© Kamla-Raj 2000

J. Soc. Sci., 4(4): 277-293 (2000)

The Kinship System of the Aghria

Uwe Skoda

Institute of Ethnology, Free University of Berlin, Drosselweg 1-3, 14195 Berlin, Germany
Fax: 0049 30 83852382; e-mail: <uskoda@gmx.net>

KEY WORDS Orissa; kinship; terminology.

ABSTRACT In the following essay the kinship system of the Aghria, a locally dominant peasant caste in northern Orissa, will be analysed on all three levels of a kinship system - categories, rules and practice. On each level possible influences not only from the North Indian, "indo-aryan" and the South Indian, "dravidian," but also from the Middle Indian, "mundaic" kinship system will be discussed. A comparison with tribal groups in the region and their Middle Indian kinship system is particularly necessary to fully comprehend all features of the system. Furthermore it will be demonstrated that the Aghria system forms a unique synthesis of elements of all three Indian kinship systems.

INTRODUCTION

When one analyses a kinship system, three levels can be distinguished (Needham, 1973: 171; Trautmann 1995 [1981]: 21ff, 29; Barnard/Good 1984: 9, 12ff). First of all the level of terminology, that is the categories, in which a relationship is conceived. This is also referred to as the cognitive aspect. The second level represents the level of rules, ideals or to say, the normative domain and thirdly the level of practice, of behaviour, or the empirical-statistical situation. While the first two levels refer to the community and are thus socio-centred, the behaviour or conduct is individual-related or refers to small groups and is thus ego-centred. According to Good (1991: 55, 95ff), the relationship between the three levels definitely comprises of inconsistencies. This is so because on the one hand they possess a certain autonomy and need not be congruent - for instance, a possibility could be an association of a symmetrical terminology with an asymmetrical rule. On the other hand they are not supposed to stay in direct contradiction with one another. It means that the rules cannot contradict the native categories and the practice seems to be meaningful only in relation to the concepts and rules that form the social system. In the following essay on the kinship system of the Aghria[1] - a caste of peasants settling basically in the northwestern part of Orissa and parts of Madhya Pradesh, classified by the Government as an "Other Backward Class" (OBC) - I will analyse the different levels separately, before a final conclusion will be reached.

THE TERMINOLOGY[2]

Considering the terminology presented below (Table 1) one recognises not only characteristics known from North Indian contexts, but also features typical for South Indian kinship systems. This is not surprising if one realises that the observed region is part of a frontier zone between the two Indian kinship systems just mentioned - the "indo-aryan" in the North and the "dravidian" in the South as Karve (1998 [1953]: 50-1) and Trautmann (1995 [1981]: xvi) already pointed out. Apart from the "indo-aryan" and "dravidian" mode of classification other additional principles are recognisable. These are presumably parts of another kinship system, which Karve (1998 [1953]: 72) already, although rather vaguely, expected in analogy to the regional Munda-language family. The studies of Pfeffer (1983) and Parkin (1992) confirmed this assumption without sharing the hypothesis that a language family necessarily must correlate with a kinship system[3]. For a thorough analysis all three kinship systems have to be described briefly.

SOUTH INDIAN OR "DRAVIDIAN" KINSHIP TERMINOLOGIES (THE TAMIL EXAMPLE)

It was Dumont (1983 [1953]: 8-15), who in the 50s pioneered the research related to the 'dravidian' kinship system. In his work he was inspired by ideas of C. Lévi-Strauss (in particular his alliance theory as described in his book "The Elementary Structures of Kinship" 1949), whose

Table 1: The Aghria terminology

Generation +4	
painaja	all men (FFFF, FMFF etc.)
painai	all women (MMMM, FMMM etc.)
Generation +3	
boru	all men (FFF, FMF, MFF, MMF etc.)
bori	all women (MMM, MFM, FFM, FMM etc.)
Generation +2	
aja, dada	all men (FF, MF etc.)
ai, aima, bai	all women (MM, FM etc.)
ajasasur	WFF, WMF (as possible specification)
aisas	WMM, WFM (as possible specification)
Generation +1	
bapa, bua	F
ma	M
baba, borka bapa	FeB, MeZH, MeZHB
kaka	FyB
bori	FeBW
kaki	FyBW
phuphu	FZ, FZHZ, MeZHZ (MZHZ?)
phupha	FZH, FZHB
mamo (MeB: boromamo; MyB: sanmamo)	MB, MBWB, FBWB
mami, mai	MBW
munoma, mausi	MyZ, MyBWZ, MyZHZ, FyBWZ
boroma, borkama	MeZ, MeBWZ, FeBW, FeBWZ
munobapa, mausa	MyZH, MyZHB
sasur	WF, HF, ZHZF
sas	WM, HM, ZHZM
babasasur	WFeB, HFeB
kakasasur	WFyB, HFyB
phuphusas, boromasas	WFZ, HFZ
mamosasur	WMB, HMB
mausisas	WMZ, HMZ
Generation 0	
borobhai, dada	eB, (FBS)e, (MBS)e, (FZS)e, (MZS)e, (BWB)e
majlabhai	mB
sanbhai, bhai	yB, (FBS)y, (MBS)y, (FZS)y, (MZS)y, eZHB, (BWB)y
borobohin, bai, nani	eZ, (FBD)e, (MBD)e, (FZD)e, (MZD)e, eZHZ
majlabohin	mZ
sanbohin, bohin	yZ, (FBD)y, (MBD)y, (FZD)y, (MZD)y, yZHZ
bato	eZH, eZHB, eZHZH
bohinjuien	yZH, yZHB, yZHZH
sangi	BWB
sangat	eZHZ (yZHZ)
bohu	eBW, WeBW
bhaibohu	yBW
bor, swami	H
konia, stri	W
dedsas	HeZ, WeZ
nanad	HyZ
nanadia	HZH
dedsasur	HeB
diar	HyB
jethani	HeBW
derian, debarani	HyBW
sala (WeB: boro-sala, WyB: san-sala)	WB, WBWB
sali	WyZ, WBW, WBWZ
sadhu	WZH
samdhi	SWF, DHF
samdhen	SWM, DHM

Table 1: Contd.....

Generation -1	
boro pu, boro beta, borka beta	eS
majla pu, majla beta	mS
san pu, san beta, chute beta	yS
boro ji, boro beti, borka beti	eD
majla ji, majla beti	mD
san ji, san beti, chute beti	yD
bohu, baharia	SW
juien	DH [DHB, BDH (m.s.), HBDH]
putra	eBS (m.s.), ZS (f.s.) [eZHZS (f.s.), HeBS, SWB, eBWBS (m.s.)]
jiari	eBD (m.s.), ZD (f.s.) [DHZ, HeBD, eZHZD (f.s.), eBWBD (m.s.)]
bhatija	BS (f.s.), WZS (?)
bhatiji	BD (f.s.), WZD (?)
bhanja	ZS (m.s.), eBS (f.s.), WBS, HZS
bhanji	ZD (m.s.), BD (f.s.), WBD, HZD
boru	yBS (m.s.), HyBS, WZS (?)
bori	YBD (m.s.), HyBD, WZD (?)
putrabohu (bohu)	BSW (m.s.), HBSW
bhanjajuien	ZDH (m.s.), HZDH, WBDH
bhanjibohu (bhanji)	ZSW (m.s.), HZSW, WBSW
Generation -2	
nati	all men (SS, DS, WBSS, HZDS etc.)
naten	all women (SD, DD, HZDD, WBSD etc.)
Generation -3	
boru	all men (SSS, SDS, DDS etc.)
bori	all women (DDD, SSD, DSD etc.)
Generation -4	
nati, aja, painboru	all men (SSSS etc.)
naten, ai, painbori	all women (DDDD etc.)

ideas Dumont incorporated in his own work, applied them to India and developed them further. Dumont bases his analysis on his field research on several castes in Tamil Nadu (*Pramalai Kallar* among others) and their Tamil kinship terminology. He identifies 16 clearly distinguished categories, which form the semantic scope for ego. Every member of the subcaste is assigned one - and only one - category. Accordingly the structure of the semantic sphere is based on four fundamental oppositions: 1. the distinction according to generations; 2. sex; 3. age (only in generation 0) and 4. a division of the relatives within the generations -1 to +1, which Dumont recognises as the categories "affines" and "kin"[4], particularly because especial affinal terms are conspicuously missing. The category *maman* (in diagram A: category E) for instance, also stands for SpF and FZH, along with the relation MB. Later on the rather more neutral terms "parallel" and "cross" have gained acceptance in the literature (Trautmann 1995 [1981]: 47; Good 1991: 58) to signify Dumont's categories "kin" ("parallel") and "affines" ("cross"). I use them both as synonyms.

Dumont (1983 [1953]: 10 ff) argues, in accordance with these oppositions, that ego and his F (in diagram A as category B) are connected to each other through a kin-relationship, but are however separated terminologically from each other through the principle of generationgap (difference in generation). On the other hand, F and MB are united exactly through this principle (as part of one generation) and are separated through the contrast of "kin" - "affines." The MB is the immediate affinal relative of the F (ego, F, MB etc. stand here for the respective classes of relatives and not only for the genealogical relationships). The typical fundamental structure of the "dravidian" kinship terminology is therefore essentially based on the relationships ego - F and F - MB. Corresponding to the native point of view, Dumont has derived the relationship between ego and MB through the F. That means

Diagram A:

Generation	*male (II)*	*female (II)*	*female (X)*	*male (X)*
grandfather		*A (+ fem. A')*		
father	B	C	D	E
ego: > ego	F	G	H	I
ego: < ego	J	K	L	M
son	N (+ fem. N')		O [= k + N]* (+ fem. O')	
grandson	P (+ fem. P')			

Diagram A: Tamil-Terminology; adapted from Dumont, 1983 [1953]: 10.
* This line gives the disposition in Tamil, where k probably means "marriage". Strictly in this case considered alone, N and O form a single category.
A are the "grandfathers" (A' the "grandmothers"), B the "fathers", C the "mothers", D the "father's sisters" and "mothers-in-law", E the "mother's brothers" and "fathers-in-law", F the "brothers" older than ego, J the younger "brothers", I and M the "male cross-cousins" older and younger than ego, G and K the "sisters" (older and younger) and H / L the "female cross-cousins" (older and younger respectively), N the "parallel sons" (fem. for the "daughters", O the "cross sons" (fem. for "cross daughters) and P the "grandsons" (fem. for "granddaughters").
(Note: Ego, male and female, are only indirectly located in the figure.)

that the MB is conceptualised as FWB and is not derived through the M, as, according to Dumont, the misleading term MB generally suggests, which is descriptive and originated from our own culture, and therefore comprises a certain ethnocentrism. In the generation -2/+2 Dumont verifies the "merging" of the categories "kin" and "affines" for his case-study. This is explained according to Dumont by the fact that on the one side ego is related to both grandparents through F and M who are both kin for ego, but on the other both grandfathers enjoy an affinal relationship with one another (similarly for the grandchildren).

The relationship of affinity between F and MB, which has come into being through marriage, has expanded itself in the terminology in the following generations. That means ego's cross-relatives are at the same time ego's affinal relatives. This implies that affinity possesses here a vertical, diachronic dimension, which is embedded in the terminology and for which Dumont uses the term "alliance." Dumont argues that a marriage prescription is already inherent in the terminology, namely one of cross-cousin marriage (CCM), because only this presents an appropriate formula for the maintenance of this system, above all of the cross - parallel differentiation and therefore in the end, also of the alliance (Dumont 1983 [1953]: 17).

NORTH INDIAN OR "INDO-ARYAN" TERMINOLOGIES (THE HINDI EXAMPLE)

If one considers the "indo-aryan" terminologies - I will here restrict myself to Hindi as a well documented example - what immediately attracts one's attention is the great variety of terms and along with that the common semantic distinctions in comparison with "dravidian" terminologies. The most significant difference to Tamil is probably the lacking opposition of the cross and parallel category in the Hindi terminology. One comes across a greater differentiation in Hindi in the generations -1 and +1 as compared to Tamil in regard to the distinction between F, FeB and FyB, which are separated in Tamil only by prefixes. As against this there does not exist any such differentiation between M, MeZ or MyZ. SpF, FZH and MB are strictly separated in Hindi, in contrast with Tamil, where these relationships coincide with each other terminologically. In Tamil ego's Ch can be commonly classified with SbCh of the same sex and can be distinguished from the SbCh of another sex (therefore men and women classify the Ch complimentarily). However in Hindi SbCh are summed up without any reference to the relative sex of ego and his or her siblings (men and women classify the Ch equally - see partial comparison Diagram B).

One can find a greater number of semantic differentiations in generation 0 as in Tamil. The

Diagram B:

Hindi and Tamil kinship terms, parents' generation

Hindi

phupha	mama	mausa	caca	bap	ma	mausi	caci	bua	mami
FZH	MB	MZH	FB	F	M	MZ	FBW	FZ	MBW
FZH	MB	MZH	FB	F	M	MZ	FBW	FZ	MBW
maman		(periya-, cinna-) appa			(periya-, cinna-) amma			attai	

Tamil

Hindi and Tamil kinship terms, children's generation

Hindi

bhanja	bhatija	beta	beti	bhatiji	bhanji
ZS	BS	S	D	BD	ZD
BS(f.s.) ZS(m.s.)	ZS(f.s.) BS(m.s.)	S	D	BD(m.s.) ZD(f.s.)	ZD(m.s.) BD(f.s.)
marumakan	makan		makal		marumakal

Tamil

Diagram B: comparison of the semantic distinctions in Tamil and in Hindi in the generations -1 and +1, adapted from Trautmann, 1995 [1981]: 97.

only example where Hindi is considered more "synthesising" compared to Tamil, is the division according to the relative age in relation to ego, which split the entire generation in Tamil, but does not exist in Hindi. Ego's generation (0) is remarkable especially for its abundance of affinal terms and a comparative lack of consanguine categories. Thus all cousins (MBS/D, FBS/D, MZS/D, FZS/D) are classified as B or Z (*bhai* or *bahin*) - a distinction in cross- and parallel-relatives is henceforth not recognisable. However a terminological differentiation between WT (for e.g., ZH = *jija*), consanguines (for e.g., B = *bhai*) and WG (for e.g., WB = *sala*) is apparent, whereby such a clear distinction can be made only in ego's generation (0) and not in the previous and the following generations (Vatuk, 1969: 106; Trautmann, 1995 [1981]: 91-103) - a distinction (WT vs. WG) which befits a central significance especially because of the status difference associated with it.

Another important characteristic of the Hindi terminology is the extension of the terminology and the tendency to include all persons into the kinship sphere by using kinship terms and to capture the universe in the various kinship categories (Vatuk, 1969: 96). A good example to show the extensive use of certain terms is the category *bhai* or B (as well as *bahin*/Z), which is fundamental for the understanding of the terminology. While using the term *bhai* various meanings can be implied, ranging from the "genealogical B" to a "man - roughly of the same age as ego" (the most inclusive meaning), whereby a reference is always implied to the common forefathers (from F to the distant ancestors). The term *bhai* can in a restricted sense stand opposite to the term *sala* (WB). However if we look from another angle, that is from a wider perspective, the term *bhai* (in its most inclusive sense) can also encompass the term *sala* completely. Since the term *bhai* is not opposed to any other comparable category, Dumont considers this term to be purely descriptive. However, the category *bhai* is pivotal above all for its quasi-infinite repercussions on other categories, for instance *mama*, the "brother" of the mother. An exact specification of the relationship between close relatives (e.g. a genealogical MB) and the more distant ones (e.g. a man from the mother's village, who can also be considered as a distant *mama*) is made possible through adding certain words to the already existing term (e.g. in the sense of "near" MB). (Dumont, 1966: 99-100; Vatuk, 1969: 96-7).

The thorough analysis of the Hindi terminology by Dumont was later on substantially completed by S. Vatuk (1969), who discovered that the terms for the WT or the WG are also extended to their WT or WG, which means that the same term, used for the WG, can also be used for the WG of the WG and vice versa. On the other hand, consanguine terms are used by persons (or groups), who have given to certain WT or have received women from the same WG. It was termed

as "quasi-consanguinity" by Vatuk (1969: 101-4, see also Trautmann, 1995 [1981]: 97-102). Once again the terminology was expanded by R. Jamous. He found that even in the case of a married couple, the Z of the H and the B of the W use consanguine terms for each other (the relation BWB and ZHZ as *bhai* and *bahin*), which he describes as "metasiblingship" (Jamous, 1992: 97; also Trautmann, 1995 [1981]: xvii). The works of Vatuk and Jamous clearly indicate that even affinal relatives (for e.g. WZH or BWB) fall in the category *bhai* (or *bahin*) and can be regarded as consanguines. This means that the terminological tripartition (WT - consanguines - WG), which was mentioned at the beginning, must be extended to WT (including wife-takers' wife-taker) - consanguines (including quasi-consanguines, metasiblings) - WG (including wife-givers' wife-giver).

The characteristic features, briefly summarised here, show that the Hindi terminology, unlike the "dravidian" terminologies, is not reducible to a system of binary oppositions. That is the reason why Dumont does not speak of a structure in a narrow sense, but rather refers to a configuration of categories (just as he prefers to call the Hindi terminology a "vocabulary," as against the "dravidian" "terminologies"). Following L. H. Morgan, Dumont sees in the Tamil terminology a classificatory terminology, whose characteristic features lie in the universal division of the relatives according to certain oppositions. On the other hand he terms the Hindi "vocabulary" as descriptive, because the elementary relations described are based on ego - as a feature of a descriptive terminology (Dumont, 1966: 96).

MIDDLE-INDIAN OR "MUNDAIC" TERMINOLOGIES

In comparison with the others this kinship system is rather limited in its geographical distribution and probably owing to its peripheral position less research has been conducted. Only in recent years more general features of the system have been discovered through the work of Pfeffer (1983) and Parkin (1992). While Pfeffer considered the Middle Indian tribal society[5] as a whole, Parkin concentrated on groups with mundaic languages.

Both Pfeffer (1983: 100) and Parkin (1992: 123, 142) argue that the principal of alternation is a fundamental feature of the system. The terminology of the Ho (Pfeffer, 1983: 110-1) - a tribe in the Kondhmal District and in Chota Nagpur - shows for example an equivalence of the generations -3 and +3, for which the common term *gungu* is used. In addition the same term denotes FeB (MeZ), BCh (m.s.) and ZCh (f.s.), which means relatives of the parents' and children's generation. The term *gungu* therefore is used alternating in every second or every odd generation. Similar terminological identifications between alternating generations are also known from the Juang (Pfeffer, 1983: 104-5), a tribe from the Keonjhar District. In this case for instance MB and DH - relatives of the generation +1 and -1 - are terminologically equated. Further examples from the Juang terminology could be supplied[6]. Henceforth in the terminologies - and generally not only herein - a tendency is embedded to classify on the one hand the relatives of one's own generation with relatives of alternating generations and on the other hand to equate the relatives of adjacent or uneven generations. Both categories or "generation-sets" (Pfeffer, 1983: 100) stand in opposition to each other.

There is further consent among both authors that on the one side the distinction according to the relative age is of utmost importance in Middle Indian terminologies (Pfeffer, 1983: 100; Parkin, 1992: 138), but Parkin argues that this principle is rather restricted to the generation 0 and to the parallel kin of the parents' and children's generation. On the other side both agree about the symmetrical character of the terminologies (Pfeffer, 1983: 103; Parkin, 1992: 137). In addition to that Parkin (1992: 138) comparing various terminologies abstracted a typical North and South "mundaic" pattern, which is reproduced as Diagram C.

According to this ideal type, the following features can be stated: 1. equations MB = FZH; FZ = MBW are seen as characteristic, but these relations are strictly separated from SpF or SpM respectively, which are classified by Parkin as "affines"; 2. a terminological identification B = PaSbS and Z = PaSbD is predominant (except in the Koraput region); 3. there are separate terms

Diagram C:

Gen.	*male*	*female*	*male*	*female*	*Affines*
+2		Pa	Pa		Composita
+1	F FB	FZ MBW	MB FZH	M MZ	SpPa
0	ego; B PaSbS SpSbSp / SbSpSbSp	(ego) Z PaSbD / SpSbSpSb	SpSb / SbSp	/ ChSpPa	<<
-1	S BS SpZS	D BD SpZD	ZS SpBS	ZD SpBD	ChSp
-2		Ch	Ch		Composita

Diagram C: Typical terminology among groups speaking North and Central mundaic languages; adapted from Parkin, 1992: 138.

for SpSb, SbSp, SbSpSb, ChSpPa, Sp etc. in ego's generation and 4. in the generation -1 parallel relatives are distinguished from cross relatives, which are again not identical with affines. That means the Ch of a male ego are equated with BCh (m.s.) and WZCh, but neither with ZCh (m.s.) nor with WBCh or ChSp. Additionally Parkin (1992: 128, 140) considers the category SbSpSb as pivotal, because according to him SbSpSb is the preferred marriage partner in many North and Central mundaic groups.

Rethinking the first and last point of Parkin's, the content or character of the cross category is not quite clear, because Parkin separates it from the category of affines. Henceforth FZH = MB is not an affinal relative of ego? Could the distinction between FZH = MB on the one hand and SpF on the other hand be also considered a North Indian tendency, because MB, FZH and SpF are strictly separated there? Even more problematic seems to be Parkins separation between cross relatives and affines in the generation 0. The category "affines" in ego's generation particularly causes confusion. To sum up all four characteristics mentioned by Parkin could also be the result of a synthesis between the North and the South Indian system, which means that the principal of alternation and the opposition between junior and senior combined with a symmetrical terminology, represented first and foremost by the equation HF = WF, have to be seen as typically 'mundaic'.

THE ANALYSIS OF THE AGHRIA TERMINOLOGY

If we now reconsider the Aghria-terminology the synthesis of all three kinship systems is fairly distinct. Starting with the parents generation the equations FeB = MeZH or MeZ = FeBW are striking. These remind us of the "dravidian" pattern of classification (compare diagram A). However, in contrast to that a distinction according to the relative age is added, which does not exist in Tamil. A terminological identification FeB = MeZH, but also in a more restricted sense MyZ = FyBWZ or MB = FBWB point to a cross-parallel-dichotomy although less clearly apparent compared to Tamil. For instance the existence of separate terms for SpPa contradicts such a clear-cut kin-affines-opposition. On the one hand the separation of SpF, MB and FZH is typical for "indo-aryan" terminologies as shown in diagram B, but on the other the mentioned equations are in opposition to the known "indo-aryan" pattern. However these equations are quite common in Middle Indian terminologies. The identification of SpF = ZHZF and SpM = ZHZM seems to be significant, because it supports Parkin's hypothesis that ZHZ, or more general SbSpSb, is a preferred marriage partner.

Apart from a few exceptions one's own generation is divided according to the relative age of ego (one of the exceptions is HZH). Such a division is atypical for "indo-aryan" terminologies, but well-known from "dravidian" systems (diagram A and D). In contrast to "dravidian" and "indo-aryan" systems a classification of middle siblings seems to be possible among the Aghria. All "cousins" fall into the category "brother" or "sister" respectively or more precisely "elder brother" or "younger brother" in relation to ego - a pattern partially typical for Middle India and

Diagram D: Classification of selected relatives in the generation 0

in the "indo-aryan" kinship system

WB	FBS	MZS	B	MBS	FZS	ZH

in the 'dravidian' kinship system:

(parallel relatives - kin)				*(cross relatives - affines)*			
(FBS)e	(MZS)e	eB		(FZS)e	(MBS)e	(WB)e	(ZH)e
(FBS)y	(MZS)y	yB		(FZS)y	(MBS)y	(WB)y	(ZH)y

in the Aghria system:

WB	(FBS)e	(MBS)e	(MZS)e	(FZS)e	eB	eZH
	(FBS)y	(MBS)y	(MZS)y	(FZS)y	yB	yZH

Diagram D: Classification of the generation 0 - a comparison

very much so in the North, if one neglects the distinction of relative age A cross-parallel-opposition is totally missing. The extension of the terms for ZH to ZHZH (for eZH and yZH) or for WB to WBWB, which were introduced as prevalent in the North, would additionally contradict such an opposition. However a differentiation between eZH and yZH has not yet been observed in the North, but is in conformity with the common opposition junior/senior in the context of the tribal society. A possible combination of elements of the "dravidian" and "indo-aryan" system is represented in diagram D.

While in ego's generation a North Indian pattern could be predominant, the analysis of the terms of the children's generation shows a completely different situation. Sibling's children are classified according to the relative sex of ego - a obvious similarity to "dravidian" features, which are unknown in the North.

A pure "dravidian" pattern is, however, contradicted by the existence of separate terms for ChSp - another parallel to "mundaic" systems. The different ways of classifying children - "dravidian" vs. "indo-aryan" terminology - was also shown in diagram B. In the case of the Aghria the prevalent Hindi lexic seems significant. The terms *bhanja* or *bhatija* are a case in point. Both, however, are not used in the same way as in Hindi, that means spouses apply the terms complementarily (and not equally as in Hindi). But even if the Aghria-terminology resembles a "dravidian" pattern in the classification of the children, a obvious difference remains: the distinction of nephews/nieces in relation to the relative age between ego and his siblings. For example eBS is separated from yBS. But there is no complete division of this generation, because for example the ZCh are excluded. Furthermore a differentiation of ones own children according to their age is possible, but only prefixes are used for that. Again a middle position can be named. The classification of the WZCh could not yet be sufficiently clarified, so that these terms have to be handled very cautiously.

In the generations of the grandparents and grandchildren only two terms are applied to all persons within these generations. Some relations can additionally be specified by composita e.g. WFF as *ajasasur*. The existence of only two terms in both generations shows another parallel to the Tamil terminology and could point to a "dravidian" influence, because "indo-aryan" terminologies usually have four terms in these generations. But at least in some cases "dravidian" terminologies with a fourfold division in the generations +2/-2 are documented (Trautmann, 1995 [1981]: 232; Good, 1991: 59-60) and a twofold classification plus composita is also common in "mundaic" systems.

A distinction between elder and younger in the generations 0, -1 and +1 on the one hand and pattern of classification for the generations of the great-grandchildren, great-grandparents and beyond exists neither in Dumonts analysis of the Tamil-terminology nor in many works on "indo-aryan" terminologies (Vatuk, 1969; Pocock, 1972; Conzelmann, 1996[7]), but only in "mundaic" or tribal contexts. The identical classification of the generations +3 and -3 among the Aghria seems to be particularly significant. Even in a region like Gujarat, where synthesises of "indo-aryan" and "dravidian" systems are occasionally observed (compare Trivedi, 1969 [1961] for

Diagram E: Presumable alternation of terms in the Aghria terminology

Generations	*Terms*	*Relations*
Gen. +3	bo□u / bori	PaPaPa
Gen. +1	bori	FeBW
Gen. -1	bo□u / bo□i	yBCh (m.s.) / HyBCh / WZCh (?)
Gen. -3	bo□u / bo□i	ChChCh

the Mer example), the classification of relatives ends always in the generations -2/+2.

Apart from the mentioned equation of the generations -3/+3, in which all men are classified as *boru* and all women as *bori*, for FeBW the term *bori*[8] is also used. Striking is also the classification of yBS (m.s.), HyBS and WZS as *boru* and yBD (m.s.), HyBD and WZD as *bori*. In my opinion the category *boru/bori* among the Aghria - including all these relatives - could point to the principal of alternation as represented in diagram E.

This hypothesis is furthermore supported by the existence of very similar terminologies of the Kondh from the Baudh-Kondhmal District and the Kurukh also known as Oraon from Chota Nagpur and the Raigarh District in MP. The terminologies of both groups, which have to be seen as part of the tribal society in the wider sense, were analysed by Trautmann (1995 [1981]: 140 ff, 142 ff). They show a surprising number of common features - structural as well as lexical - with the Aghria terminology. In the Kondh terminology the term *boru* denotes FeB = MeZH and *borai* is applied to FeBW = MeZ. But these terms are not only used in the parents generation, *boru* also denotes yBS (m.s.), HyBS and WyZS, *borai* stands also for yBD (m.s.), HyBD and WyZD in the children's generation. The fact that only WyZCh are classified as *boru/borai* among the Kondh could also explain the confusion and double classification of WZCh among the Aghria (compare list of Aghria kinship terms - *boru/bori* would then only be applied to WyZCh). For the generations +3/-3 no information is available. A classification of these generations is, however, known from the Kurukh/Oraon. For all men (great-grandfather etc.) the term *baras* (if one neglects the prefix eng- which is part of all terms) is used, while women (great-granddaughter, etc.) are classified as *bari*. Identically *baras* denotes FeB = MeZH = yBS (m.s.) = eZS (f.s.) and *bari* MeZ = FeBW = yBD (m.s.) = eZD (f.s.). Both terms classify relatives in the generations -1 and +1 structurally and lexically very similar to the Kondh, but here also the generations -3/+3 are included in the same way. The Aghria terminology seems to resemble these two cases and the category *bori/boru* seems to describe a very similar semantic scope compared to the categories *boru/borai* among the Kondh and *baras/bari* among the Kurukh/Oraon.

That means that apart from the already described "dravidian" or "indo-aryan" influences the principal of alternation comes to light in the Aghria terminology. This hypothesis is further indicated by the generations +4/-4. However, in general informants were less certain regarding the classification of these generations. While relatives of the generations +3 to -3 were living together at least in one case in practice and therefore the terms for relatives within these generations were clear to everybody, there is no example known to me, in which five generations lived together. Nevertheless the statements of informants are significant, because again the principle of alternation is demonstrated. In the generation +4 the terms *aja/ai* are used as in generation +2, but a prefix *pain-* is added here. In a very similar way the terms *nati/naten* applied for grandchildren reappear in generation -4. In contrast to that other informants also state that the terms *aja/ai* are used for the generation -4. That means this generation is identified with generation +2, another even generation. Only the terms *painboru/painbori* do not fit into this pattern properly. Therefore, more research has to be conducted in this regard, but another hint for an existing alternation is the equation between eB = FF = MF or eZ = FM = MM, which are denoted as *dada* or *bai* and are addressed in this way.

To conclude, I suggest to view the Aghria terminology not only as a synthesis of "dravidian" and "indo-aryan" elements, but also to see it in the context of the tribal society of Orissa or adjacent areas of Madhya Pradesh and in relation to a peculiar Middle Indian "mundaic" kinship system in this region. The similarity between this system and the Aghria terminology is presented again in Diagram F, although the

validity of Parkin's model has to be confirmed by further test cases.

The result that certain features of the Aghria terminology are comprehensible only in the context of the tribal society is at first surprising, because in contrast to the Kondh, Kurukh/Oraon or Juang, the Aghria are considered neither as "tribal group" or "Scheduled Tribe" nor as "Scheduled Caste," but as "Other Backward Class" (OBC) and locally dominant caste. To my knowledge no such synthesis is known from any OBC so far. However, the sharing of some terminological characteristics will be less surprising, if one considers the spatial proximity in which Aghria live with tribes like the Kondh, Oraon or Munda. In many cases they are even neighbours in the same village.

The principle of alternation as a common feature shared by tribal groups and castes in the same region and shown in their terminologies is in my opinion further confirmed by certain ritual functions particularly during the wedding ceremonies of the Aghria. Some functions can only be fulfilled by representatives of the brides or grooms generation and the generation of the grandparents/grandchildren, but not by members of the generations of the parents or children. But this point cannot be elaborated here.

RULES AND PRACTICE

1. The Rule of Endogamy

Among the rules of the Aghria kinship system I first consider the rule of endogamy. According to this rule marriage should be restricted to the Aghria caste and furthermore to the former districts of Sambalpur, Balangir and Sundargarh. In contrast to that marriage with Aghria in parts of Madhya Pradesh is prohibited, because these Aghria are regarded as inferior in status. Usually a breach of the rule leads to excommunication from the caste. Aghria families who have arranged marriages outside the caste, loose their status as Aghria and are considered as Sarlia - an inferior category, which according to informants has come into being as a result of mixed marriages. The lower status of these mixed marriages is expressed by the word "*sarlia*" itself, which means "slipped." A marriage between Aghria and Sarlia, who also call themselves Aghria, is excluded.

However, in practice the breaking of the caste endogamy can be tolerated as the case of an influential Aghria-landlord and revenue collector of the King shows, who apart from three other marriages with Aghria-women had a relationship with a Chasa-woman without officially marrying her. This case caused a considerable scandal

Diagram F: Aghria terminology presented in relation to diagram D ('=' : terminological equation // ';' : terminological separation)

Gen.	*male (II)*	*female (II)*	*male (X)*	*female (X)*	*Affines*
+4	PaPaPaPa (PaPa)				
+3	PaPaPa = ChChCh				
+2	PaPa				Composita
+1 (E)	FeB=MeZH	MeZ=FeBWZ; FeBW	MB=FBWB; FZH	MBW; FZ	SpF=ZHZF; SpM=ZHZM
+1 (Y)	FyB; MyZH	MyZ=FyBWZ; FyBW			Composita
0 (E)	eB=(PaSbS)e= (BWB)e	eZ=(PaSbD)e= eZHZ	eZH; HeB	eBW; HeZ; HeBW	WB; BWB; HZH; WZH
0 (Y)	yB=(PaSbS)y= (BWB)y	yZ=(PaSbD)y= yZHZ	yZH; HyB	yBW; HyZ; HyBW	WZ; (e)ZHZ; ChSpPa
-1 (E)	eBS (m.s.)=	eBD (m.s.)=	(e)BS (f.s.)=	BD (f.s.)=	DH; SW
-1	ZS (f.s.); S	ZD (f.s.); D	ZS (m.s.)= WBS=HZS	ZD (m.s.)= WBD=HZD	Composita
-1 (Y)	yBS (m.s.)= HyBS= WZS (?)	yBD (m.s.)= HyBD= WZD (?)			
-2	ChCh				
-3	ChChCh = PaPaPa				
-4	ChChChCh (ChCh = PaPa)				

among the Aghria, for the landlord had brought her into his house without being expelled from his caste. Nevertheless in another case a married Aghria-woman was excommunicated for having an affair with her Gond-neighbour. In a third case an Aghria-woman married a man from another, rather high caste and was expelled afterwards. It seems that in this case her father was also excluded temporarily, but then readmitted into the caste after giving a feast. A reintegration into one's own caste (visible in the participation in feasts and other rituals) seems to be possible after some time as in the case of the father or probably also the daughter, but at the end depends on the families involved.

The rule of endogamy furthermore restricts marriage to ones own generation. That means it is a form of intragenerational endogamy. Marriage with persons of adjacent generations should be avoided. But unfortunately it could not be clarified if it is possible to marry persons who belong to the grandparent's or grandchildren's generation.

In spite of the avoidance of marrying persons of adjacent generations this rule can be evaded in practice if the marriage partners are related to each other only in a very distant way. For example in one case a men married the daughter of a distant, classificatory sister (but the exact distance could not be specified by the informants).

2. The Rule of Exogamy

The Aghria are divided in exogamous, patrilineal clans known as "*bansa*" (*bana*) and "*gotra*" (*barga*). Marriage within ones own clan is strictly forbidden. Bansa and gotra seem to be structurally identical, which means each person belongs to one bansa and one gotra and every bansa corresponds with one and only one gotra (e.g. a family belongs to the bonsa "bahar" and the gotra "gautam"). An overlap between bansa and gotra is excluded - it is impossible that persons have the same gotra, but different bansa or vice versa. Therefore bansa and gotra express the same rule of exogamy, but an explanation for the double formulation of one rule could not be found. Gotra as patrilineal clans are well-known from various ethnographical settings in North India (e.g. Karve, 1998 [1953]: 52) among castes of all status categories, but particularly among Brahmins and Kshatriya. The importance of this rule becomes clear immediately before a wedding when bansa and gotra of the potential spouses are compared several times to avoid the breach of the rule. In the process of marriage the wife is incorporated into the clan of the husband.

The Aghria are also known as "chourassi ghar" or "84 houses," because it is said that the Aghria originally consisted of 84 bansa and gotra. It is further believed that out of these 84 clans only 44 have come to Orissa. Each of these 84 clans had acquired one of three titles, so that 60 clans bear the title Patel, 18 the title Nayak and another 6 the title Choudhury. In the process of marriage these titles however play no decisive role, which means marriages can be arranged in both directions between all three categories. A distinction of clans in wife-giver or wife-taker clans or a status difference between clans could not be recognised and is not postulated by the Aghria.

Village exogamy as a preference/tendency is recognisable, but is not articulated as a strict rule in comparison to the bansa-/gotra-rule.

If Aghria wish to evade the bansa-/gotra-exogamy, this might eventually be possible by an adoption. This means, that, if bride and groom are of the same clan, one of them has to be adopted before the marriage by someone from another clan so that the rule is not broken formally.

3. Cross Cousin Marriage

The rule of cross cousin marriage seems to have been wide spread in former times with a preference for the matrilateral cross cousin (MBD), but marriage with the patrilateral cross cousin (FZD) was equally possible and practised. Nowadays this rule seems to loose its importance due to the existence of the sickle cell anaemia - a relatively frequent genetic defect, through which the red blood corpuscles are unable to bind enough oxygen. This can cause anaemia, disturbances of the blood circulation or a blocking of the capillaries, which leads to damages of the heart, the lungs and the brain, and even potential breakdown of these organs (Dey, 1997: 1-3). Sickle cell anaemia is a very sensitive topic, because if it is known, that cases of sickle cell exist in particular

families the marriage chances of these families are considerably reduced. Therefore only very limited information about this could be gathered so far.

However, many Aghria try to avoid cross cousin marriage and prefer structurally and spatially rather distant marriages to bypass the genetic defect. Obviously marriage with families with whom no kinship relation exists, were recommended by medical doctors in many cases. Therefore in my opinion a change is obvious from cross cousin marriage as a rule or MBD-marriage as preference towards completely new kinship ties. That does not mean that no more cross cousin marriages are arranged, but rather signifies that they are no more preferred as relationships, but they are still possible and in no way forbidden as in North India.

The research conducted by Dey (1997: 68) documents the frequency of cross cousin marriage among the Aghria in practice in two different regions: a northern region, including parts of the undivided districts Sambalpur and Sundargarh and a southern region, a part of the undivided Balangir district. The results are briefly presented in diagram G:

In the northern region the frequency of cross cousin marriages is roughly 10 per cent in a sample of 876 marriages. The higher percentage of marriages with the matrilateral cross cousin compared to the patrilateral cross cousin seems significant. In the southern region there is only a 5 per cent frequency of cross cousin marriages, but here the sample is far more limited in numbers. For that reason the data of the northern region are more reliable. However, significantly the percentage of MBD-marriages in both regions is around 5 per cent while the share of FZD-marriage amounts to only 1 per cent. In comparison with other case studies of cross cousin marriage analysed by Trautmann (1991 [1985]: 218 ff), who considered a frequency of cross cousin marriages between 10 to 30% as usual in practice, this case of 10% (or slightly less if the southern region is included) appears quite likely - especially if the additional factor, sickle cell anaemia, is taken into consideration.

Diagram G: Frequency of cross-cousin-marriages in two selected regions (adapted from Dey, 1997: 68)

Type of Marriage	*Northern Region*		*Southern Region*	
Marriage with cross cousin of 1.degree:				
matrilateral cross cousin	41	4.68 %	14	4.49 %
patrilateral cross cousin	12	1.37 %	3	0.96 %
Marriage with classificatory cross cousin[1]:	43	4.91 %	1	0.32 %
Percentage of cross cousin marriage	96	10.69 %	18	5.77 %
Number of marriages:	876	100 %	312	100 %

[1] The author distinguishes between "First cousin once removed", "First cousin twice removed", "Second cousin" and "Beyond second cousin" - a specification which remains unclarified for me. I have included all these categories under the label "Classificatory Cross Cousin" - as sufficient for the purpose.

If one takes sickling into account a detailed specification of these marriages according to the years or decades in which they were arranged would be desirable. Fortunately, Dey (1997: 70) provides such information for the northern region, which are reproduced in diagram H.

Diagram H: Frequency of cross-cousin-marriages in the last decades (adapted from Dey, 1997: 70)

Year of marriage	*Number of marriages*	*Cross cousin marriages absolute*	*percentage*
1916-1925	4	0	0 %
1926-1935	35	6	14.71 %
1936-1945	91	8	8.79 %
1946-1955	175	16	9.14 %
1956-1965	212	20	9.43 %
1966-1975	225	32	14.22 %
1976-1985	134	14	10.45 %
total	876	96	10.96 %

My hypothesis that the number of cross cousin marriages is currently declining because of the sickle cell anaemia and the predominant subjective feeling that sickling can be avoided through more distant relationships can neither be verified nor be falsified by the present data. Although the number of cross cousin marriages has decreased by roughly 5 per cent in the

decade 1975-1985, this is no proof for my hypothesis, because the number in the decades before was also rather low (around 10%). To support my thesis, which stands in opposition to the opinion of Dey (1997: 69), who considers the number of cross cousin marriages as relatively stable, more material particularly about the last 15 years is needed.

Furthermore, it would be necessary to obtain more data in addition to the ones reproduced to get an exact idea about the relation between the rule or ideal on the one hand and the practice on the other. For example, detailed information, why no cross cousin was married, would be desirable. It would be crucial to know, if a cross cousin in a marriageable age was available or not. Only with such data the adherence to the ideal could be clarified. On the level of practice apart from demographic factors which eesentially determine cross cousin marriages the individual strategies and aims are equally important. In a case observed by me a cross cousin marriage (MBD-marriage) was arranged, and it was argued, that through this marriage the maintenance of the relationship was secured. However, in the same family another cross cousin marriage could have been arranged between the younger siblings of the spouses. This did not happen and both sides explained that apart from the existing relation between the two families new marriages with other families were considered a topmost priority.

In practice a contradiction is revealed between cross cousin marriage on the one side and kinship terminology on the other. As shown above there is no distinction between cross and parallel cousins in the Aghria terminology, that means that all cousins are classified as brothers or sisters. Therefore in case of cross cousin marriage a classificatory sister is married. This can cause considerable confusion among the relatives especially regarding the form of address. The younger brother of a man, who has married his cross cousin, calls the wife of his elder brother "sister" as usual before this marriage, although she now stands in the relation of a bohu or eBW to him. In contrast to other ethnographical contexts (e.g. Trivedi, 1969 [1961]: 58 ff) in this case there is no adjustment of categories after marriage - the older relation and form of address continues to be the most important one.

4. Rules of Avoidance and Respect

As an essential part of the kinship system on the normative level the rules of avoidance not only determine behaviour, limit the contact between certain relatives, but can also indicate taboos regarding sexual relations and marriage and symbolise a status difference. These rules can also include a prohibition of contact with each other. This prohibition, however, was not verified by my own observations in all cases. Aghria informants mentioned three such rules: Firstly, HeB and yBW should avoid each other and it is expected that the yBW is veiled (*odhini*) in the presence of her HeB. Secondly, the relation between WeZ and yZH is subject to similar restrictions, but a veil may not be necessary. Thirdly, HMB and ZSW should avoid each other.

In addition to the rules of avoidance special respect towards all persons of the parents' generation is expected, not only towards father and mother, but also in relation to FB, MB or SpF and to FZ, MZ, SpM etc. Particularly the relation of respect towards the MB seems to be unusual considering other North Indian settings. In these cases ego usually has an intimate relation with his MB in contrast to his relations to the FB, MZH or FZH. Madan (1998 [1975]: 296-7) interprets this as latent deference of the MB in his role of a wife-giver towards ego. In contrast to that the MB can appear as an authoritative person in the context of the tribal society of Middle India as the example of the Juang documents (Pfeffer, 1983: 101). Also Parkin (1992: 190-1) argues that in spite of some exceptions the respect towards all persons of the parents' generation is a basic Middle Indian or "mundaic" pattern. Additionally he mentions the case of the Kharia, who also practice the third avoidance rule of the Aghria (HMB vs. ZSW).

Practically, the rules of avoidance between HeB and yBW prohibit all forms of contact, which means that they are almost "untouchable" to each other. A cup of tea, for example, is not given by the yBW directly to HeB - not into his hand -, but is put on the ground in front of him. In many cases the presence of her HeB is seen as a reason for the yBW to leave the room, if the presence of the HeB is not avoided in advance. However, if an unavoidable meeting takes place, the yBW usually veils her head, particularly the back

of her head and the hair, but not so much the face. The rule of avoidance between HeB and yBW seems to be the strongest in practice. Informants confirmed that the second rule (WeZ vs. yZH) is weaker in practice.

All three rules of avoidance stand in a certain conflict to the rules of cross cousin marriage in practice. Considering the third rule - avoidance between HMB and ZSW - and a case of matrilateral cross cousin marriage, it can be noticed that the father has to avoid his daughter (or a FB his BD) which is contradicted by my own observation. In a combination of the second rule of avoidance and a cross cousin marriage a brother should avoid his older sister, which again is not confirmed by the practice. However, the rule of avoidance between HeB and yBW is strictly observed even in cases of cross cousin marriage, which is then an avoidance between an elder classificatory brother (eB) and a younger classificatory sister (yZ).

5. Joking Relationships

In contrast to the rules of avoidance and relations of respect, a ritualised, public and partly obligatory joking is practised in several joking relationships. A special intimacy is in many cases attached to or expected from these joking relationships. In opposition to the rules of avoidance and respect, joking relationships can hint to a very familiar relationship and to possible sexual relations or later marriages, e.g. in levirate-relations. (Kolenda, 1990: 144; Parkin, 1992: 188) Generally joking can have an anti-structural or anti-hierarchical effect and can represent a certain, sometimes temporarily limited, symmetry in a relation (as far as a symmetrical joking is meant). Among the Aghria such joking relationships exist between 1. eBW and HyB; 2. WyB and eZH (sometimes extended to WeB, yZH, WBWB and ZHZH); 3. ZHZ and BWB and 4. nati/naten (all persons of the grandchildren's generation - perhaps including generation -4) and aja/ai (all persons of the grandparents generation - perhaps including the generation +4).

Additionally there are some joking relationships rather limited to certain contexts - first and foremost with persons of one's own generation, for example, between brothers and sisters, between brothers or between sisters, but generally also with BW, ZH etc. These joking relationships are of central importance during the wedding ceremonies and occasionally include persons of the grandparents or grandchildren's generation. In comparison to the concrete joking relationships between certain relatives first described these relationships do not play any role in daily life and therefore have to be characterised as weak joking.

In general, joking takes place within one's own generation or between persons of alternating generation, but never with relatives of the parent's generation, because they are entitled to respect. Additionally, one also does not joke with persons of the children's generation, particularly if these 'children' are older. Furthermore, joking with persons of the generations +3/-3 seems to be considered inappropriate, so it shows that joking is restricted to even generations.

In practice, jokes between eBW and HyB can be related to the marriage to be arranged for the HyB. In one case a eBW cracked jokes about the potential bride of her HyB. For example, she said that the family had already chosen a bride for him and only he, the potential groom, did not know it. As far as cross cousin marriage is concerned various relations can overlap, e.g. HyB and eBW can be classificatory siblings. Nevertheless, the joking is practised in such a case. An eBW or classificatory sister told her HyB or yB jokily that he could have married her younger sister and added that he should finally admit that he does not like her.

While joking relationships between HyB and eBW seems to be vivid joking with the grandparents is according to informants slowly declining, because the grandparents are more and more seen as persons entitled to respect. Joking with small children is generally accepted, although these relations are not institutionalised. For instance, a MB can crack jokes with his ZS or a FB with his BS, but in such cases the ZS or BS have to be very young and the joking is always one-sided from MB to ZS etc. not vice versa.

In the context of marriage, joking is on the one hand related to the bride and the groom, with whom a unilateral joking is practised, and on the other hand to the ritual functionaries, the so-called *suasen*, who are responsible for this kind of joking. During the wedding ceremonies

the *suasen*, who may belong to the bride's or groom's generation, but also the generations of the grandparents and grandchildren, have, for example, the task of anointing certain parts of the body of the bride and groom with turmeric and oil. Their faces do not have to be included in it, but many *suasen* anoint the face thoroughly as a form of joking particularly disliked by the bridal couple.

From other North Indian settings not only avoidance rules, but also joking relationships are well-known and well-documented. For example Karve (1998 [1953]: 61) and Vatuk (1975: 182-3) both describe, that the older male affinal relatives of their husbands (e.g. HeB) are usually avoided by the wives, what is somehow balanced by the joking relationships they have with the younger male affinal relatives (e.g. HyB). This close relation between avoidance and joking is also confirmed by Kolenda (1990: 118, 140) for her ethnographical context in UP, in which three joking relationships were institutionalised: 1. between HyB and eBW, 2. between WZ and ZH and 3. between wife's mother and husband's father.

At least two rules of the three found by Kolenda exist among the Aghria too, although the joking relationship WZ/ZH is limited to WeZ/yZH. Additionally the forms of intergenerational joking seem to be important in the case of the Aghria - particularly the joking between grandparents and grandchildren in the wider sense. As far as I know no such joking is known from the North, but such cases are well-documented in the tribal setting of Middle India, e.g. among the Juang (Pfeffer 1983: 100). As in these tribal cases the joking with the grandparents/grandchildren as well as the joking between ZHZ - BWB could imply the possibility of marriage, which again brings us back to the question of the ZHZ as a possibly preferred marriage partner.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE LEVELS - CONCLUSION

The kinship system of the Aghria first of all shows the impressive autonomy of the different levels - categories, rules and practice. Therefore, all three levels have to be analysed separately and contradictions between the levels are possible to a certain extent. For example the categories do not correspond to a pattern, which would be expected in relation to cross cousin marriage, which itself seems to be in the process of change. In addition to that the preferred form of cross cousin marriage - the matrilateral form - stands in a certain contradiction to the recognisable principal of alternation in the terminology, because in a matrilateral cross cousin marriage the marriage of one's father is repeated structurally. But as already shown certain inconsistencies between the levels are tolerable in practice, which means the functioning of the whole system is not in doubt, although a confusion might exist in some contexts, of which the Aghria themselves are aware.

The lacking congruence of the levels could be the result of different influences of various kinship systems. On the one hand the classification of generation 0, in particular the categorical distinction between wife-taker (ZH) and wife-giver (WB), to a large extent the lexic, the existence of gotra, but in parts also the avoidance and joking relationships (especially towards HeB and HyB) all that can be considered as typical for North India or the "indo-aryan" kinship system. On the other hand cross cousin marriage does characterise the South Indian or "dravidian" system essentially. The cross and parallel distinction in the parents' and children's generation - although not complete - also points to a similarity to the South and to the symmetrical prescriptive terminologies there.

Additionally the principle of alternation is recognisable not only in the terminology, but also in the pattern of avoidance and joking relationships and in the ritual functions. The principle of alternating generations or at least the partially existing distinction between even and uneven generations and their opposition is not known from northern or southern systems. This is also true of the predominant separation of the generations -1 to +1 in "elder" and "younger" or in "senior" and "junior," in which the "senior" is of superior status. All this presumably hints at a Middle Indian or "mundaic" influence. Similar pattern are described in the tribal setting of Orissa and Madhya Pradesh. Therefore the Aghria classified as "Other Backward Class" by the government

have to be seen not only as a synthesis of northern and southern elements, but also have to be understood from the perspective of the tribal society, to which they are linked in their settlements. To sum up, the Aghria kinship system cannot be assigned to any of the three kinship systems unambiguously, but combines various elements of these

NOTES

1. The following analysis is based on a two-months field research in an Aghria family in Sambalpur District, which was funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG). I would like to thank both - my hosts in Orissa and the DFG - for their support. Finally, the essay has to be understood as a "work in progress" rather than the end of my research.
2. Elaborate descriptions of relationships can be avoided through appropriate abbreviations, whereby I would stick to the following system (compare Trautmann, (1995 [1981]: 31)):

m.s.	*male speaker*	*f.s.*	*female speaker*		
F	father	M	mother	Ch	children
B	brother	Z	sister	Pa	parents
S	son	D	daughter	Sb	sibling
H	husband	W	wife	Sp	spouse
e	elder	y	younger		
W T	wife-taker	WG	wife-giver		
+2/+1	grandparents /parents generation	-2/-1	grandchildren's/ children's generation	0	ego's generation

   The relations mentioned above can be accordingly combined, to express second or third degree of relationship, for e.g. FF (father's father), MB (mother's brother), FZH (father's sister's husband), MyB (mother's younger brother), eZDy (elder sister's daughter, younger than ego) or FBSe (father's brother's son, elder than ego).
3. In analogy to the three big Indian or Southasian language families Karve (1998 [1953]: 50) and Trautmann (1995 [1981]: 19) recognised different kinship systems, for which they used the same terms: 1. the indo-aryan, 2. the dravidian and 3. the mundaic kinship system (the assumption for the Munda-system is also shared by Parkin, 1992: ix). In my opinion it seems possible, that the speakers of a particular language family share in many cases the same or a very similar kinship system. However, it is not possible to draw a priori any conclusion about the kinship system from the language family and vice versa as Boas (1911: 133) shows comparing different ethnographical cases. Also Karve (1998 [1953]: 51), Trautmann (1995 [1981]: 19, 122) and Parkin (1992: ix) accept that considering many exceptions from the formulated analogy and indirectly oppose any form of linguistic determinism. In this regard the situation in Orissa is particularly complex, because several groups are bilingual or are able to speak even more languages or different parts of a group speak various languages. According to Elwin (1991 [1942]: xxix) parts of the Agaria-tribe speak Hindi, an indo-aryan language, while other groups speak a Munda-language. A correlation between language and kinship system seems rather unlikely in such cases. In general does a common classification of language families and kinship systems under the same term rather contribute to a certain confusion, which Barnard / Good (1984: 59) try to avoid in regard to the dravidian system by using the term with and without quotation marks. New terms could help to make the distinction - language family vs. kinship system - clear. Instead of the terms for the language families I prefer to use rather geographical terms - North Indian ("indo-aryan"), South Indian ("dravidian") and Middle Indian ("mundaic") to denote the kinship systems, although these terms are also not totally free of a geographic determinism, which, however is not implied. Like Barnard/Good I use the terms for the language families only in quotation marks if they refer to kinship systems.
4. Trautmann prefers the term "consanguine" instead of "kin." Both these terms can be understood as "blood relatives" only inadequately, as this would primarily suggest biological ties and would not include the social dimension of kinship. In the following I use "kin" synonymously with "consanguine."
5. Pfeffer (1983: 118) does not explicitly postulate a Middle Indian kinship system, but seems to recognise it implicitly.
6. For a comprehensive study of the dualistic culture of the Juang see Pfeffer (1994).
7. Conzelmann (1996: 381) mentions the existence of terms for the generation of the great-grandparents.
8. The collection of all kinship terms in the Oriya script (and not only the English script/translation) has not yet been completed. Therefore, the stated hypothesis has to be verified in a second research period later this year.

REFERENCES

Barnard, A. and A. Good. 1984. *Research Practices in*

the Study of Kinship. London: Academic Press.
Boas, F. 1911. *The Mind of Primitive Man*. New York: MacMillan.
Conzelmann, E. 1996. *Heirat, Gabe, Status. Kaste und Gesellschaft in Mandi*. Berlin: Arabisches Buch.
Dey, A. 1997. Sickle Cell Gene: Its Pattern of Distribution and Association with Natural Selection (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Sambalpur University). Sambalpur.
Dumont, L. 1983 [1953]. "The Dravidian Kinship Terminology as an Expression of Marriage," (pp. 3-17) in L. Dumont *Affinity as a Value*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
____. 1966. "Marriage in India. The Present State of the Question (III). North India in Relation to South India," *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, 9: 90-114.
Elwin, V. 1991 [1942]. *The Agaria*. Delhi: Vanya Prakashan/Oxford University Press.
Good, A. 1991. *The Female Bridegroom. A Comparative Study of Life-Crisis Rituals in South India and Sri Lanka*. Oxford: Clarendon.
Jamous, R. 1992. "The Brother-married-sister Relationship and Marriage Ceremonies as Sacrificial Rites: A Case Study from Northern India," (pp. 52-73) in D. de Coppet (ed.), *Understanding Rituals*. London: Routledge.
Karve, I. 1998 [1953]. "The Kinship Map of India," (pp. 50-73) in P. Uberoi (ed.), *Family, Kinship and Marriage in India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
Kolenda, P. 1990. "Untouchable Churas through their Humor," (pp. 116-53) in O. M. Lynch (ed.), *Divine Passions. The Social Construction of Emotion in India*. Berkeley.
Madan, T.N. 1998 [1975]. "The Structural Implications of Marriage in North India: Wife-givers and Wife-takers among the Pandits of Kashmir," (pp. 287-306) in P. Uberoi (ed.), *Family, Kinship and Marriage in India*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
Needham, R. 1973. "Prescription," *Oceania*, 42: 166-81.
Parkin, R. 1992. *The Munda of Central India. An Account of their Social Organization*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
Pfeffer, G. 1983. "Generation and Marriage in Middle India: the Evolutionary Potential of 'Restricted Exchange'," *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, 17 (1): 87-121.
____. 1994. "The Dualistic Culture of the Juang," (pp. 103-16) in G. C. Tripathi and H. Kulke (eds.), *Religion and Society in Eastern India*. New Delhi: Manohar.
Pocock, D.F. 1972. *Kanbi and Patidar*. Oxford: Clarendon.
Trautmann, T.R. 1995 [1981]. *Dravidian Kinship*. New Delhi: Vistaar.
Trivedi, H.R. 1969 [1961]. *The Mers of Saurashtra. An Exposition of their Social Structure and Organization*. Baroda: Baroda University.
Vatuk, S. 1969. "A Structural Analysis of the Hindi Kinship Terminology," *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, 3 (n.s.): 94-115.
____. 1975. "Gifts and Affines in North India," *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, 9 (n.s.): 155-96.