

Kinship in Western Uttar Pradesh A Re-interpretation of Sylvia Vatuk's Model of North Indian Kinship

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ABSTRACT This article is based upon my M.A. thesis. The task of the thesis was to analyse different models of kinship in northern India in a comparative way. I analysed the models of structural approaches by Dumont and Vatuk, the componential and reflectionist analysis by Scheffler and Turner, the approaches of cultural anthropology by Fruzzetti and Östör as well as Inden and Nicholas and the functionalist model by Tambiah. After the analysis of these different models I offered my own hypothesis concerning the kinship system of northern India on the basis of Vatuk's data on kinship in western Uttar Pradesh. In contrast to Vatuk and Dumont I came to the conclusion that affinity has a diachronic dimension not just on the analytical level of institutionalised acts and forms of behaviour, but as well on the level of kinship terminology. For the sake of brevity I will restrict myself in this article to the debate between Dumont and Vatuk and my own hypothesis.

INTRODUCTION

This article deals with the debate between Dumont and Vatuk concerning the kinship system of northern India. My main assumption for the analysis of a kinship system is the separation of two different levels on which a kinship system manifests itself. The separation of these two different levels of kinship systems, which themselves have to be regarded as systems, was introduced into social anthropology by Lévi-Strauss (1977). He called them the "système des appellations" and the "système des attitudes" respectively. On the first one of these levels, which Needham (1973) called the categorial level of kinship, the analysis of the terminology of the kinship system takes place. The second level of a kinship system, according to Needham the normative level of kinship, deals with an analysis of all the institutionalised acts and forms of behaviour between kin, such as gift exchange, marriage rules, avoiding and joking relationships

etc. It is, however, important to emphasise that these two levels of a kinship system are separated only for analytical purposes. After a separate analysis the categorial and the normative subsystem of the kinship system have to be seen together, in order to establish whether the two subsystems are structured in an analogous way or not. This assumption is a structuralist one and it is in all its consequences not followed by the representatives of the componential analysis and the cultural and the functional approaches. The representatives of a componential analysis such as Scheffler (1980) share the assumption that a categorial level has to be kept separate from the normative level of kinship, but they restrict their analysis to the categorial level, because in their opinion the normative level does not form a proper system in itself, it is too much dependent upon the personal life experience of the informants. In contrast to the representatives of the structural and componential analysis the cultural anthropologists such as Inden, Nicholas, Fruzzetti and Östör refuse to analyse systems of kinship terminology. They refuse to undertake a structural or componential analysis of terminology systems, because they regard the scientific terms of social anthropology such as descent, alliance, affinity and consanguinity as eurocentric constructs. According to their approach an analysis of a kinship system has to be linked to the analysis of indigenous conceptions of the body (Frzzetti and Östör, 1976a, 1976b; Inden and Nicholas, 1977). They define the anthropological concepts of affinity, consanguinity etc. as waterproof, substantialist categories, useless for cross-cultural comparison. The representative of the functionalist approach who wrote about North India, Stanley Tambiah (1973, 1989), is not concerned with the terminologies

people use to pattern their social relationships, but he solely analyses the transmittance of material goods across lines of descent or alliance.

I will present the different hypotheses of the kinship systems of northern India in two parts. Assuming the standpoint of the structuralist approach I will first discuss the different results concerning the terminology systems, followed by my own interpretation, which will show that in these systems not only consanguinity but also affinity contains a diachronic dimension. The second part of this article will deal with the normative level of the kinship systems of northern India. In this part I want to show that the gift exchange in the context of life-cycle rituals and rites of passage comprises a system in itself.

My own analysis relies mostly upon the data presented by Sylvia Vatuk in her papers "A structural analysis of Hindi kinship terminology" (1969) and "Gifts and affines in North India" (1975). I will work essentially with the data presented in these articles because they offer the most complete list of both the kinship terms and their genealogical referents on one side (see Appendix) and the different kinds of givers and receivers of ceremonial presentations. Also Turner (1975) and Dumont (1975) have based their analysis on the data presented in these two articles.

THE HINDI KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY SYSTEM

In his article "Marriage in India: the present state of the question III" (1966) Dumont offered a hypothesis that can be described as the starting point of the debate about kinship in North India. Dumont stated in this article that the North Indian kinship terminologies do not contain an opposition between affinal and consanguineal relatives. The lack of this clear opposition is due to the fact that the North Indian kinship terminologies are egocentric in type and do not rest upon simple principles of opposition, they are descriptive and do not have a structure in the strict sense of the word (ibid.: 96). This statement derives from his problems with the definition of the terms for consanguineal relatives in Ego's generation, *bhai* ("B")¹ and *bahen* ("Z"). The problems with defining these categories arises from his assumption that the definition of a cer-

tain term should be the same on all levels. But the term *bhai*, to which he restricts his further analysis, adding that the situation concerning the term *bahen* is exactly the same, can have a wide connotation designating under the exclusion of affinal relatives all male alters in one's own generation and caste (ibid.: 99). Whereas it seems that in the parental generation, where the term *bhai* does not occur directly but where it is decisive for defining the categories *caca/caci* ("FB/FBW") and *mama/mami* ("MB/MBW"), it has a more restricted meaning, designating only the "true" (*sage*) *bhai* of the parents. But due to his assumption that a term has to carry the same meaning over all the generations he has to reject this definition of the term *bhai* on the parental level and defines *bhai* as: "a relative who is either a proper brother or a son of one of the couples formed by the 'brother' (or the 'sister') of the father (or of the mother) and his (or her) spouse." (ibid.)

After this definition a *bhai* is a male alter of the same generation with whom one is related through a relative of an ascending generation, so that siblingship is a "double relationship of filiation from a common ancestor" (ibid.: 100). The category *bhai* is thereby following Dumont an empirical one and not a logical, because siblingship ceases to exist at the same time when the memory of a common ancestor ceases. Furthermore, the usage to designate all members of one's own caste who are of approximately the same age as *bhai* or *bahen* can be explained with this definition, because in a very wide sense all members of an endogamous caste can be regarded as being related through blood ties. But on this level the categories *bhai* and *bahen* are all-encompassing, because there is no other category which stands in opposition to them. This means that the relationship between affines as for example between Ego and his *sala* ("WB") is transformed on the next higher level into a consanguineal one.

In his opinion the opposition of affinal and consanguineal relatives comes only to the fore when one takes into account the normative aspects of a kinship system, i.e. the system of gift exchanges and marriage rules. In addition he states that only on this level the opposition of affinity and consanguinity reveals a diachronic

dimension. The wife-givers of adjacent generations like the mother's brother and the wife's brother fulfil similar functions during life-cycle rituals and rites of passage, they are the givers of ceremonial presentations. The wife-takers and the female agnates whom they married are the receivers of these gifts and as such stand in opposition to their wife-givers. Dumont gives in his above cited article an example of how the relationship between wife-givers and wife-takers manifests itself during a mourning ceremony. The Sarjupari Brahmins of eastern Uttar Pradesh choose a wife-taking affine for fulfilling the services of a *purohita*, because they claim the highest status in that region and, therefore, cannot engage a member of another Brahmin caste as *purohita*. But the fact that they choose this kind of relative for fulfilling the *purohita*'s services indicates that the relationship between wife-takers and wife-givers is modelled in an analogous way to the relationship between Brahmins and lower castes, a relation that rests on status. The distinction of affinal relatives of a wife-taking side, a wife-giving side and of consanguineal relatives derives, according to Dumont, not from a pure kinship principle as it is the case in the South, but it is the caste principle of hierarchy which gives the North Indian kinship system its structure (ibid.: 95).

In contrast to Dumont to whom the Hindi kinship terminology obliterates the structure of the North Indian kinship system instead of revealing it, Vatuk states that the terminology is a clear expression of it and that it is as such recognised by the people using it (1969: 96). She claims that Dumont considered the Hindi kin terms not consistently enough as denotata of categories or classes of kin. According to Vatuk he regards them only as descriptive of certain genealogical relation which leads him to the conclusion that the Hindi kinship terminology does not constitute a system in the strict sense. Vatuk states in her article on the Hindi kinship terminology the hypothesis that it has a tripartite structure dividing the relatives in Ego's generation into relatives of a wife-giving group, relatives of a wife-taking group and relatives of one's own group. Furthermore, the Hindi kinship terminology has following Vatuk an extensionistic character, because the wife-givers of one's wife-givers are

designated by the same term as one's wife-givers, i.e. *sala* ("WB/ WBWB"). The same holds true for the wife-takers of one's wife-takers, they both are *jija* ("ZH/ ZHZH"). The referents to which the consanguineal terms *bhai* ("B") and *bahen* ("Z") are extended are called by Vatuk "quasi-consanguineal" relatives. The extension of these terms encompasses the siblings of one's spouse's same sex sibling's spouse as well as the spouses of one's sibling's spouse's same sex sibling. But this extension is according to Vatuk not due to the all-encompassing meaning of the terms *bhai* and *bahen*, neither is it included in Dumont's definition of siblingship as a double relationship of filiation from a common ancestor (see above). This rule of extension turns people into consanguines or equals who stand as wife-givers or wife-takers in the same position towards a single wife-taking or wife-giving group respectively. Vatuk and Turner both related this extensionistic feature of the Hindi kinship terminology of Western Uttar Pradesh to the hypergamic conceptualisation of marriage alliances which is taken to be prevailing in northern India. The wife-givers of one's wife-givers are classified together with one's wife-givers because they both are in a position of inferior status towards one's own group and in the same way are the wife-takers of one's wife-takers in a superior position towards one's own group. Analogous to this the "quasi-consanguineal" relationship between *SbSpssSbSp* and *SpssSbSpSb* derives from the same position these referents occupy towards either one's wife-takers or one's wife-givers (Vatuk, 1969: 101), or as Turner expressed it: "WG²" = "WG," "WT²" = "WT," "WG" x "WT" = "C" and "WT" x "WG" = "C" (1975: 285). This result leads Vatuk to the conclusion that Hindi kinship terminology is an expression of marriage, because it structures the kinship universe into affines of a wife-taking group, affines of a wife-giving group and consanguines.

Concluding the terminological part of this article I want to formulate a hypothesis concerning the relationship of affinity and consanguinity in the terminology of the three central generations as described by Vatuk. The terms used to designate relatives of the first ascending generation are *mama/mami* ("MB/ MBW"), *mausi/mausa* ("MZ/ MZH"), *caca/caci* ("FB/ FBW")²

and *bua/phupha* ("FZ/ FZH"). The first three of these terminological couples only differ in the ending indicating the sex of alter, i.e. *-a* for males and *-i* for females. The only exception are the terms designating the father's sister and her husband.³ Although these terms also comprise a common linguistic root (Dumont, 1962: 16), they do not fit in the scheme of collateral relatives of the first ascending generation. Therefore I assume that these terms denote two distinct categories whereas the terms *mama/mami*, *mausi/mausa* and *caca/caci* each form a category on their own. This assumption is in accordance with Dumont's method as proposed in the article "The Dravidian Kinship Terminology as an Expression of Marriage" (1953). An important point of this method is that he considers in the analysis only "the distinctiveness of the terms denoting the classes, quite irrespective of their linguistic form," an assumption which allowed him to reject linguistic differences which do not express an opposition of classes (Dumont, 1983: 8). Among these linguistic differences which do not express an opposition of classes are on one hand distinct terms encompassing exactly the same denotata and on the other hand terms which are just differentiated by affixes, for example the terms *mama/mami*, etc. The reason why the father's sister and her husband contrast as a pair with all other collateral couples of the first ascending generation can in my opinion be explained by the idea that he is an affinal relative, whereas all others are consanguines. This would mean that only affinal relatives from the wife-giving side are transformed in the next generation into consanguineal ones and that the affines of the wife-taking side remain affines. Differentiating the relatives of the first ascending generation according to whether they belong to a wife-taking side or a wife-giving side, the *mausa*, the husband of one's mother's sister, is in a somewhat ambiguous position. He is a wife-taker of the wife-givers of Ego's father. But that he belongs to the consanguineal relatives is in perfect accordance with Vatuk's definition of "quasi-siblingship." He is a wife-taker in relation to the same group as one's father is. If the MZH would not be a "quasi-consanguineal" relative, he should just like the FZH be considered as an affine. Exactly this seems to be the case in the

Bengali kinship terminology. Fruzzetti and Östör strongly criticise Vatuk's "quasi-sibling" rule, arguing that such an equation does not exist in the Bengali terminology (1976a: 81). The Bengali terms for designating collateral relatives of the first ascending generation are *kaka/ kaki* ("FB/ FBW"), *mama/ mamima* ("MB/ MBW"), *pisima/ pisi masay* ("FZ/ FZH") and *masima/ mesa masay* ("MZ/ MZH") (ibid.: 73). It is obvious that the terms for FZH and MZH differ from those designating MB and FB. This is an indication that in the Bengali terminology system not only the father's sister's husband but as well the mother's sister's husband is regarded as an affine. Both are wife-taking affines of the first ascending generation.

If it is true that in the parental generation only affines of a wife-giving side transform into consanguines and that those of a wife-taking side remain affines what consequences does this have for the reciprocal relationships with the first descending generation? In my opinion it is possible to derive from this that relatives of a wife-giving side are consanguineal relatives and those of the wife-taking side affinal ones in the first descending generation too. This would mean that the term for WBS and WBD, *bhatija/ bhatiji*, is a consanguineal term and the term for ZS and ZD, *bhanja/ bhanji*, is an affinal one. These considerations concerning affinity and consanguinity in the terminology to designate relatives of the first ascending and descending generations affect as well the terminological configuration in ego's generation. The relationships in ego's generation can be differentiated into relationships between same-sex siblings and those between opposite-sex siblings. The terms designating FB and FBW are consanguineal terms as well as the term for BS and BD. This indicates that the relationship between two brothers is irrespective of age differences a relationship of symmetry and consanguinity. The terms for MZ and MZH carry a consanguineal meaning as well, but the reciprocal terms are *bhanja* and *bhanji* I described as terms containing an affinal meaning. This leads to the conclusion that the relationship between two sisters is a symmetric and consanguineal one, and that affinity plays only a subordinate role. This differs from the relationships in the first ascending and descending generation which

rest upon a brother-sister relationship in ego's generation. The terms for MB and MBW carry a consanguineal meaning and the reciprocal ones an affinal meaning. The situation concerning the relationship between FZ, FZH and BS and BD is vice versa. Here the relationship to the relatives of the first ascending generation is characterised by affinity whereas the reciprocal relationship with the first descending generation is a consanguineal one. This indicates in my opinion that the brother-sister relationship is characterised by both affinity and consanguinity and it means as well that the female perspective on affinity and consanguinity differs from the male one. If, as I suggested, *mama* and *mami* as well as the *bhatija* and *bhatiji* are consanguineal terms this indicates that from the perspective of a female ego the brother belongs to the consanguineal relatives. In contrast to the female perspective stands the male one. The terms *bua*, *phupha*, *bhanja* and *bhanji* connote affinity and this leads to the conclusion that a male ego reckons his sister to the affinal relatives.

GIFTEXCHANGE AND THE CATEGORY OF THE *DHYANE*

Following Dumont Vatuk tries to verify her conclusions concerning the tripartite structure of the Hindi kinship terminology through an analysis of the system of gift exchanges. In her article "Gifts and affines in North India" (1975) she comes to the conclusion that on the level of ceremonial presentations between relatives exists a threefold structure too. The wife-givers keep on giving gifts to their wife-takers at the occasions of all major ceremonies and rituals without receiving any counter-gifts. This relation between affines contrasts with the relations between male agnates, friends and neighbours which are characterised by "delayed balanced reciprocal exchanges," i.e. the gift contributions which one family forwards to male agnates, friends of the family and neighbours are given back at the next similar occasion in exactly the same amount (ibid.: 166). The asymmetry in the relation between wife-givers and wife-takers changes slightly as Vatuk and later on also Dumont state when the three groups, i.e. wife-takers, wife-givers and consanguines, are to-

gether opposed to a new wife-giver as it is the case when the son of a family gets married. This hypothesis results from their interpretation of the distribution by the wife-takers side of the saris received from the wife-givers. The saris form a crucial part of the affinal gift called *dat* or *dahej*. This gift accompanies the bride to the house of her bridegroom and apart from certain items which are for the personal use of the bride it is distributed on the side of the wife-takers. Vatuk gives one example of the distribution of the saris which she says is exemplary. In this example the FM, MBSW and MM of the bridegroom receive one sari, the FFM just like the FBW, MZ and MBW three, the MZD two and to the FZ as well as the Z are given five saris. Vatuk (1975: 194) and Dumont (1975: 213) consider the inclusion of women of a wife-giving side like MM, MZ, MBW, MZD and MBSW as a slight shift from a former strict asymmetry in the wife-giver-wife-taker relationship towards symmetry. The fact that the outmarried female agnates like the bridegroom's sister and his father's sister receive a higher amount of saris indicates in their eyes a quantitative difference and not a qualitative one.

But the hypothesis that the relationship between wife-givers and wife-takers contains despite its asymmetric structure an aspect of symmetry is not just build upon the distribution of *dahej*. Vatuk describes in the above cited article that among the Gaur Brahmins of western Uttar Pradesh there exists a category *dhyani*, which designates all women to whom one has a gift-giving obligation (1975: 180). The women who fall into this category are in ascending generations all the women who are related to one's F and FF as sisters, in ego's generation all the women ego designates as sisters and in descending generations all *beti* (D), *bhatiji* (BD), *bhanji* (ZD), *poti* (SD) and *dhevti* (DD). But the category *dhyani* has also a masculine form, *dhyana*, which designates all the husbands of the *dhyani*. Furthermore, the plural form *dhyane* encompasses not only all the women to whom one has a gift-giving obligation but also all the members of the *dhyani*'s conjugal households. Vatuk therefore defines the *dhyane* category as a category designating the wife-takers plus the women through which the relationship with the wife-takers was established (ibid.). But the composition

of the categories *dhyani* and *dhyane* depends on the sex of ego. The composition of the category as mentioned above is just valid for a male ego. For a female ego only women of descending generations, i.e. the *bhatiji*, *bhanji*, *poti* and *dhevti* and the members of their conjugal households fall into this category, because female relatives of descending generations are already *dhyani* for their female relatives of ascending generations and the designation *dhyani* can never be used in a self-reciprocal way. The aspect of symmetry in the relationship between wife-givers and wife-takers now derives from the fact that a married couple jointly fulfills the obligation of giving gifts to the *dhyani* which means that a man has not only the obligation to give gifts to his wife-takers but also his wife-givers, i.e. to the married daughters of his wife's brothers and sisters.

Dumont does not agree with all the conclusions Vatuk formulates concerning the categories *dhyani* and *dhyane*. Vatuk regards the category *dhyane* as an extension of the category *dhyani* and the *dhyani* as the primary recipients of the gifts flowing from the wife-givers to the wife-takers. For her the gift-giving obligation towards the *dhyane* is just a derivative of the former obligation and serves to secure the well-being of the outmarried daughter or sister in her conjugal home (ibid.: 193). Dumont claims the opposite. For him the term *dhyane* designates all the wife-takers of a certain group and the women through which these relationships were established. Therefore the *dhyani* are not the primary recipients of the gifts passing from the wife-givers to the wife-takers, but they are recipients among the other recipients of the *dhyane* category. Dumont, however, agrees with Vatuk's conclusion that the composition of the *dhyane* category from the perspective of a married couple reveals an aspect of symmetry in the asymmetrical relationship between wife-givers and wife-takers.

I agree with Dumont's interpretation that the *dhyani* is not the primary recipient of the gifts, but that these gifts are affinal ones given by wife-givers to their wife-takers, the *dhyane*, and that the *dhyani* as a gift recipient is seen as one of them. The crucial point in the composition of the *dhyane* category is in my opinion that it only designates the recipients of affinal gifts from the

perspective of the wife-givers. Vatuk does not mention that there exists a category designating affinal relatives who have the obligation to give gifts. As a wife-taker it is not possible to refer to the group of people from whom one receives affinal gifts, there is no encompassing term designating all the wife-givers as a group. This leads to the conclusion that the kinship universe of the Gaur Brahmins divides into relatives who are *dhyane* to ego and those who are not. This would mean that the kinship system does not have a threefold structure, but a twofold one. Furthermore, if the relatives falling into the *dhyane* category have to be considered as affinal relatives then all the others who are opposed to them should be considered as consanguineal ones. In my opinion it is therefore possible to state that affinity is defined in the kinship system of the Gaur Brahmins of Uttar Pradesh through the giving of women and gifts and not through receiving them.

This result is consistent with my hypothesis concerning the terminology as proposed in the first part of this article. The category *dhyane* encompasses all the terms of the three central generations which I considered as affinal terms. In the first ascending generation only the *bua* and the *phupha* fall into the *dhyane* category and these are as well the only relatives of this generation which I labelled as affinal relatives. Furthermore, I supposed that the situation in the Bengali kinship terminology should be different, because there not only the form of the term for FZH but as well for MZH differs from the terminological scheme in the first ascending generation and according to Inden and Nicholas they both fall into a category, which can be defined as an affinal category⁴. In the first descending generation all the female relatives *beti* (D), *bhatiji* (BD) and *bhanji* (ZD) are *dhyani*, but it is only the son of one's sister, *bhanja*, who belongs to the *dhyane* and not the son of one's brother. In ego's generation all women who are *bahen* to ego and their husbands fall into the *dhyane* category. The fact that the WBD falls into the *dhyane* category of a male ego does neither contradict my hypothesis nor does it indicate a shift from an asymmetrical wife-taker-wife-giver relationship towards symmetry. She is a relative of a wife-giving side and as such regarded as a consanguine. Regarding the

dhyane category, her FZH has the same gift-giving obligations towards her and the group she is married to as her father and father's brother. But towards her brother, the *bhatiji*, these obligations do not exist just as a father or father's brother have no gift-giving obligations towards him. The situation concerning the relationship between MZH and MZ on one side and WZS/D and ZS/D on the other side is somewhat different. I said that in this configuration the relationships to the first descending generation are characterised by affinity, because here the *bhanji* as well as the *bhanja* fall into the *dhyane* category. But this relationship is an absolutely symmetrical one, because it rests upon a relationship between two sisters and therefore one could describe the obligation of two sisters to give their respective children gifts as a delayed balanced reciprocal exchange just like Vatuk does concerning the obligation of two brothers to give their respective daughters gifts (1975: 166).

HYPERGAMY

Vatuk and Dumont as well as other authors writing about kinship systems of northern India linked their results to the hypergamous conceptualisation of marriage alliances in this region. The term "hypergamy" means that the wife-takers have a superior status towards their wife-givers. This type of marriage is the ideal in northern India, but it is most consequently practised only by very high ranking castes as Brahmans and Rajputs. Dumont works out in his article "Marriage in India, the present state of the question II" (1964) a quite exact definition of the anthropological term hypergamy, but I will restrict myself here only to the points which are of interest for my thesis. Dumont defines isogamy as a type of marriage in which a status difference between the parents leads to a loss of status for both the marriage itself and the children resulting from this union, whereas hypergamy means that a man marries a woman of either the same status or of a slightly lower status. What is crucial in the case of hypergamy is that a marriage between a man and a woman of slightly lower status does not end in a degradation of that union and its offspring (ibid.: 87). Dumont called this the "normative neutralisation" of status differ-

ences. From the perspective of the husband and his group it is unimportant whether his wife is of the same status or of a slightly lower, because the status of the children will not be affected by the status difference, whereas from the perspective of the wife and her family the status changes when she is married in a hypergamous union. According to Dumont a hypergamous union leads to an increase of prestige for the wife-givers (ibid.: 89; 1980: 117), so that he defines the term "hypergamy" as referring "to wife-giving as contributing indirectly to the status of a group perpetuating itself through males" (ibid.).

The hypergamous marriage in northern India is called *kanya dan* ("gift of a maiden"). The *kanya dan* is a religious gift like all gifts which are classified as *dana* (Parry, 1986: 459) and these gifts have to be given to a worthy recipient, otherwise they would endanger the giver of *dana*, because the giver of *dana* is according to the classical theory of *dana* considered to be identical with the gift, like the sacrificer is considered to be identical with the sacrifice (ibid.: 461). Like Parry, Jamous works out common features concerning the conception of sacrifice and gift. But whereas for Parry the relationship between sacrifice and gift is evolutionary in the sense that the identification of sacrifice and sacrificer was transmitted to the theory of the gift, for Jamous these similarities are structural in kind. He compares the bride with the sacrifice, her father with the sacrificer and the bridegroom with the priest who accompanies the sacrifices and with the divinity receiving the sacrifice (Parry, 1992: 63). The bride has been purified through the premarital rituals. Being decorated with jewelry she is no more an "object," but in a certain sense holy, just like the gifts offered to the Brahmans. A bride is on her first visit to the bridegrooms house decorated like a goddess during processions (ibid.: 69, footnote 10). Furthermore, Jamous sees an analogy between the role a married woman plays in her parental household and the food remnants of sacrificial rituals. The sister or daughter is being transformed through the marriage ritual so that she can officiate during rituals when she returns to her parental home for attending life-cycle rituals and rites of passage (ibid.: 66).

This role, which a married daughter or sister plays in her parental home, comes to the fore in

Vatuk's descriptions of gift exchanges during the life-cycle rituals of the Gaur Brahmins. She and her husband officiate during these rituals and they receive ritual prestations for it, called *neg* (Vatuk, 1975: 169). It is the married sister who performs the ritual of *cucci dhuai*, the "washing of the breasts of a new mother," at the time when her brother's wife gives birth to a child, a ritual which is supposed to purify the relationship between a mother and her child (ibid.: 170).

On the basis of the fact that a sister transforms through the marriage ritual, in which she is given to a bridegroom of superior status, into an officiant of rituals in her parental home, hypergamy in northern India should not only be considered as indirectly contributing to the status of wife-givers, as Dumont did. The reciprocity in the relationship between wife-givers and wife-takers finds an additional expression in the process of transformation itself, through which the wife-givers receive an officiant which is necessary for the performance of life-cycle rituals and rites of passage.

CONCLUSION

From the above presented material I will draw the following conclusions. The relationship between wife-takers and wife-givers is comparable with the relationship of the priest who accompanies the sacrifice or the gift, i.e. the Brahmin or *purohita*, to the patron who offers the sacrifice or gift, the *yajamana*. It is important to note in this context that the superiority of status which a wife-taker occupies towards his wife-giver, does not result from the "gift of a maiden," the *kanya dan*, which initiates the relationship between them. The one implies the other and vice versa, to the effect that it is not possible to stipulate cause and effect in this relationship (Jamous, 1992: 69). But not only the status differences go together with the *kanya dan*, but also the affinity in this relationship. Affinity is in the kinship system of the Gaur Brahmins of western Uttar Pradesh defined as the giving of women and goods. This has been shown by the analysis of the *dhyane* category.

It exists only an ego-centred category which consists of affinal relatives of a wife-taking side, and there exists no reciprocal category which

consists of affinal relatives from whom one can expect gifts. In my opinion it is possible to conclude from this that the central value of affinity in western Uttar Pradesh is the giving of women and goods, or as Inden and Nicholas expressed it in their analysis of the Bengali kinship system, the giving of bodily and non-bodily substances. They state in their analysis that it belongs to the most important duties of the head of a household to act as a *yajamana*, as the one who spends a sacrifice. But the supreme duty of a householder is according to them to marry the daughter off through giving her as a *kanya dan* to the wife-takers, i.e. to act as a wife-giver (Inden & Nicholas, 1977: 7). I think that the central position which the giving of bodily and non-bodily substances occupies on the normative level of the kinship system of the Gaur Brahmins is consistent with the results of the analysis of the categorial level. On the terminological level only the affinal relatives of the wife-taking side remain affines from a diachronic perspective. These are the relatives who fall into the *dhyane* category, i.e. the category encompassing the relatives to whom ego is related as a wife-giver. In contrast to these relationships stand the relationships to relatives of a wife-giving side, which are not characterised by affinity, but by consanguinity. Affinity as well as status differences are denied in the relation from wife-takers to their wife-givers. The recipient of women and other gifts is only of importance to the giver. From the perspective of the receiver the giver does not play such a central role. This assumption is in my opinion in accordance with Dumont's definition of hypergamy as the "normative neutralisation" of status differences. The slightly lower status of the wife-givers is neutralised concerning the children resulting from this union. But the differences of status play a central role in the reciprocal relationship of the wife-givers to their wife-takers. Only because of this status difference is it possible that the daughter or sister who has been given away, can return to her parental home for fulfilling ritual functions during life-cycle rituals and rites of passage. This means that status differences, affinity and the gifts classified as *dana* all point into the same direction, they flow from wife-givers to wife-takers.

APPENDIX

The following grid of the Hindi kinship terminology is a reprint from the one Vatuk presented in his article "A structural analysis of a Hindi kinship terminology" (1969).

1. The abbreviations I use in this article for the different kintypes are the same ones Vatuk uses in her 1966 article.
2. In this analysis the terms for FeB and FeBW are not included, because they were also not been included in the analysis of Vatuk (1966), Dumont

Term	genealogical referent	partial content of category
(1) <i>baba</i>	FF	FFB, FMB, FFZH, FMZH, FZHF, FZHFB, FZHMB, FZHfZH, FZHMZH, MZHF, MZHFB, MZHMB, MZHfZH, MZHMZH
<i>dadi</i>	FM	W of <i>baba</i>
<i>nana</i>	MF	MFB, MMB, MFZH, MMZH, MBWF, MBWFB, MBWMB, MBWFZH, MBWMZH, FBWF, FBWFB, FBWMB, FBWFZH, FBWMZH
<i>nani</i>	MM	W of <i>nana</i>
<i>dadasara</i>	HFF/ WFF	<i>baba</i> of H/ W
<i>dadas</i>	HFM/ WFM	<i>dadi</i> of H/ W
<i>nanasara</i>	HMF/ WMF	<i>nana</i> of H/ W
<i>nanas</i>	HMM/ WMM	<i>nani</i> of H/ W
(2) <i>caca/ tau</i>	FyB/ FeB	FFBS, FMBS, FFZS, FMZS
<i>caci/ tai</i>	FyBW/ FeBW	W of <i>caca/ tau</i>
<i>mama</i>	MB	MFBS, MMBS, MFZS, MMZS, MBWB, MBWBWB, FBWB, FBWBWB, FBWBWZH, MZHBWB, MBWZH, MBWBWZH
<i>mami</i>	MBW	W of <i>mama</i>
<i>bua</i>	FZ	FFBD, FMBD, FFZD, FMZD, FZHZ, FZHBW, MZHZ
<i>phupha</i>	FZH	H of <i>bua</i>
<i>mausi</i>	MZ	MFBD, MMBD, MFZD, MMZD, FBWZ, MZHBW, HBWM, ZHBWM, WZHM, BWZHM
<i>mausa</i>	MZH	H of <i>mausi</i>
<i>mavsa</i>	BWF/ ZHF	F of <i>bhabil/ jija</i> (see below)
<i>mavsi</i>	BWM/ ZHM	M of <i>bhabil/ jija</i> (see below)
<i>ma, amma, mata</i>	M	
<i>bap, pita</i>	F	
<i>sasur</i>	HF/ WF	
<i>sas</i>	HM/ WM	
(3) <i>bhai</i>	B	FBS, MBS, FZS, MZS, HBWB, ZHBWB, WZHB, BWZH, (f.s.) BWBWBZ
<i>bahen</i>	Z	FBD, MBD, FZD, MZD, HBWZ, ZHBW, WZHZ, BWZHZ, (m.s.) ZHZHBW
<i>bhabil/ bhabahu</i>	BW/ (m.s.) yBW	W of <i>bhai</i> and (f.s.) BWZ, (f.s.) BWBW, (f.s.) BWBWBZ
<i>jija/ bahenol</i>	ZH	H and HB of <i>bahen</i> ; (m.s.) ZHZH, (m.s.) ZHZHB, (m.s.) ZHZHZ
<i>sala</i>	WB	WFBS, WMBS, WFZS, WMZS, WBWB, WBWZH, (m.s.) BWB, (m.s.) BWBWB, (m.s.) BWBWBZ
<i>salhaj</i>	WBW	W of <i>sala</i>
<i>sali</i>	WZ	WFBD, WMBD, WFZD, WMZD, (m.s.) BWZ
<i>sarhu</i>	WZH	H of <i>sali</i>
<i>devari/ jeth</i>	HyB/ HeB	HFBS, HMBS, HFZS, HMZS
<i>dauranil/ jethani</i>	HyBW/ HeBW	W of <i>devari/ jeth</i>
<i>nanad</i>	HZ	HFBD, HMBD, HFZD, HMZD, HZHZ, HZHBW, (f.s.) ZHZ, (f.s.) ZHZHZ, (f.s.) ZHZHBW
<i>nandoi</i>	HZH	H of <i>nanad</i>
(4) <i>beta</i>	S	(in certain circumstances includes <i>bhatija</i> and <i>bhanja</i>)
<i>beti</i>	D	(in certain circumstances includes <i>bhatiji</i> and <i>bhanji</i>)
<i>bhatija</i>	BS	S of <i>bhai, sala, devari/ jeth</i> , (f.s.) BWB, (f.s.) BWBWB
<i>bhatiji</i>	BD	D of same
<i>bhanja</i>	ZS	S of <i>bahen, sali, nanad</i> , (m.s.) ZHZ, (m.s.) ZHZHZ
<i>bhanji</i>	ZD	D of same
<i>jamai</i>	DH	H of <i>beti, bhatiji, bhanji, poti, dhevti</i>
<i>bahu</i>	SW	W of <i>beta, bhatija, bhanja, pota, dhevta</i>
(5) <i>pota</i>	SS	S of <i>bhatija, bhanja</i>
<i>poti</i>	SD	D of <i>bhatija, bhanja</i>
<i>dhevti</i>	DS	S of <i>bhatiji, bhanji</i>
<i>dhevti</i>	DD	D of <i>bhatiji, bhanji</i>

(1975) and Turner (1975).

3. This difference was first brought to my notice by Prof. Platenkamp.
4. Inden and Nicholas state in their analysis that the Bengali categories *jñati* and *kutumba* are opposed to each other, the first one being defined through the sharing of bodily and non-bodily substances and the second one through the giving of bodily and non-bodily substances. They refuse to label these categories as consanguineal and affinal categories respectively, because the content of these categories is not identical with the north-American categories of "blood relatives" and "in-laws." I do not agree with this conclusion, because in my opinion the definition of the Bengali categories of *jñati* and *kutumba*, i.e. the sharing and the giving of bodily and non-bodily substances clearly indicates an opposition which can be translated as an opposition of consanguinity and affinity.

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