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IMPLICIT FORMALITY
KEESING'S CHALLENGE AND ITS
SIGNIFICANCE FOR EUROPEAN KINSHIP

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During the 1960s and 1970s, students of kinship became increasingly uneasy about the gap between formal terminology-and-genealogy-based models and data on actual behaviour. This gap–sometimes described as the problem of relating 'prescriptive' and 'statistical' models–was an important factor in Schneider's rejection of the structural and cognitive traditions, and their subsequent near abandonment by Anglo-American anthropology. However, these developments did not resolve the problem so much as simply refuse to address it. The need for a better understanding of the relation between terminology and behaviour is still there, nowhere more so than in Europe, where quantitative historians and sociologists have revealed major macro-regional differences in kinship practices, which are associated with distinct patterns of kinship terminology.

*This is where Keesing comes in. In his contribution to a 1972 volume celebrating the centenary of Morgan's "*Systems*", he, too criticized the existing work on formal models–but did not advocate abandoning it. On the contrary, he argued that it should be extended and deepened–setting aside simplistic assumptions of a direct correspondence between terms and roles in order to model the complex social and semantic processes that integrate kinship with the rest of social life. In this article, I return to Keesing's agenda and propose a modeling approach that would fit some of the European data.*

Introduction: Roger Keesing's Response to the Crisis of Kinship Theory

I chose Roger Keesing as my intellectual ancestor for the AAA session on "Kinship: Tidemarks and Legacies" because of his contribution to a 1972 volume celebrating the centenary of Morgan's "*Systems*" (Keesing 1972). It was a time of intellectual disquiet, shortly before the celebrated collapse of Anglo-American kinship studies. Keesing's paper discusses formal terminology-based models of kinship, and he was troubled by how little they had to say about the complexities of actual kinship behaviour. However, he did not advocate abandoning formal models. On the contrary he argued that they should be extended and deepened – setting aside simplistic assumptions of a direct correspondence between kinship terms and social roles. He also made the very interesting suggestion that there might be a formal analogy between kinship and friendship ties.

Keesing's argument not only challenged overly simple models of the terminology-behaviour connection; he also criticised the view that kinship behaviour was unstructured

and simply a matter of flexible negotiation, as we would say today. At the same time, he was critical of analysts who focused too narrowly (as he saw it) on the formal structure of terminology–represented at that time most prominently by Lounsbury (1969a) and Scheffler (1972). However, he did not reject any of these views outright. The goal, as he saw it, was to identify grammars of social activity that could connect the structural aspects of kinship terminology with the practicalities of actual behaviour. The challenge was to identify the formal properties that linked the different levels of kinship together.

The need for a better understanding of the relation between terminology and behaviour is still there, nowhere more so than in Europe, where sociologists and demographic historians have revealed major macro-regional differences in kinship practices (Reher 1998; Kohli 2010 *et al.*) associated with distinct patterns of kinship terminology (Schlee and Heady 2010). In this article I apply Keesing's agenda to one aspect of kinship in present day Europe.

Terminology and Residence Patterns

The aspect I focus on is the relationship between kinship terminologies and residence patterns; i.e., the spatial relationships (see comments by Lehman in this issue on the concept of space) among kin. The graphs that I will use to illustrate this analysis are based on network data from the nineteen field-sites of a project (Kinship and Social Security [KASS]) whose main aim was to investigate kinship and patterns of mutual assistance. Nevertheless, my focus in the next few pages is not on pragmatics, but on semantics expressed through the relationship between variation in the morphological form of kin terms and the spatial distribution of relatives "on the ground".

Figure 1 groups the nineteen field sites into three macro-regions: 1. "northwest" (Sweden), 2. "central" (France, Germany, Austria), and 3. "south and east" (Italy, Croatia, Poland, Russia).[1] Although the macro-regions differ in size, they are not arbitrary. They correspond to differences in kinship patterns recorded in other cross-national surveys. They also correspond to the following three structural differences among the national kinship terminologies. First, for the northwest region:

- The Swedish terminology is the most "descriptive"–many terms for close relatives are formed by stringing together the words for primary kin.

Next, there are two kin term contrasts that separate Sweden and the "central" countries from those in the south and east:

- The first concerns the terms used for cousins. In the three Slavonic languages, and in the local dialect of one of the Italian field sites, cousins can be referred to using the words for siblings with suitable qualifiers or minor modifications. In Sweden and the "central" countries, this is not possible.
- The second concerns the terms used to refer to the relationships of a husband and wife to each other's parents. In Sweden and the central countries these are based on the terms for own parents; e.g., in French *beau père* is a qualified version of
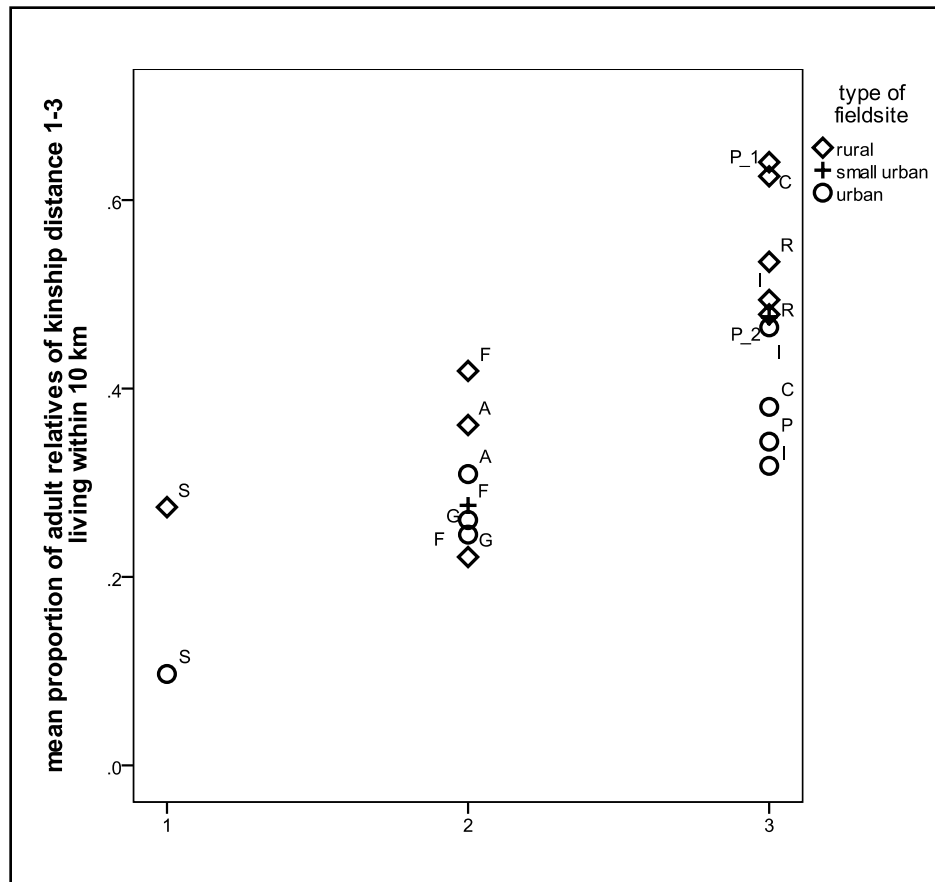
Figure 1. Spatial clustering of relatives by macro-region.

père (father). But in the other four countries this is not the case; e.g., the corresponding Italian terms–*suocero* and *padre*–are quite distinct.

As Figure 1 shows, the proportion of close relatives living within a 10 kilometre radius rises steadily as we move from northwest towards the south and east. This tendency applies to both urban and rural localities, although the absolute level of clustering is somewhat higher in rural areas. At first glance, this appears to match the spatial distribution associated with two of the terminological differences. First, the wide geographical range of Swedish kinship networks may make distinct terms for more distant relatives seem unnecessary. Second, in areas where relatives live close by, it may be easier to categorise cousins with brothers and sisters.

However, this argument breaks down for the third difference. As Figure 2 shows, the terms for own and partner's parents are most similar where the average physical distance between the people concerned is greatest. For this case, at least, we need a different kind of explanation.

The "In-law" Paradox

The use of parent-like terms might, instead, reflect an expectation that either married partner is ready to take on a filial relationship to the other's parents by, for instance, being ready to live in the partner's parental home. If so, we would expect that parent-like terms
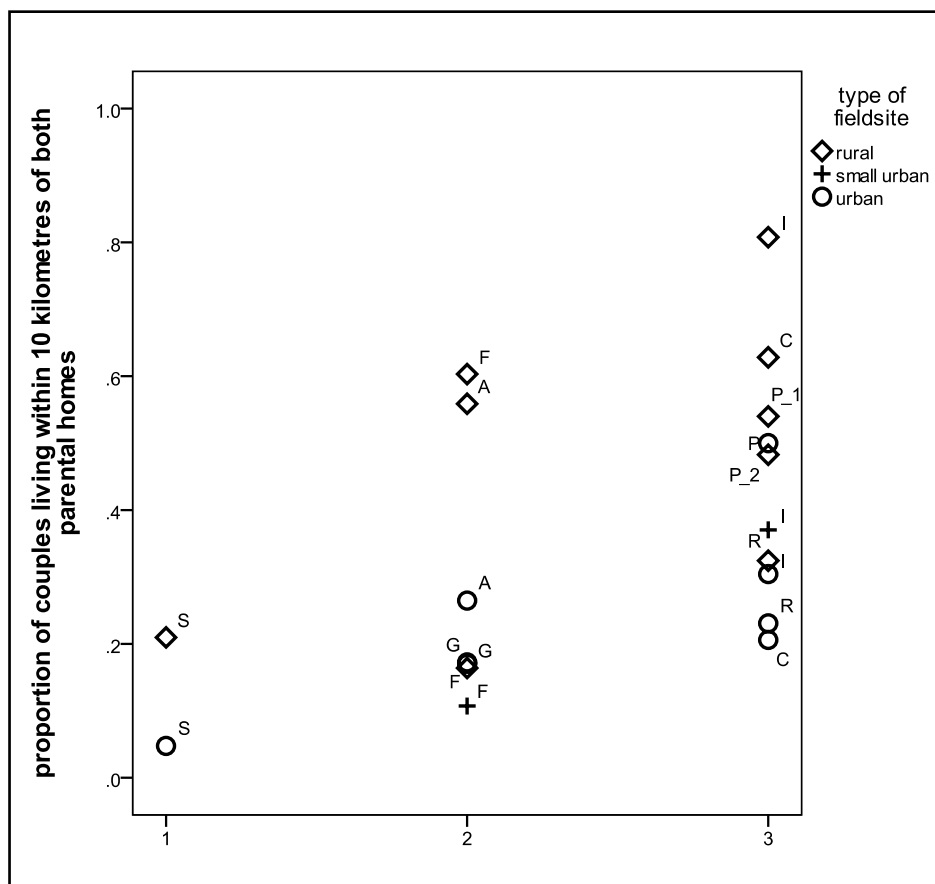
Figure 2. Mutual closeness of parental homes (indicative measure) by macro-region.

would be associated with a relatively high proportion of 3-generation families living in the same household.

This, however, is not the case (see Figure 3). Three-generational households are rare or non-existent in most of the field sites where parent-like terms are used, but present or even quite common in all of the southern and eastern field sites.

Another possibility is that the use of parent-like terms implies that each partner has an equivalent filial relationship to both parental couples. However, it is not possible to co-reside with both sets of parents unless the two parental couples share the same dwelling, which would make the marriage virtually incestuous. Thus, if a wife is to have the same residential relationship to her own and her husband's parents and the same is true for her husband, then neither she nor her husband can co-reside with either set of parents, meaning that marriage will be neo-local, as the data show.

But before accepting this Equivalent Filial Relationship (EFR) hypothesis as the solution to the problem, we need to check out one more possible explanation. The parent-like terms are gender-symmetric in that the terms for husband's parents and wife's parents are the same. Could there be a direct connection between this terminological
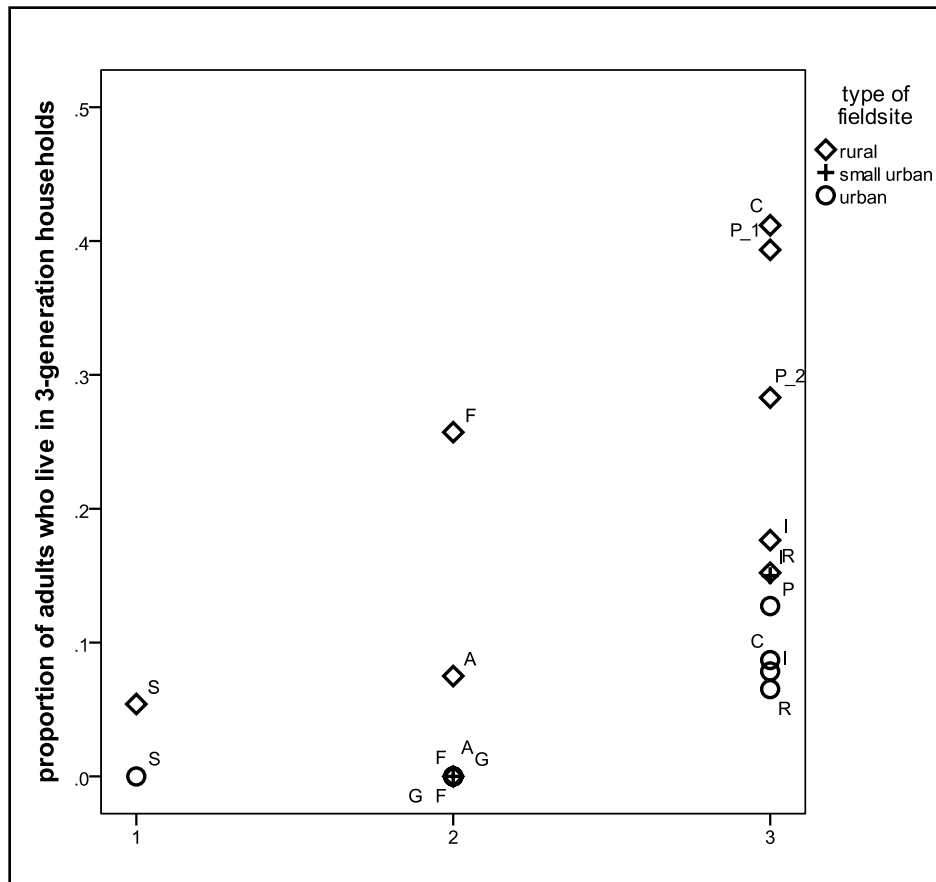
Figure 3. Three-generation households by macro-region.

symmetry and the symmetry of the spatial distance to both sets of parents? We can test this symmetry hypothesis because two of the non-parent-like terminologies–the Italian and the Polish–are also gender-symmetric. In Italian, for example, the terms *suocero*, *suocera* are used for HF, HM, and WF, WM. However, as Figure 3 shows, three-generation households, which necessarily involve non-symmetric spatial relationships, are quite common in Italy and Poland. So the hypothesis that there is a direct connection between gender-symmetrical terminologies and symmetrical spatial relationships is not supported by the data.

Kinship Perspectives

Thus the EFR (Equivalent Filial Relationship) hypothesis emerges with the most empirical support. This confirms a suggestion, made previously by Sapir, that the parent-like terms might express a "feeling of the sentimental equivalent (*sic.*) of blood relatives and relatives by marriage" (Sapir 1985:26). What differentiates this from mere symmetry is that each partner adopts the other's viewpoint as his or her own.

The sharing of perspectives has been a major theme in social psychological research on social relationships in general, including relations of friendship. A central finding, first formulated by Heider (1946), and confirmed by numerous research results since

then, is that sharing attitudes towards third parties strengthens a positive relationship between the attitude-sharers (Park and Schaller 2005). In conjunction with the EFR hypothesis, we can say that by aligning terminology and behaviour towards the two sets of parents, young couples are affirming their own close relationship.

Of course, a terminology is a social fact and does not necessarily reflect the attitudes of an individual user. However, by making it easier to express a relationship in a particular way, the conventional choice of terms implicitly endorses the viewpoint embodied in those terms. Thus the conventional adoption of parent-like terms to refer to partner's parents amounts to an implicit social endorsement of the couple's solidarity and of their shared point of view regarding the parental relationships involved.

This raises another question, namely why the endorsement of the couple's point of view is never complete. Why, in other words, are the reference terms[2] for parent and partner's parent always qualified by expressions such as "beau", "svär", "Schwieger" or, in English, "in-law"? The answer must be that complete terminological equivalence would conflict with the parental couples' views of themselves as being distinct from each other and most closely connected to one's own son or daughter. At least some allowance must be made for this perspective of the older generation: the question is, "How much?" At stake in the social choice between parent-like and parent-unlike terminologies is which generation's perspective takes priority in the implicit judgment of the community as a whole.

A Formal Version of the Perspectives Argument

We now set out this argument more formally using algebraic notation. Let $K(y|x)$ denote the kin term that x uses to refer to y. Then the equation

$$K(y|x) = K(q|p) \tag{1}$$

means that x refers to y by the same kin term that p uses to refer to q.

We can set up a simple scenario with four individuals, a, b, c, d, and start by assuming that

$$K(c|a) = K(d|b). \tag{2}$$

Our hypothesis is: If a and b share a sense of identity, they can reinforce it by each referring to the other person's relative using the same term that the other person would use. That is, if

$$K(c|b) = K(c|a) \tag{3A}$$

and

$$K(d|a) = K(d|b), \tag{3B}$$

then a and b will feel the sense of solidarity towards each other that comes from sharing the same point of view towards c and d. As a consequence, their relationship to each other will be strengthened, and they will tend to offer each other more mutual support.

By combining equations (3A) and (3B) with equation (2), it follows that

$$K(c|a) = K(d|a) \tag{4A}$$

and

$$K(c|b) = K(d|b). \tag{4B}$$

These two equations also have implications for the relationships concerned. To the extent that terminology guides behaviour, equation (4A) implies that a will be inclined to treat c and d in the same way, and equation (4B) indicates that b will do likewise.

However, kinship terms do not occur in isolation–each term must be understood in relation to the other elements of the terminology in question. Read (2001) argues that the mutual dependencies in any terminology can be analysed as an algebraic semi-group in which each term has a reciprocal, and can also be expressed as a product of two other terms (in fact, it is possible that a given term can be generated by several different products). This means that the ability of a and b to apply the same terms to c and d is subject to some constraints and, conversely, if equations (3A) and (3B) do apply, they may impose constraints on the use of other terms in the system. These constraints are cognitive, but–because of their implications for the solidarity between a and b, and because they will also affect equations (4A) and (4B)–they are likely to have social implications as well.

In the terminologies considered in this article, this situation can often be dealt with by replacing equations (3A) and (3B) by

$$K(c|b) = K^*(c|a) \tag{5A}$$

and

$$K(d|a) = K^*(d|b), \tag{5B}$$

where $K^*(y|x)$ is a modified form of $K(y|x)$, and by making similar modifications to equations (4A) and (4B). The underlying form conveys the same message as the identities in the original equations, but the modification makes it possible to treat the terms as non-equivalent when necessary, thus sidestepping potential inconsistencies in the instantiation of the semi-group rules. This also makes it possible to soften the behavioural implications of the original equations, but without altogether cancelling the underlying inclinations they imply (c.f. Read's (1984:445) analysis of the use of step-parent and half-sibling terms in English).

This completes the general explanatory framework proposed here. But before applying it, we need to specify some common terminological equations and behavioural assumptions that condition the ways in which the system operates in all the European societies considered in this article. It is not claimed that these specific conditions would necessarily apply in other cultures.

The European terminological equations concern the words for primary relationships. Applying Read's (2007) notation for reciprocals and products within the terminological semi-group, and using the conventional letters for the relationships concerned, we write

$$P^{-1} = C \tag{6}$$

and

$$Z \bullet S = D \tag{7A}$$

$$B \bullet D = S. \qquad\qquad (7B)$$

Note that since these three equations relate to what Read describes as the categorical space of kin terms, their application is not restricted to immediately adjacent relatives in the genealogical space. (By convention, the order of terms in the products of kin terms reverses the usual sequence for writing relationships in the genealogical space.)

There are two behavioural assumptions:

1. that the parents of a husband cannot share the same residence as the parents of the wife (the *residential incest* constraint); and
2. that parents make a clear distinction (but not necessarily in residential terms) between their own children and those of other people (the *reproductive unit* constraint).

Perspectival Analyses of the Main Terminological Contrasts

Using this framework it is possible to produce comparable analyses of the main terminological contrasts described at the start of this article.

Affinal Terminologies

As a first step, we can see how the earlier discussion of affinal terminologies can be expressed in this formal framework. Suppose that, as shown in Figure 4,

1. *a* and *b* are husband and wife,
2. *c* and *d* are the mothers of *a* and *b*, respectively,
3. *e* is the father of *a*, and
4. *f* is the child of *a* and *b*.

Then equations (3A/B) and (4A/B) describe a hypothetical situation in which *a* and *b* express their shared outlook by using parent-equivalent terms to refer to each other's parents.
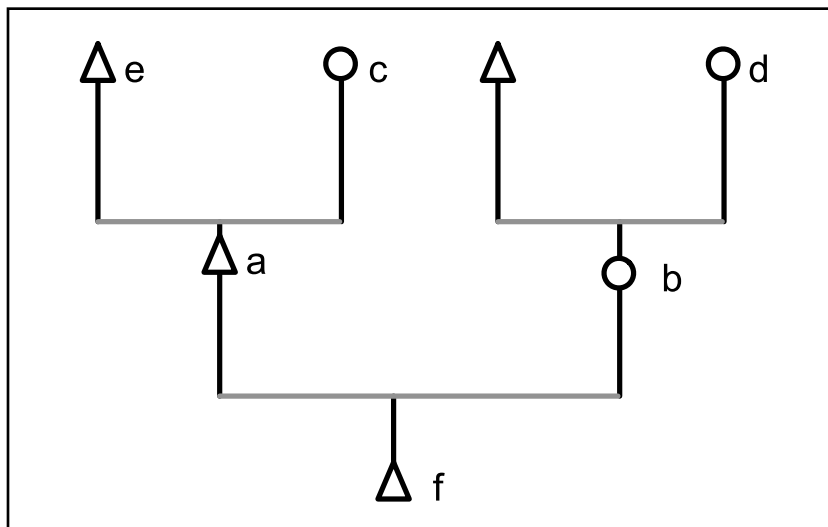

Figure 4. Affinal terms.

However, a problem would arise from the viewpoint of *e*, for if *b* refers to him as "father", equation (6) means that he must refer to her as "daughter"–which would be inconsistent with the reproductive unit constraint. (Indeed this problem would also arise from the perspectives of *c*, *d* and the husband of *d*). As a result, *a* and *b* can only express their mutual identification in the modified form of equations (5A) and (5B), referring to each other's parents with qualified terms such as "father/mother-in-law", whose reciprocals "son/daughter-in-law" make it possible for the parents to preserve the distinction between own children and own children's partners. So, in practice, the options are either to use modified parental terms, or else to use terminologies that keep own and partner's parents entirely distinct, such as the contrast in Italian between *madre* and *suocera*.

Cousin Terminologies

Figure 5 sets the scene for a comparable analysis of the implications of Europe's different cousin terminologies. The key distinction for the present argument is between terminologies in which it is impossible to refer to cousins by sibling terms (French, German and Swedish), and languages in which sibling terms (or lightly modified versions of them) can be used. This is the case in Croatian, Russian and Polish–though in Polish an equivalent to cousin can also be used. In official Italian the words for sibling and cousin are quite distinct, but in the rural field site the dialect term is *frati cugini*–equivalent to "cousin brothers".[3]

The diagram shows three generations: a grandmother, her two sons, and their children–in each case a son and a daughter. Although I have assigned the individuals a gender, this is simply for ease of reference and plays no role in the argument. All the terminologies are gender-symmetric or nearly so.

The point at issue is how the two males in the youngest generation, *a* and *b*, should refer to each other's sisters, *c* and *d*. Of course, each refers to his own sister in the same way, as "my sister," which is the starting assumption of equation (2). If they follow
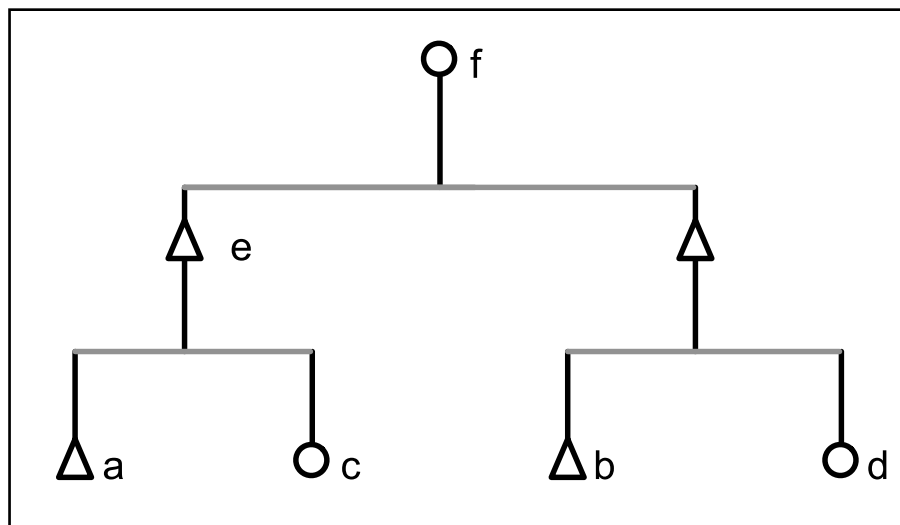

Figure 5. Cousin terms.

the pattern set out in equations (3A) and (3B), and each uses the word "sister" without any qualification to refer to the other man's sibling, they will be implicitly affirming the equivalence of their own kinship identity. Each cousin will also be indicating (by equations (4A) and (4B)) his readiness to treat the other's sister similarly to his own.

Nevertheless, things are not entirely straightforward since a terminology that allowed this would also result, via application of equations (7A) and (7B), in a situation where e, the father of a and c, would refer to b and d as his son and daughter. As in the previous case, this would violate the reproductive unit constraint. As all of the European languages considered here make a distinction between own children and sibling's children, it is clear that this constraint must take precedence over the wish to equate siblings to cousins, which means that, as in the previous case, it is necessary to apply, instead, the compromise formulation of equations (5A) and 5B). So the choice is between a qualified sibling-like terminology and the use of entirely distinct cousin terms.

Implications for residence patterns

The countries in which sibling-like terms are used for cousins (Russia, Poland, Croatia, and part of Italy) are also those in which the terms for own and partner's parents are entirely distinct. These countries, shown in the third column of the scatter-plots, are also the ones with the highest average values on all three of our measures of spatial closeness. The other four countries–France, Sweden, Germany and Austria–all use parent-like terms to refer to partner's parents and have lower levels of kinship clustering. So we need to ask: Do these spatial patterns follow from the assumptions set out in the previous section?

We have already considered this question for the affinal terminologies. By using actual parental terms for each other's parents, each partner would (by equations (4A) and (4B)) be acknowledging what I earlier called an Equivalent Filial Relationship to both sets of parents, with the implication that they should treat each parent in a similar way. As the residential incest constraint prevents them from living with both sets of parents, the implication is that they can live with neither, which rules out multi-generational households, the closest form of spatial clustering. Of course, neo-local residence need not mean that the young couple moves very far from their homes of origin. Yet if, as we have suggested, their joint perspective (implied by equations (3A) and (3B)) expresses a relationship of shared identity and mutual solidarity, this might well make it easier for young couples to manage life as separate conjugal households and so move further from their original homes and the support of their parents and siblings. Taking both points together, a parent-equivalent terminology would both prevent the most extreme form of residential closeness and provide some psychological support for mobility. It would, therefore, be consistent with comparatively low levels of spatial clustering.

Turning to the other contrast, a terminology that equated siblings and cousins would imply (by equations (4A) and (4B)) that ego should treat both in similar ways. Alone, this does not say anything about the overall strength of the relationships concerned since it might mean either that relationships with cousins should be as close as those between siblings, or that relationships with siblings should be as distant as those with cousins. However, when we turn to equations (3A) and (3B) the situation becomes

clearer. If, in Figure 5, the cousins *a* and *b* apply the same terms to each others' sisters, they are thereby affirming their own shared identity–and the same would apply to any situation in which two cousins referred in the same way to each others' siblings of either sex. This shared identity between cousins does imply a strengthening of solidarity and, since it is easier for people to cooperate when they live near to each other, one would expect this solidarity to be associated with physical closeness.

Thus, in both affinal and cousin terminologies, the sharing of terms translates into the patterns (of greater or less residential clustering) shown in Figures 1 to 3. The fact that sharing terms has opposite implications in the two cases is consistent with the empirical finding that, in the countries covered by our study, the kinship terminologies usually show one kind of sharing, but never both.

While the macro-regional differences in kinship clustering are consistent with our argument, it is important to note that these differences are a matter of general tendencies rather than clear-cut distinctions. The argument does allow for a certain amount of overlap since it presents residence patterns as the outcome of the feelings of identity expressed in the terminologies, not as a matter of hard and fast rules. It is thus perfectly reasonable to suppose that, with a given terminology, practical factors might lead to the different levels of clustering found in urban and rural areas. This practical adaptability is also consistent with the fact that the sharing of terms generally takes the near-equivalent form shown in equations (5A) and (5B).

The one situation in which sharing an exactly equivalent term would imply a clear-cut rule is in the case of intergenerational co-residence, which would actually be ruled out by the combination of each of equations (4A) and (4B) with the residential incest constraint. In this case, the fact that, in accordance with equations (5A) and (5B) the terminologies actually use parent-like rather than parent-equivalent terms, means that an outright contradiction between terminology and behaviour is avoided. Even so, it is noticeable that in both northwestern and central Europe, where parent-like terms apply, 3-generational households are only found in the rural samples. Here a housing stock that was originally developed for farming families may sometimes make this residence pattern hard to avoid.

Grand-parental Perspectives, and the Swedish Case

In the discussion of the combined constraints exerted by the semi-group rules and the behavioural assumptions that they may help to transmit, I have focused on two constraints: the avoidance of "residential incest" and the distinctiveness of the "reproductive unit." Both of these involve consistency between the aspirations towards shared identity in one generation and the aspirations and assumptions of their parents. However, kinship terminologies typically cover five generations: Ego's, the two previous generations, and the two generations that follow. In this context, focusing on just the perspectives of immediately adjacent generations seems to be rather short range. Although I shall not present a formal extension of the argument here, there are a couple of additional correspondences between terminology and behaviour suggesting that an extension might be possible.

The first of these concerns the persons labelled *f* in Figures 4 and 5. In the first case, this person–the child of *a* and *b*–is in the youngest of three generations. The point at issue is whether the labels applied by *a* and *b* to the oldest generation should be symmetrical with respect to *f*–in the sense that individuals who are genealogically equidistant from *f* are referred to by the same (possibly gendered) term, regardless of the identity of the intervening relatives. When the terms are symmetrical (or as nearly symmetrical as equations (5A) and (5B) permit), the residential pattern is comparatively loosely clustered. In the second case, where *f*, the grandmother of *a* and *b*, is in the oldest generation, the point at issue is correspondingly transposed: Should the terms applied to the youngest generation be symmetrical about *f*? When they are, the residential pattern is comparatively tightly clustered.

We can sum this up by saying that when relationships are described from the viewpoint of the oldest generation, people tend to stay near their parental homes, but when the perspective of the younger generation is taken, people feel freer to move away. The idea that this symmetry might be meaningful is given plausibility by the fact that in nearly all of these languages the terminology for the relationships between the oldest and youngest generations is itself symmetrical in that the terms that are used are not affected by the gender of the person in the middle generation. (For example, in Italian both sets of grandparents are *nonni* and both sets of grandchildren are *nipoti*.) However, our sample has limited data on alternative non-symmetrical systems of 3-generation terms and so this question must be left unanswered.

Actually, to be more precise, we can give a very partial answer since we do have one non-symmetrical system of grandparental terminology: the one used in Sweden. We have not yet explained why the Swedish residential patterns are even more spatially dispersed than those recorded for the other central western field sites. I will now argue briefly that this may be connected with the descriptive nature of Sweden's grandparental terminology. The terms in question are:

- for grandchildren: *sonson, dotterson, sondotter, dotterdotter*
- for grandparents: *farfar, morfar, farmor, mormor.*

The words for the elementary relationships are respectively *son*, *dotter*, *far* and *mor*. The principle behind the grandparental terminology (which also underlies the terminology for parents' siblings and siblings' children) is to combine primary kinship terms in a way that describes the path linking ego to the person in question as precisely as possible. The effect of this principle is that there is no single inclusive term by which an old person can refer to all his or her grandchildren, or which the grandchildren can use to assert their shared relationship to that particular ancestor and so affirm the sense of shared identity that, following our earlier argument, the recognition of this shared relationship would be expected to generate. Though the other central and north western countries in our sample resemble Sweden in emphasising new marital relationships over the ties of shared descent, their terminologies nonetheless resemble those of the southern and eastern countries in having inclusive terms for the relationship of all grandchildren to their common ancestor. The Swedish terminology is the only one which does not express this

relationship, so it is not surprising that it is associated with residential patterns that suggest the greatest physical separation between grandparents and grandchildren of any society in our sample.

Conclusion

We have now seen that comparable perspective-based analyses are possible for the choices between parent-like and parent-unlike affinal terminologies and between sibling-like and cousin terms. We have also discussed the possible implications of Sweden's descriptive kinship terminology. In all three cases, the terminology used in southern and eastern Europe gives more weight to the perspectives of senior generations–which is consistent with residential patterns in which, as we have seen, people tend to remain close to their ancestral homes.

The perspectival approach, itself, is not new. As well as the suggestion by Sapir (1985) cited above, other examples include Lounsbury's (1969b) analysis of Crow-Omaha terminologies and living arrangements, and Barry's (2008) analysis of the social and ideological factors connected with Europe's adoption of Eskimo terminologies. What is new here is partly the focus on different generational perspectives within a broadly Eskimo set-up, partly the analytic framework with its combination of formal description, perspectival implications, and the use of exogenous assumptions about specific social preferences.

Two aspects of the argument may be applicable to kinship systems elsewhere. The first is the way in which the discussion accompanying equations (2) through (4B) links the use of equivalent terms, equivalent behaviour towards the people referred to, and identity and solidarity between the people making the references. The second aspect, linked to equations (5A) and (5B), concerns the use of modified terms to indicate a partially equivalent relationship, thereby dealing with inconsistencies in the expectations of people with different perspectives on the relationships concerned.

As Keesing would require, the analytic framework, though fairly complex, avoids any direct equation between terminological forms and social roles. The fact that the same terminology-practice relationships hold for rural and urban field-sites, but with different absolute levels of residential clustering, suggests that the approach could be integrated with explanations involving other economic and institutional spheres. The mechanisms involved are implicit in the sense that they do not involve conscious rules or generate 100 percent regularities, and also in the sense that they do not simply replicate common-sense explanations. Nevertheless, this paper's graphical analysis of residential practice demonstrates that the framework has considerable explanatory power and partially meets the challenge that Keesing posed forty years ago.

Acknowledgments

can be found–as authors or helpers–in the three volumes of the series, *Family, Kinship and State in Contemporary Europe,* and on the KASS (Kinship and Social Security) project website: www.eth.mpg.de/kass. The project was coordinated from the Max-Planck Institute for Social Anthropology and financed by a grant from the EU's Sixth Framework research programme, with additional support from the Max-Planck Society and other participating institutions. Thanks are due to Campus Verlag for permission to reproduce graphs from the third volume of *Family, Kinship and State in Contemporary Europe*.

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[1] This and the following two graphs are based on network interviews conducted for the KASS project. On average thirty interviews were conducted in each locality, and the proportions relate to the circumstances of those informants. For more methodological information see Heady (2010) and the appendices to Heady and Kohli (2010).

[2] People may use unmodified parental terms to address partner's parents even in countries with parent-unlike terminologies (see Buchowski *et al*. 2010: 354-355). This usually occurs when only one of the parental couples is present and when there is no need to consider the wider social field containing the other parental couple. The term of address expresses the position of the speaker *within* their partner's parental household, not an equation of relationship between the two different parental households.

[3] Information provided by Carlo Capello.

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