in relationship systems, the modern descendants of **e(m)pu* occupy quite different positions. Formally the relationship designated may be asymmetric, as in Toba *ompu/pahompu* and Kédang *epu/maqing*, or symmetric, as in Fiji *tauvū/tauvū* and Coastal Alor *opung/opung*; and the asymmetry or symmetry of the relationship is connected with the asymmetry or symmetry of the systems in which they occur. These words seem always to be consistent with an attitude of respect and appear most frequently to apply to social superiors, but sometimes they occur only as names for certain kinds of social inferiors, as in Karo *kempu* (second descending level relatives) and Wailolong *opu* (wife-takers). There is no sign though that there is any derogatory con-

notation of the word in these two societies. Typically the terms imply a certain social distance such as that between relatives two generations removed or that between affines, but occasionally in special circumstances closer relatives may be designated by them, as in the Penan mourning usage. In a similar way, Nga'da (Flores) *bbu*, grandparents, may be used reciprocally by grandparents and grandchildren, father and son, or mother and daughter to show respect or affection (Djawanai 1978: 26).¹² Finally the same word may indicate two quite distinct kinds of social superiority in the same system, as when the Kédang refer to all members of the second ascending level as well as all wife-givers as *e pu* (Barnes 1974: 271).

I have attempted (p. 276) an explanation in a manner molded to the Kédang frame of reference for the distribution of the Kédang relationship name *e pu*. Within the line of reference (or the Kédang patriline) men of the first ascending level and those who are elder than Ego in the medial level (*amé* and *agé*) may be regarded by Ego as having precedence and the right to direct him in day to day affairs. We may speak here of a temporal authority. The secular aspects of authority recede from Ego's relations with men and women of the second ascending level. Persons of this level are classed as *e pu*, but they may be referred to collectively as *amé-e pu* (p. 265).

Age brings with it increased emphasis on the spiritual aspect of authority; there is indeed in Kédang representations a continuum from the living, through the aged, to the ancestors, with no decisive break (that is, not even one marked by physical death) in the concomitant sequence of transformations. The other representatives of spiritual authority are the wife-giving affines. I have described the crucial roles these persons play in connection with birth, naming, illness and health, marriage, and death. Having set all these matters out at length in my book, I was able to refer to them as "a series of reasons why the term *e pu* leads all the rank order lists. It is exclusively associated with spiritual authority." Kédang society gives crucial relationships based on age and affinity an asymmetric

cast, and the relationship system expresses this asymmetry. In this asymmetric context, the greatest unity between status and category is to be found in the category named by *e pu*.

This explanation however approaches the matter only in Kédang perspective. There is also a comparative side to it; for it is not uncommon for a single term to be applied to all or most persons in the second ascending genealogical level and at the same time to an entire (descent) line of jurally superior relatives. This pattern occurs in many terminologies of different kinds in different parts of the world (Barnes 1977b: 173). It may be that the only thing these systems have in common otherwise is that they are in one way or another lineal. A very well known example is that of the Omaha Indians, who refer to all male relatives of the second ascending level and above by *itiga* and apply the same name to all males in the patrilineal descent line of FM (see Barnes 1976: 393, figure 2). Scheffler (1970: 263) has referred to facts of this kind as "a particularly significant defect in 'alliance theory,'" for alliance theory, as Scheffler has it, must claim that the real meaning of the term in question is its affinal one, namely "wife-giver". This assertion is misconceived in the first place in that no one other than Scheffler has ever made it. The kind of argument that he seems to have in mind is that in some societies a relative such as MB is of principal social significance in so far as he is F's affine and Ego's WF, a situation which may be marked by classing each kind of connection in the same category (Dumont 1953). But the concern here is with the quality of a social relationship and the structure of a terminological system, not with the "real" or "primary" meanings of words. Arguments of the latter kind are appropriate only to a given context of utterance. The anthropologist might very well assert that Purum *pu* signifies wife-givers rather than grandparents in a specific statement (Needham 1962: 78), but in doing so he will base himself on a considered examination of the context as well as the explicit indications of the Purum. In any case, in order to represent a language correctly the anthropologist, lexicographer or grammarian must

be able to interpret a given lexeme as having a specific significance in one context, while perhaps attributing quite a different significance to it in another context. Another, lesser point is that even in asymmetric prescriptive systems, the pattern in question does not always involve the wife-giving line. It is the line of the wife-givers of Ego's own wife-givers that a Jinghpaw labels by *ji*, the word he also applies to grandfather (Leach 1961: 40; Barnes 1976: 395).¹³ It is ironic, given Scheffler's statement of what alliance theorists must say, that Leach (1954: 84; 1961: 40) has spoken of *ji* as though he thought its first meaning were "grandfather" (see Barnes 1974: 246).

Now this digression has the virtue that it places emphasis on the comparative aspects of the problem. The comparative side cannot be satisfactorily dealt with by exclusive reference to features of a particular language or culture. There are indeed purely formal considerations which must be given attention. In a broader context, the Austronesian expressions derived from **e(m)pu* may be said to exemplify the limited alternatives of classification. According to Needham (1969: 165), "A genealogically definable scheme of categories possesses only two classificatory dimensions: vertical (lineal) and horizontal (lateral)." These possibilities are logical ones. Furthermore, "the axis of any classificatory term (i.e. one not confined to a single genealogical position) can only fall along one or other or both of these dimensions".¹⁴ He remarks that terminologies of asymmetric prescriptive alliance (the Jinghpaw, the Purum, the Kédang) often exemplify the last possibility, but as Scheffler and I and others have noted so do systems like those of the Omaha or the matrilineal Hidatsa. From a formal point of view placing alternative genealogical levels under the same term is a simplification of classification along the lineal dimension. Placing affines of apposed kinds in the same category is a comparable feature of the lateral dimension.

The expressions "horizontal" and "vertical" are of course in this context metaphors

(as indeed are "lineal" and "lateral") deriving from a two dimensional diagram on a sheet of paper. There are no vertical and horizontal properties in the vocabulary of a language, only equations and distinctions marked by vocabulary. The metaphorical character of this manner of speaking is shown clearly when we try to imagine what a third and fourth classificatory dimension might be. Two dimensional pictures have up and down; depth provides the third dimension, and time comes fourth (in moving pictures). A "kinship" chart however plots simultaneity against succession. Relatives may be simultaneous, that is belong to the same genealogical level, but distinguished by the particular sequences of succession to which they belong. Alternatively they may belong to the same sequence, but be distinguished according to the order in which they appear in it. Relationship systems do not therefore organize social ties in space but in time, and our charts and professional vocabulary are thus spatial metaphors for temporal facts. In a more conventional sense then there is only one dimension in a kinship chart, the dimension of time.¹⁵ Within this dimension there are only two modes of relationship, namely simultaneity or succession, and it is these two modes of temporal relationship which provide the two "classificatory dimensions" referred to by Needham. Indeed it is this sequence of observations which explains why there are only two such axes.

Allen (1978: 359) has proposed (following Granet 1939: 166) that the simplest form of social organization is a four section system, actually a relationship system with only four terms, from which many of the kinds of distinctions made by natural terminologies have been eliminated. This means that a single principle of division has been introduced on each axis. However, it is only if one insists on exploiting the potential to distinguish and combine on both axes that one can say the four term system is the simplest one. On the condition that one were willing to forego the potential of one axis, a two term system could easily be devised. On the axis of succession, a two term system would class

all persons by a principle of alternating level. This means that all relatives, whether cross or parallel, of either sex, and of a given level would be placed in a single category. The category would also apply to all persons one level removed on either side and so on. Here there would be no point in trying to ascertain a primary genealogical meaning because the only grounds for significance would be the opposition of one term to the other together with the principle of alternation. This two term system would exemplify Dumont's hypothesis that marking alternation of generations is evolutionarily more primitive than marking their continuous flow (that is, by use of vertical equations within descent lines).

If on the other hand it is the axis of succession which is left unexploited, then a single distinction may be introduced on the lateral axis. This distinction might separate lineal from affinal relatives; it would then be the simplest form of prescriptive terminology. It might be objected that by failing to hold adjacent levels apart, this terminology would place unmarriageable persons such as F (w.s) and M (m.s.) into the same category as the spouse. But this objection has no place in a purely formal argument. It would be legitimate to suppose that in a society with a two term prescriptive terminology, unmarriageable affines would be tacitly identified by secondary means or that men might marry their mothers and women their fathers. A rationale for this variety of two term system might be that the distinction between one's own exogamously defined grouping and those persons with whom this grouping contracts marriages is in some sense more primitive than is the recognition of alternation of generations.

Another formal consideration is that a term may be self-reciprocal or it may be reciprocated by another term. In principle these are the only alternatives. In practice a single lexeme in a given system may be in complete or partial reciprocation with several terms. It is even possible that the reciprocal of this term is unnamed (as in the complete absence of any term for the second descending level in Kédang, in Wailolong, Flores,

and in Bernusa, Pantar). Each of these alternatives has been exemplified in this paper.

If we were to try to reconstruct the position of **e(m)pu* in an ancestral terminology by naively collecting together the various uses of its derivatives in present day languages, the result would be incompatible with any of the hypothetical simple systems so far discussed. One label for all affines as well as for all relatives one level distant could not fit a four section system, nor could it occur in either of the simplest two term systems. This aggregated pattern has more to do with the virtual possibilities of classification, placing limits at all periods and in all societies, than it does with history.

VII

The case has been made that the proto-Austronesian name **e(m)pu* did not in all probability signify a specific genealogical kinsman, such as FF or MF. Even when used as a relationship word today, it still retains (as Blust has also noted) something of the character of a title. Thus in pre-Islamic Javanese literature *ěmpu* frequently appears with the meaning "lord" or "master" before the names of men of high social standing and members of the clergy. During the Islamic period *ěmpu* came to be a name for the smith, a figure of exalted ceremonial importance, who at times even officiated at court rituals (see Pigeaud 1967: 152; Gericke and Roorda 1901, s.v. *empu*; and Rassers 1959: 224, 241).¹⁶ There is reason then to suppose that the original root had something of the character of a title about it in early Austronesian social organization. The point however is not to assign it to any single class of words. There is no reason to think that the original Austronesians lived in a world any more made up of single or primary meanings for words than that of their successors. Roots like **e(m)pu*, it may be taken, reflect words of that time (perhaps as many as 5,000 or 6,000 years ago according to Blust 1976: 29) which were just as polysemous (or, where it is only a question of categorization, polythetic) as

are their present day descendants.

In an early context *e(m)pu named relatives and other persons when seen from a certain vantage. This perspective was provided by a structure of symbolic proportions which constituted a social metaphysic. The themes of this metaphysic are still to be found today, and they may be proper subjects for comparative study with a view to reconstructing the prehistoric forms of Austronesian thought. I have already made one such investigation in a study of present day derivatives of PAN *maCa, eye, source, center, focus (Barnes 1977).¹⁷

Among these themes is a symbolic equivalence of sources=lifegivers=divinity. This set of associations is still intact in the results of modern ethnographic studies (see the papers in Fox, in press), and it is to be encountered in the semantic structure of many Austronesian words. In a restricted region, the set is exemplified by the full phrase by which wife-givers are named in Kédang formal ritual idiom, *epu puén, bapa matan*, constructed as it is from two dyadic pairs *epu-bapa* and *pué-mata*. In Kédang language *epu* and *bapa* are the referential and vocative forms, respectively, for the same category. *Pué*, which is a reflex of *puqun, means trunk; and it associates figuratively and in a partially synonymous way with *matan*, source (Barnes 1974: 229-233), as in the formal address of a suitor to the parents of his prospective bride, *ino puén, amo matan*. In Alor Besar, Alor the MB is *amang pukong*, the FZ *inang pukong*. Speakers of the same language in the village Maluku, Pantar refer to the entire second ascending level as *pukong* (Barnes 1973: 73-74, 78-79). The analogy between social relationship and trees is made very explicitly by the Rotinese. *Baï-huk* is an individuating referent for the "stem grandfather" or "grandfather of origin" (in the first instance a MMB); in east Roti *solo-huk* singles out a similar relative of the third ascending level; while *toök-huk* is "the stem mother's brother", or "mother's brother of origin" (Fox 1971). Among the Sikanese of Flores one MB is *pulame*, from *pu*, stem, trunk, root, origin, and *mame* MB (Fox 1971: 244). The Belu of Timor give the wife-giving group, *uma mane*, ti-

ties meaning source, vital energy, root and trunk (Vroklage 1952: 1: 255). The Ema of Timor, with their exemplary system of asymmetric alliance, call the wife-givers of their own wife-givers, *uma mane pun*, the basis or trunk of the givers, those persons who made possible the birth of Ego's mother (Clamagirand 1975). In Wailolong, Flores the *belake puken*, or trunk MB, is similarly characterized by special mystical influences. The Lamaholot directly compare him to Divinity (Barnes 1977a: 150).¹⁸

The same symbolic emphasis on trunks and sources is given material expression in the widely spread Indonesian regulations governing the proper location of base ends of posts in the construction of houses, fences, and boats (Barnes 1975: 82-83). This tissue of analogy is paralleled as well in other words, such as PAN *hulu, head, beginning, upper course, PAN *maCa, eye, etc., and PAN *puna, beginning, origin, spring (Barnes 1977c: 310), and in various ethnographic practices having to do with heads, springs, headwaters, eyes, seeds, and plants. The system of analogies in some ways is more constant than are the forms of social organization in various regions of the Austronesian world. A palaeontology of Austronesian thought might begin by tracing out this pattern. Here too is the best place to start an exploration of an old name for the lords and originators of life, for ancestors, for affines, for givers and takers-away of beneficence -- persons therefore who mark crucial thresholds, life and then death in the case of ancestors, and with whom are also sometimes classed replacers and receivers, bringing together (as does another Austronesian idiom [Barnes 1977c: 307-308]) by a kind of confusion of metaphor and metonymy beginnings and ends, tips and sources.

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NOTES

* I wish to thank Robert Blust for his considerate and helpful comments on this article.

1. An example is Lamalera, Lembata, where the wife-giving line is *opu laké* and a section of the wife-taking line is *ana opu*. *Ana* is child; so *ana opu* are affinally categorized offspring of women from Ego's patriline (thus, FZC and ZC). Similar usages may be found in Lewolein, Lembata except that FZH and ZH are simply *opu* and their sisters (FZHZ, ZHZ) *opu wai*, "female affines".

2. The absence of any distinctive term for grandchildren and for other persons of their level is unusual but it is a recurrent feature in the archipelago. It happens in Bernusa, Pantar (Barnes 1973: 77-78), Wailolong Flores (Barnes 1977a: 148), as well as Lewolein, Bakan, Lewuka, Lamalera and Hadakewa on Lembata and Nobo on Adonara. In Riang Laka, Solor this level is indicated by *upu*.

3. Blust (in press) writes that four vocative variants must be reconstructed **ampu*, **empu*, **impu*, and **umpu* with four referential counterparts **t-ampu*, **t-empu*, **t-impu*, and **t-umpu*, meaning lord, master, owner, and reciprocally grandparents and grandchildren. See also Stresemann (1927: 63, 215) who reconstructs proto-Ambonese *ubu*. In this and Kisar *upu* (and other Moluccan cognates) PAN *mp* and *mb* have reduced to *p* or *b*.

4. With no intention other than that of illustrating his point, I may mention the following eastern Indonesian examples: Alor Besar, Alor *bapa(ng)* (Barnes 1973:74); Kei *ubun*, *bun* (Geurtjens 1921: 134); Fordate, Tanimbar *ubu* (Drabbe 1932: 103); Jamden, Tanimbar *embu* (Drabbe 1940: 145).

5. Relationship terms, by definition, do not simply denote persons as class names denote objects and section names denote classes of persons permanently assigned to that section. Rather they identify persons with respect of some relationship to ego; hence Leach (1961: 34-35) can say that "a kinship term in isolation has no significance". Rivers has misstated the alternatives. A similar lack of clarity occurs in Granet's claim (1939: 170) that Chinese terms note less classes of individuals than categories of relationship and in Lévi-Strauss's response (1969: 315), "Classes or categories, it mat-

ters little." The main thing is that relationship terms are relative, not absolute, designations. The word "category" has been wildly abused by anthropologists (see Barnes 1978: 475).

6. In the sense of trunk and base it derives, according to Dempwolff from PAN **puhun*, which as I am informed by Robert Blust is now written **puqun*. As is demonstrated by this article, I agree in principle with Leach's remarks on homonymy, extension and primary meanings in his discussion of the Trobrian category "*tabu*" (Leach 1962; see also Lyons 1977: 550-569), but the question can still be addressed whether or not the etymology of his sense no. 1 of *tabu* (p.121), taboo, feared, forbidden, is different from that of senses no. 2, grandparents, ancestors, totems, and no. 3, father's sister, "lawful woman".

7. Professor Dr. Onvlee has written me however to the effect that he is somewhat uncertain of the etymology of *marapu* and has therefore avoided publishing on the question.

8. Lambooy has it that *ra* is equivalent to *da*, many, great. I wish to thank Mr. Greg Forth for drawing my attention to Kapita and Lambooy.

9. Blust (in press) writes, "*+e(m)pu* could not have had the literal meaning that Dempwolff attributes to it". More decisively, he says further, "there is a definite implication that *+e(m)pu*...and its vocative counterpart *+bubu* were extraneous to the system of kinship terminology proper. If so, the most reasonable inference regarding their meaning is that they formed part of a title system which stressed the functional connection of members of alternate generations". I wish to thank Dr. Blust for permission to quote from this manuscript. Reflexes of the root do sometimes have only affinal uses in other parts of Indonesia than the Solor Archipelago. Dayak *empo* means father-in-law and mother-in-law; *empo lambong* are the siblings of the parents-in-law (Hardeland 1859, s.v. *empo*).

10. See note 6.

11. Dempwolff's training was pre-structuralist and he conceived himself to be reconstructing "sounds" rather than phonemes.

"A phonemic approach to the problems may therefore modify some of Dempwolff's constructions"; for if some of his symbols are phonemes, not necessarily all of them are (Dahl 1973: 9, 13, 19). Nevertheless Dempwolff chose to work on Indonesian languages because so much had already been done there, and he acknowledged the work of predecessors such as van der Tuuk, Brandes and H. Kern. He regarded his own reconstructions as modifications of those of Brandstetter, whose work he considered himself to be continuing, and from whom he received financial support (Dahl, p. 6). See Dahl's comment (p. 7) on the background to Dempwolff's interpretations in Vaihinger's "Philosophie des Als Ob". I should like to thank Matthias Laubscher for providing me with Dahl.

12. Mr. Djawanai has written me to say that he renders the word *bbu*, rather than in Arndt's notation *cebu*, because he posits the first sound *b* as syllabic, manifest in a heavily voiced onset. He adds that *bbu* is also used as a cover term for great-grandparents and the ascending generations as well as for great-grandchildren and the descending generations. There is a phrase *bbu-nusi*, or simply *nusi*, which may be rendered as the ancestors and also future generations. The Nga'da relationship system is cognatic (Barnes 1972).

13. A printer's error has garbled a crucial passage (1976: 395). The sentence beginning line 9 should read, "Only in the line of wife-givers of wife-givers does one find among the Kachin a single term for all males.". See the editor's correction beginning of issue no. 4.

14. Not specifically mentioned here are various kinds of "oblique" equations, but as the term suggests this possibility is again a result of two axes.

15. Bachelard (1936: 92) indeed says that time has several dimensions and that time has extension, which derives from the superposition of several independent times in the individual consciousness. Bachelard reads here rather like Broad, who under the title, "The Extension Aspect of Temporal Facts" compares a person's mental history to a cord

made up of parallel strands of varying lengths (1964: 322). The Cambridge background of Broad's metaphor is clear enough. But Bachelard's points about the construction of an individual's representation of events in duration may be taken without commitment to the view that these representations are made up of several distinct times, or dimensions of time. In the same way Lévi-Strauss's argument (1963: 67-80, 301-302) that a kinship terminology is made up of several different kinds of time is less likely than an interpretation to the effect that a single dimension of time underlies each of the lines of succession in the terminology, each line displaying different temporal patterns in social relationships (Barnes 1976: 391-394). These observations do not mean of course that facts about space cannot be represented in a relationship terminology (Leach 1962), only that none of the dimensions of space are included in the representational medium. On the other hand, social relationships may sometimes be given spatial representation. A commonplace example is when persons assume certain positions in a ceremony or in a house according to the nature of their social relationships.

16. I thank Professor Clifford Geertz and Dr. Peter Carey for reminding me of this usage and Dr. Carey for drawing my attention to some of the sources.

17. Again as Blust has mentioned to me, the present rendering of this root is **maCa*. My paper would also have been usefully supplemented by reference to Blust 1974, which despite its date was not yet available when my article was in press. Blust reconstructs several compounds involving **puqun* and **maCa* as PAN idioms. Otto Koenig (1975) has also recently published a vast collection on "eye" symbolism.

18. A western Indonesian example is Karo Batak *puang kalimbubu*, wife-givers of wife-givers (Singarimbun 1975: 107, 141).

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