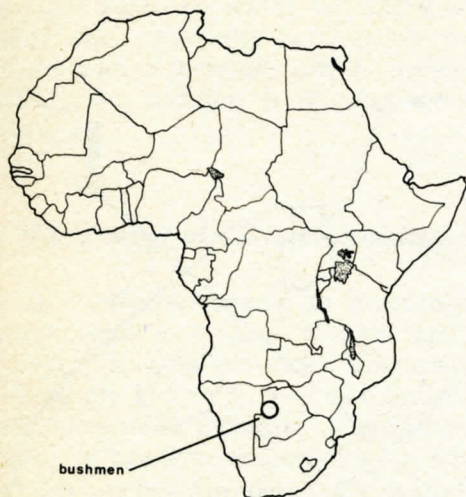


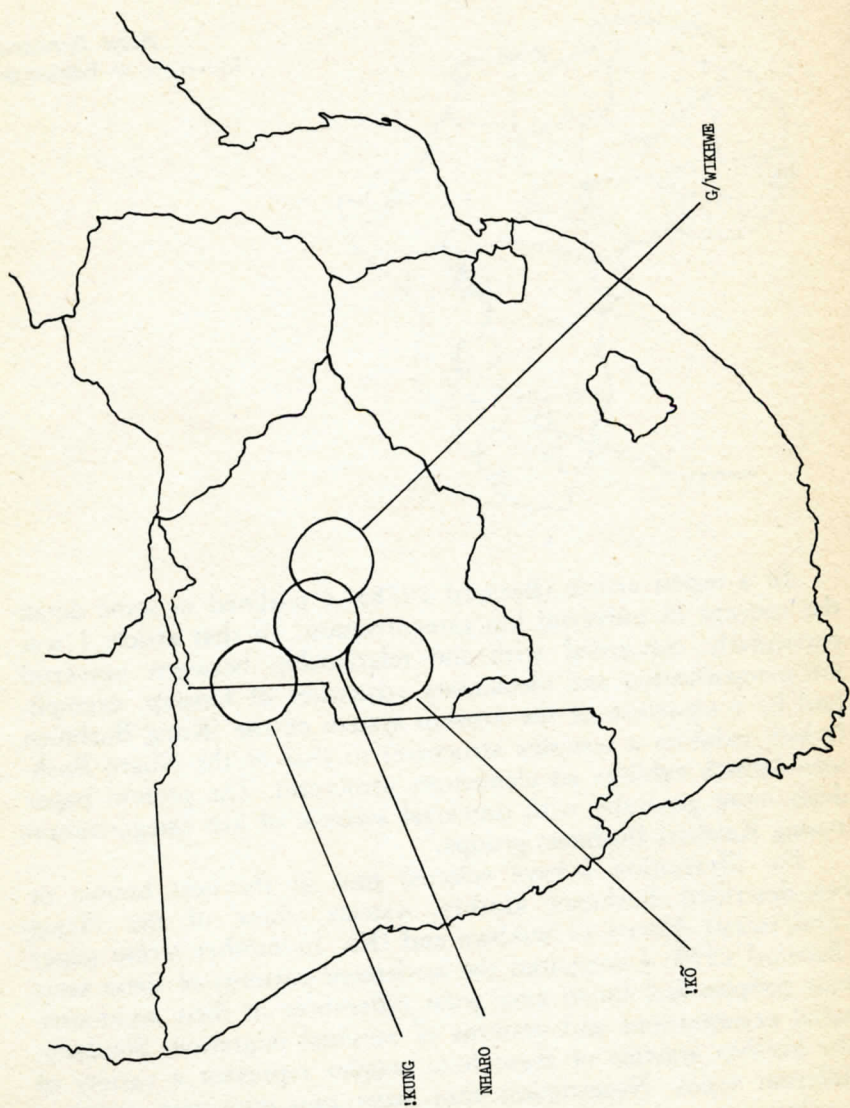
UNIVERSAL KIN CATEGORIZATION IN FOUR BUSHMAN SOCIETIES¹

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In a recent article (Barnard 1978a) I outlined in some detail the concept of universal kin categorization. In that article I was particularly concerned with the relationship between universal kin categorization and elementary structures of kinship, exemplified by comparison of the kinship system of the !Kung Bushmen (which exhibits a complex structure) to that of the Nharo Bushmen (which exhibits an elementary structure). The present paper deals more generally with universal systems of kin categorization among Kalahari Bushman groups.

For illustration I have selected four of the best known or best-described Bushman kinship systems, those of the !Kung (Zhū/twāsi), Nharo, G/wikhwe and !Kō. In another recent paper (Barnard 1979) I compared the settlement patterns of these same four peoples and found very great differences in their socio-territorial organizations and patterns of seasonal migration. Similarly, the kinship systems of these four peoples represent a variety of different types. Nevertheless they have two important common attributes — universal kin categorization and a universally extend-



ed distinction between joking partners (relatives who are treated with licence) and avoidance partners (relatives who are treated with reserve). The significant differences among the systems stem from the means by which the joking/avoidance distinction is extended, the relationship between the joking/avoidance distinction and the rules of marriage, and the presence or absence of an explicit ideology (in addition to a practice) of universal kin category extension.

1. The concept of universal kin categorization

In a universal system of kin categorization each member of society stands in a "kin" relationship to every other member of his society or social network. Whether actual consanguineal or affinal links are known or not, each individual can apply relationship terms to everyone he meets. A kinship system in which there exists a belief in common descent, but in which there is a category of "non-kin", is not considered (ideologically) universal. Nor is a system which extends kin terms in a purely metaphorical sense, without the sociological constraints imposed by the kinship system, e.g., in defining the marriageable category or stipulating particular kinds of behaviour towards certain classes of kin. However, this distinction between metaphorical and true kinship is a fuzzy one, since in any society close kin will be treated differently from very distant or classificatory kin. Thus the precise definition of universal kin categorization, like the precise definition of "kinship" itself (see Needham 1971; Southwold 1971; Schneider 1972), is very difficult. In its broadest sense, universal kin categorization is a form of social classification which encompasses the whole of society and which is based on notions of kinship, or of kinship and affinity.

I distinguish two types of universal kinship — empirical and ideological. Empirically universal systems are those in which a given person happens to associate only with people who may be classified as members of some kin or relationship category. Ideologically universal systems are those in which, however imprecise the means of kin category extension may be, a given person must classify as members of some kin category all those with whom he associates, simply because there is no such category as "non-kin".

In a logical, and perhaps also an evolutionary sense, ideological universality is derived from empirical universality. Small-scale

societies, such as those whose members still subsist primarily by hunting and gathering, tend towards empirical universality. It is possible, if not probable, that all the various means of kin category extension found in both universal and non-universal systems were created in order to maintain a wide range of kin categorization within societies as they expanded, geographically and numerically. Today, empirically universal systems are probably rare. Ideologically universal systems, on the other hand, are common among hunter-gatherers and small-scale horticulturalists in many parts of the world. Of the four peoples discussed in this paper, the !Kung, Nharo and G/wikhwe have ideologically universal systems, and the !Kō have an empirically universal system.

2. !Kung

Speakers of !Kung languages are scattered throughout north-western Botswana, northeastern Namibia and southern Angola. Here I am particularly concerned with the central !Kung, or Zhū/twāsi, who number about 6000 people (Lee 1979: 38) and live in the north-western Kalahari desert of Botswana and Namibia. The central !Kung inhabit the region of Kalahari in which there is a relatively abundant supply of water and plant foods and a variety of game animals. There are two units of socio-territorial organization — the nuclear or extended family and the band. Bands number, on average, about twenty-five people each (Marshall 1976: 196) and utilize overlapping territories of some 300 to 1000 square kilometres (approximated from map in Yellen 1976: 55; 1977: 39). In the dry season, several bands may come together around a permanent waterhole, and in the wet season, return to their own territories. Band members may be recruited through either consanguineal or affinal ties, and individuals frequently change band membership, e.g., by inter-marriage. Bride service is practised, and as a result, post-marital residence tends to be initially uxori-local. The following brief description of the !Kung system of kinship and marriage is based only on the work of Lorna Marshall (1976: 201-86, unless otherwise noted; cfr. 1957; 1959; Fabian 1965).

The !Kung have an Eskimo, lineal terminology which is extended throughout their society by rules of namesake-equivalence. !Kung fathers name their babies after close, living relatives, and

any namesake's relatives are regarded as terminologically equivalent to one's own. Names are sex-specific. Ideally, the first-born son is named after his FF and the next son after his MF. The first-born daughter is named after her FM and the next daughter after her MM. Other children are named after their parents' siblings or parents' siblings' spouses.

If EGO is named after a grandparent, the kin terms for close relatives are applied as follows²:

<i>!gu!na</i> (or <i>tun!ga</i> [w.s.])	grandfather, grandson, male first cousin
<i>tūn</i>	grandmother, granddaughter, female first cousin
<i>tsu</i>	FB, MB, FZH, MZH; and the reciprocals of all of these
<i>//ga</i>	FZ, MZ, FBW, MBW, and the reciprocals of all of these
<i>ba</i>	F
<i>dai</i>	M
<i>!ha</i>	S
<i>=khai</i>	D
<i>!go</i>	elder B
<i>!kwi</i>	elder Z
<i>tsī</i>	younger B, younger Z
<i>!hoa</i>	H
<i>tsau</i>	W
<i>≠tum</i>	father-in-law, son-in-law
<i>/utsu</i>	mother-in-law, daughter-in-law

In addition, there is a principle of alternate generation classification extended indefinitely. Except where alter alter is a primary kinsman (F, M, B, Z, S, D, H, W) or a namesake, the terms *!gu!na* (for males) and *tūn* (for females) alternate generationally with the terms *tsu* (for males) and *//ga* (for females). For example, the father or son of a *!gu!na* is termed *tsu* and the father or son of a *tsu* is termed *!gu!na*.

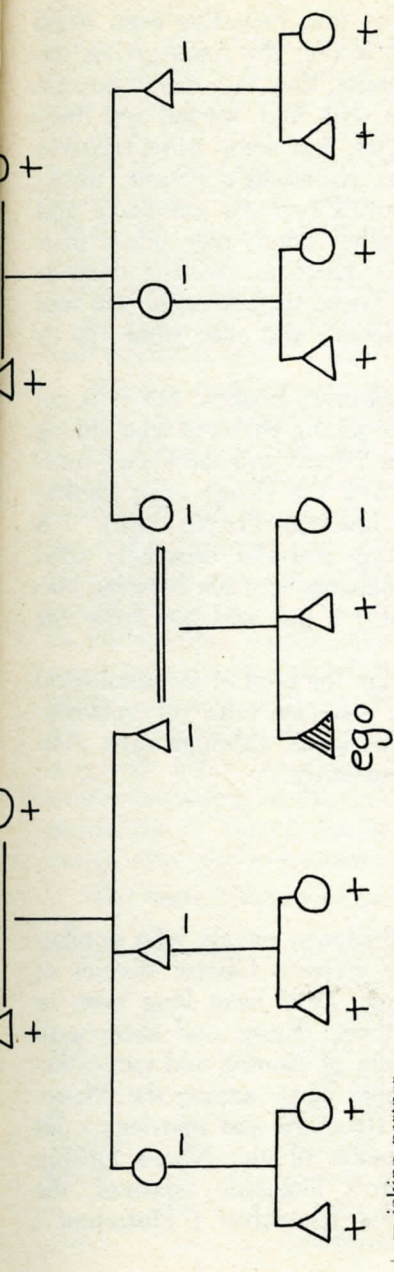
If EGO is named after an uncle or an aunt, then the kin terms are applied differently. EGO calls his senior namesake's close relatives by the terms his senior namesake uses; and he treats these individuals, like all others, according to the relationship terms

applied. For example, if EGO is named after a FB, then calls this FB *!gu!na* ('namesake/grandfather/cousin/grandson'); the FB's siblings (excluding EGO's father) *!go*, *!kwi* or, if younger than EGO, *tsi* ('siblings'); and the FB's parents, children and siblings' children *tsu* ('uncle/nephew') and *//ga* ('aunt/niece'). Thus on the FB's side of the family, members of the FB's generation are given terms which would otherwise (i.e., if EGO was named after a grandparent) be applied to grandparents and cousins; and grand-parents and cousins are given terms which would otherwise be applied to uncles and aunts.

On the opposite side of the family from which EGO receives his name, the normal sequence of the generation terms is not reversed; it is the same as it would be if EGO were named after a grandparent. However, general rules of namesake-equivalence do apply. On this side of the family, and indeed for distant and non-consanguineally-related people. EGO's namesake is always *!gu!na* (male) or *tũn* (female); and EGO's father's and mother's namesakes are *tsu* (male) and *//ga* (female), classificatory "uncles" and "aunts". When two strangers meet, the elder classifies the younger according to the place of the younger's name in the elder's genealogy (see Lee 1972: 357).

People termed *!gu!na* (or *tun!ga*), *tũn*, *!go* (m.s.), *!kwi* (w.s.), *tsi* (same-sex) and *!hoa* or *tsau* are joking partners, who may tease, insult and make sexual jokes with each other³; and an especially joking relationship is maintained between a child and the person he is named after. People termed *ba*, *daĩ*, *!ha*, = *kbai*, *!go* (w.s.), *!kwi* (m.s.), *tsĩ* (opposite-sex), = *tum* and */utsu* are avoidance partners, whom one must respect. Avoidance partners keep their distance, both socially and physically. Some of Marshall's informants even demonstrated for her the proper distances which should be maintained between avoidance partners sitting together (see Marshall 1976: 249-50). Joking/avoidance status is extremely important to the !Kung (and to other Bushmen). In relation to any given EGO, each member of society falls into one category or the other according to the kin terms they apply, and each category is reciprocal (see figures 1a, 1b).

Given the clear-cut joking/avoidance distinction on the basis of kin category and given the universal extension of the categories themselves, one might expect the !Kung to prescribe marriage to joking partners and prohibit marriage to avoidance partners. But



+ = joking partner

- = avoidance partner

Fig. 1a - !Kung. Ego is named after a grandparent

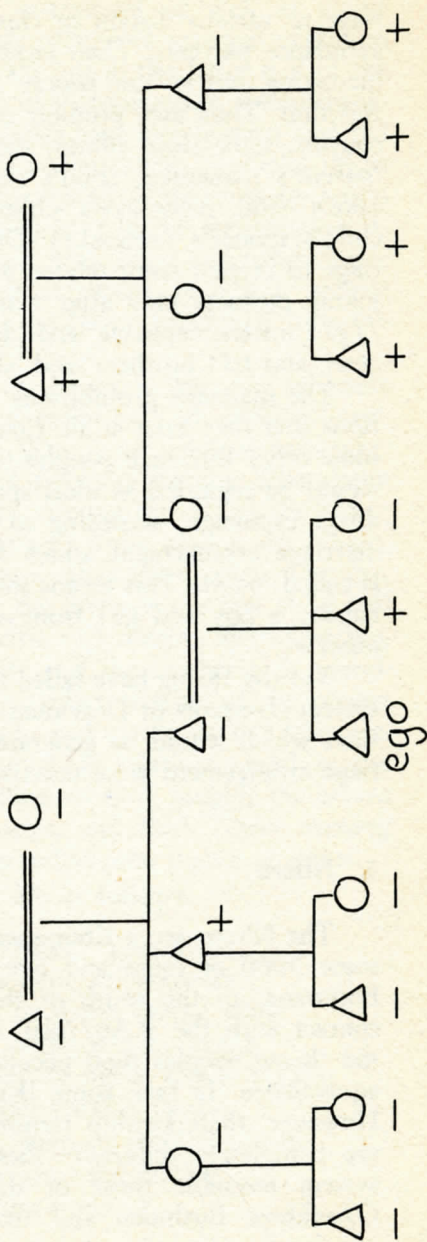


Fig. 1b - !Kung. Ego is named after his father's brother

curiously, the !Kung prohibit marriage to close kin and allow marriage to various distant or classificatory kin, including even some avoidance partners. Their explanation is that the name-giving/name-taking unit is "one people". One must, they say, marry outside this unit. Thus they prohibit marriage with first, second and third cousins, some close affines, step parents, and some name-relatives (parent's namesake, child's namesake, namesake's parent, namesake's child, namesake's sibling, spouse's parent's namesake and child's spouse's namesake). On the other hand, they allow marriage to certain name-related avoidance partners, treating them as joking partners only after marriage. These include some *tsu* and *//ga* ('uncles/nephews' and 'aunts/nieces') and even some *!go* or *!kwi*, and *tsi* ('brothers' and 'sisters').

The marriage prohibitions are sometimes broken, but it is curious that they exist at all. Cousins are joking partners who among some other Bushman peoples (e.g., the Nharo and the G/wikhwe) would be regarded as ideal spouses. And the !Kung even idealize direct exchange; according to Lorna Marshall (1976: 262): « A marriage arrangement which the !Kung consider especially good is called *!oa ku*. This means that an exchange is made between two bands: a boy and girl from one marry a girl and boy from the other ».

Yet the !Kung have failed to develop the kind of terminological system (Iroquois or Dravidian) or the marriage rules (to cross-cousins) which would be generated if this ideal, although rare, marriage arrangement were practised consistently.

3. Nharo

The Nharo are a Khoe-speaking Bushman people who number some 5000 or more and live in the western Ghanzi district of Botswana, to the south of the !Kung. They have long been in contact with the ≠Au//eisi, or southern !Kung, and share with the !Kung peoples their peculiar system of naming and namesake-equivalence. In fact, some !Kung names occur among the Nharo. However, their kinship terminology structure and marriage rules are completely different; these elements of the Nharo kinship system resemble those of the Nharo's linguistic relatives, the G/wikhwe Bushmen and the various Khoekhoe ("Hottentot") peoples.

Nharo country extends over a limestone ridge which at one time contained numerous natural waterholes as well as ample vegetable and animal resources. Their pattern of seasonal migration probably resembled that of the !Kung, but in the latter half of the century, as a result of the intrusion of European and Bantu-speaking cattle herders, the natural waterholes have largely been replaced with even more numerous wind- and power-driven boreholes. Most Nharo today live in small borehole-centred settlements or bands (Nharo sg.: *tsou*). These are grouped into larger territorial units which I call band clusters (Nharo sg.: *n!u*). Band and band cluster membership is inherited through either parent, and bride service is not practised. The following data on Nharo kinship is from my own fieldwork (cfr. Barnard 1978b) ⁴.

The kin terminology system of the Nharo is Iroquois, bifurcate merging and utilizes a small set of reciprocal, sex-aspecific categories. These are extended through !Kung-type rules of namesake-equivalence, but Nharo practices of personal naming differ from those of the !Kung in some respects. Among the !Kung the father names his children after other relatives, while among the Nharo, grandparents name their grandchildren after themselves. The first pair of grandparents to arrive after the birth of the first child will do the naming. Names are sex-specific and naming alternates between the father's side of the family and the mother's. If grandparents are not available, then some other relative of the proper sex, on the proper side of the family and of the proper kin category will name the child. Since all these relatives stand in the same relationship to the child (kin category *tsxō*, roughly the Nharo equivalent of !Kung *!gu!na* or *tun!ga*, and *tūn*), Nharo naming cannot alter the categorization of grandparents, uncles or aunts.

The basic Nharo kin categories are as follows:

<i>tsxō</i> (or <i>mama</i>)	namesake, grandparent, grandchild, cross-uncle or aunt, cross-cousin, cross-nephew or niece, joking affine
<i>g//o</i>	parent, parallel uncle or aunt, child, parallel nephew or niece, spouse's <i>g//o</i>
<i>ki</i>	elder sibling, elder parallel cousin
<i>!kwĩ</i>	younger sibling, younger parallel cousin
<i>khwe</i>	spouse, spouse's same-sex sibling, same-sex sibling's spouse
<i>/wi</i>	avoidance affine

Tsxō, same-sex *ki* and *!kwĩ*, and *kbwe* are joking partners (Nharo: *g//ai*); and *g//o*, opposite-sex *ki* and *!kwĩ*, and */wi* are avoidance partners (Nharo: *!au*). There is no special relationship between name-giver and name-receiver. Joking affines are defined as spouse's *g//ai* and their reciprocals, and avoidance affines are defined as spouse's *!au* and their reciprocals. All except one of the categories given can be expressed as egocentric kin terms, with the prefix *ti-*, or 'my' (the exception being *mama*, which takes no prefix); and all except *ki* (reciprocal: *!kwĩ-ku*) and *kbwe* (reciprocal: *se-ku* 'married') can be expressed reciprocally with the suffix *-ku*, 'to each other'. Gender suffixes are added to egocentric kin terms when used in reference, and some kin categories contain more specific sex and generation-distinguished terms, but these micro-level distinctions need not concern us here. Joking/avoidance categorization is illustrated in figure 2.

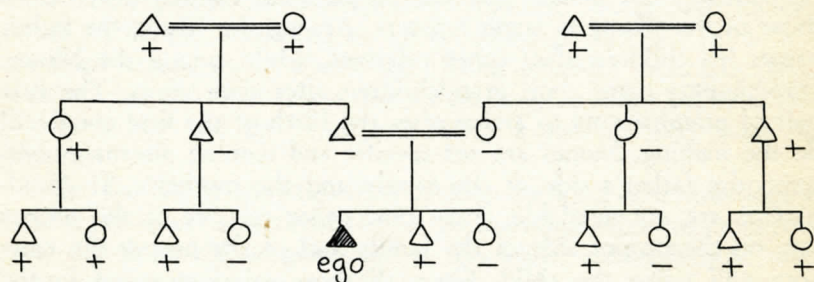


Fig. 2 - Nharo and G/wikhwe

The Nharo categorize according to a set of semi-conscious rules. The closest links define the relationship. If consanguineous ties are closest, then consanguineous ties are used. If affinal, these are used. And if tracing through a namesake yields a closer genealogical point of reference, then name ties are used. For example, if EGO's MBD has the same name as EGO's sister, then she is classified as *ki* or *!kwĩ*, and not as *tsxō*. ZN (sister's namesake) is a closer relationship than MBD. Where consanguineal or affinal ties are either unknown or very distant, alter is placed in the category of a namesake who appears as a close relative in EGO's genealogy. The categories are intended to be reciprocal, but conflicting categorization (two people classifying each other different-

ly) does occur. The solution in such cases depends on the particular sociological circumstances.

Unlike the !Kung, the Nharo use their kin terminology system for the regulation of incest and marriage. Only joking partners of the *tsxō* category are marriageable. All other Nharo are considered either "parents/children" (*g/o*), "siblings" (*ki* or *!kwī*) or non-marriageable "avoidance affines" (*/wi*). The system may be considered one of "cross-cousin marriage", but from a demographic point of view it is important to note that "real" (genealogically defined) cross-cousins are very often unmarriageable because of rules of namesake-equivalence. In the example given previously, EGO's MBD was classified as "sister" because she bore the name of EGO's real sister. Such situations are common since a grandparent may give his or her name to more than one grandchild if the grandchildren have different parents.

4. G/wikhwe

The G/wikhwe inhabit the southern part of Botswana's Central Kalahari Game Reserve, immediately east of the Nharo. Although they lack the !Kung and Nharo naming system, their kin terminology structure closely resembles that of the Nharo; and the Nharo and G/wikhwe languages are mutually intelligible.

G/wikhwe country is less hospitable than that of the !Kung or of the Nharo, and the G/wikhwe pattern of seasonal migration is essentially the reverse of the !Kung one. There is no year-round staple plant food (only seasonally-available plants being found in the central Kalahari), and there is a scarcity of water. Each band disperses in the dry season to exploit scattered resources and comes together in the wet season to travel as a group around the band territory, in search of food, water, and water-bearing melons (Silberbauer 1965: 18-61; 1972: 275-304). G/wikhwe bands, and allied bands help each other in times of drought and food-shortage. Visitors from allied bands enjoy the same rights to the resources of their host bands as members of the host band itself. The closer inter-band kinship links tend to be between allied bands, and allied bands frequently intermarry (see Silberbauer 1972: 302-04). The following description is based partly on my own brief encounters with G/wikhwe and the G/wikhwe kinship system and partly on the work of George B. Silberbauer (especially 1972: 304-19; cfr. 1961; 1963; 1965; 1973)⁵.

Like the Nharo, the G/wikhwe have an Iroquois, bifurcate merging terminology and a set of reciprocal kin terms formed by kin category morphemes, suffixing *-ku*; their egocentric terminology, however, does not make use of reciprocal terms as often, and some basic terms are sex-specific. In egocentric usage, the kin terms (used with the prefix *ki-* 'my') are:

<i>baba</i>	grandfather, MB, FZH
<i>mama</i>	grandmother, FZ, MBH
<i>n//odi</i>	cross-cousin, cross-nephew or niece
<i>ba</i>	F, FB, MZH
<i>gje</i>	M, MZ, FBW
<i>/kwa</i>	child, parallel nephew or niece
<i>gjibaxu</i>	elder sibling, elder parallel cousin
<i>gjaxu</i>	younger sibling, younger parallel cousin
<i>k'ao</i>	H, HB (w.s.), ZH (w.s.)
<i>g//eis</i>	W, WZ (m.s.), BW (m.s.)
<i>/wi</i>	affine

Baba, *mama* and *n//odi* are equivalent to Nharo *tsxō* (in G/wikhwe reciprocal usage, *n//odi-ku*); *ba*, *gje* and */kwa* to Nharo *g//o* (G/wikhwe reciprocal: *g//o-ku*); *gjibaxu* and *gjaxu* to Nharo *ki* and *!kwĩ* (G/wikhwe reciprocal: possibly *gijaux-ku*)⁶; and *k'ao* and *g//eis* to Nharo *khwe* (G/wikhwe reciprocal: *se-ku* 'married'). The G/wikhwe use category */wi* both for joking affines (who would be *tsxō* among the Nharo) and for avoidance affines. Avoidance relatives are called *!au* (as among the Nharo), but there is no specific term for joking relatives. They are simply *!au-kjima* 'non-avoidance', or more literally, 'not feared'. In short, there are only two basic differences between the Nharo system and the G/wikhwe system — one being the wider meaning of the term */wi* in G/wikhwe, and the other being the G/wikhwe division of Nharo category *tsxō* into senior male (*baba*), senior female (*mama*), and equal or junior (*n//odi*). Both differences are primarily linguistic and not sociological. The latter seems to reflect the use of the !Kung naming system by the Nharo, for it is the G/wikhwe system which more closely resembles those of the other Khoespeaking peoples (Barnard 1976: 102-26, 149-67). Joking/avoidance categorization for close kin is the same as that among the Nharo (figure 2).

Since the G/wikhwe lack the naming system of the !Kung and Nharo, babies are named after events coincident with their birth.

Thus there are almost as many G/wikhwe names as there are G/wikhwe babies; namesakes are extremely rare. Their method of kin categorization might be expected to be more *ad hoc* than that of the other two Bushman peoples yet discussed, but this is not the case. G/wikhwe know their genealogical relationship to most people they meet; and where genealogical links are unknown, friendship links among the G/wikhwe function in the same way as namesake links among the !Kung and Nharo (see Silberbauer 1972: 309). Joking partners' joking partners and avoidance partners' avoidance partners are joking partners, and joking partners' avoidance partners and avoidance partners' joking partners are avoidance partners. Within the broader categories (joking and avoidance), kin terms are applied according to the relationship of the stranger to one's linking friend or acquaintance, whose kin category would already be known.

G/wikhwe marriage is exclusively to joking partners, specifically to opposite-sex-same-generation joking partners, i.e., *n//odi*, the category of cross-cousins. However, as among the Nharo, actual cross-cousin marriage is infrequent; and most marriages are band-exogamous, and uxori-local until the birth of the first child (Silberbauer 1972: 303).

5. !Kō

The !Kō live in the relatively barren south-central Kalahari, to the south of the Nharo and southwest of the G/wikhwe. Their dialects represent yet another language family; and their kin terminology system, although Iroquois in type, is considerably different in joking/avoidance structure from the systems of the Nharo and G/wikhwe. The !Kō also lack a clear ideology of universal kin categorization, and I consider their kinship system empirically universal in type.

!Kō group structure is similar to that of the other Bushman groups, except that there seems to be a much greater concern with territoriality. Each family exploits a different area within the band cluster territory. Between band cluster territories are strips of "no-man's-land", which are rarely crossed, except in the autumn, for the annual male initiation ceremonies (see Heinz 1966: 125-34; 1978). Bride service and initial uxori-local residence are practised, and until very recently, band clusters were essentially endogamous.

The rare marriages which do occur across band cluster boundaries do not result in a change of band cluster membership. The in-marrying !Kō is considered a foreigner; in theory he remains a member of his natal band cluster indefinitely (Heinz 1966: 17-110; cfr. 1972; 1979). The description of !Kō kinship which follows is based on data collected by their leading ethnographer, H.J. Heinz (1966: 153-224, and figures 30, 31 and 32), except where otherwise noted.

Like the G/wikhwe, the !Kō name their children after events occurring at the time of birth. They have no system of name transmission from one generation to the next or of namesake-equivalence.

No reciprocal kin terms are recorded for the !Kō. Their basic egocentric kin terms, minus the first-person singular prefixes *na-* (before a vowel), *m-* (before a labial) and η (elsewhere), are listed below. In addition to these, descriptive terms are sometimes used as alternatives, particularly for distant kin, and one's own children are distinguished by their relative ages. The suffix *- η / η* is sometimes added for affines, and the suffix *-!au* for distant or classificatory kin. For the genealogical points of reference marked with an asterisk, the suffix *-!au* is required (note, e.g., *na a* 'my F'; *na a !au* 'my stepfather, my FB, my MZH, etc.'). The three genealogical points of reference listed in square brackets below are not given by Heinz. They are my hypothetical additions, based on the internal logic of the system⁷.

$\neq e$	grandfather, grandchild (either sex), MB, FZH, ZC (m.s.), [BC (w.s.)], [HB], WZ (same age or younger than EGO)
//am	grandmother, FZ, MBW, WZ (older than EGO)
\bar{a}	F, FB*, MZH*
kai	M, MZ*, FBW*
$\odot a$	child, BC (m.s.)*, [ZC (w.s.)*], cross-cousin*
$\odot xa$	elder sibling, F's elder B's child M's elder Z's child
=xan	younger sibling, F's younger B's child, M's younger Z's child
η/η	spouse
/a bā	F-in-law, WB
$\odot a \eta/\eta$	M-in-law, child-in-law, HZ
!oa	HB, WZ ⁸

The !Kō system, like that of the !Kung, alternates generational terms. At least for lineal relatives, $\neq e$ (for senior male joking partners and junior joking partners of either sex) and $//am$ (for senior female joking partners) alternate with \bar{a} (for senior male avoidance partners), kai (for senior female avoidance partners) and Θa (for junior avoidance partners of either sex). And unlike the other Bushman groups who distinguish cross- from parallel cousins (i.e., the Nharo and the G/wikhwe), the !Kō apply senior and junior sibling terms to parallel cousins according to the relative ages of the parents' siblings rather than the relative ages of the parallel cousins themselves. The Nharo and G/wikhwe practice is particularly consistent with an ideology of universal kin categorization, and the !Kō practice may reflect the fact that they do not extend these terms to as many individuals.

The principle behind the !Kō rules of joking/avoidance categorization is the same as that illustrated in the rules of G/wikhwe extension of joking/avoidance categorization through friendship links. The difference is that for the !Kō the rules determine not only the classification of non-genealogically-related people, but also the classification of close kin (see figure 3). For the !Kō, joking partners' joking partners and avoidance partners' avoidance partners are *always* joking, and joking partners' avoidance partners and avoidance partners' joking partners are *always* avoidance. $\neq e$, $//am$, same-sex Θxa and $=xan$, η/η and $!oa$ are joking partners, and \bar{a} , kai , Θa , apposite-sex Θxa and $=xan$, $/a h\bar{a}$ and $\Theta a \eta/\eta$ are avoidance partners.

The closest joking relationship is between mutual $\neq e$. $\neq e$ (or $!oa$) is also the marriageable category of kin. The system resembles those of the Nharo and the G/wikhwe in defining classificatory "grandchildren" as potential spouses, but of course the main dif-

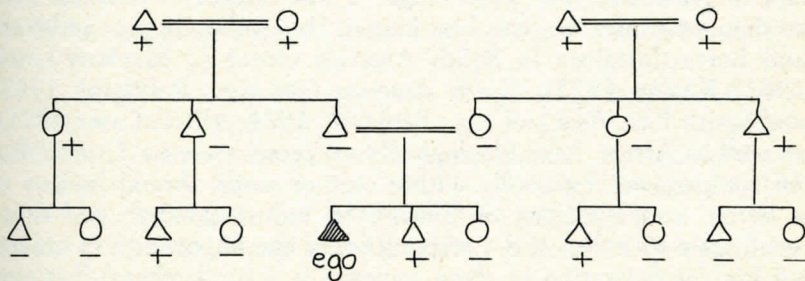


Fig. 3 - !Kō

ference is that this category cannot include cross-cousins. By the strict rules of joking/avoidance categorization, cross-cousins are avoidance partners (since they are the children of joking partners, i.e., joking partners' avoidance partners). This striking peculiarity results in the equation of cross-cousins with children (or, more precisely, with step-children or same-sex siblings' children, *Oa !au*).

The potential for marriage to individuals not classified as kin is not made clear in the ethnography. The !Kō system is not ideologically universal — there is a concept of non-kin (A. Traill, personal communication) — but social relations do tend to be confined to kin. Members of the same band cluster probably know their kin relationship to each other, and since most marriages are band cluster-endogamous it seems likely that most marriages occur between \neq and not between non-kin.

6. Conclusion

The kinship systems of the four peoples discussed here are in some ways very different. Yet the two basic similarities — a clear distinction between joking partners and avoidance partners, and universal kin categorization — are striking. The first similarity may be peculiar to Bushmen; thus it is especially interesting that each Bushman system manages to extend this same joking/avoidance dichotomy to close kin according to different rules of kin category extension. The second similarity is common, at least among hunter-gatherers and small-scale horticulturalists.

Previous ethnographers of hunter-gatherers have tended to emphasize the differences between kinship systems. My belief is that a strong case could be made for considering the similarities, and in particular, the wide range of kin category extension. Australian examples are the best-known, but other hunter-gatherers and horticulturalists in South America (see e.g., Maybury-Lewis 1967; Kaplan 1975), North America (see e.g., Ridington 1969) and South East Asia (see e.g., Benjamin 1966; 1967; Carey 1976), as well as Africa, have ideologically universal systems. Cross-cultural comparisons, especially within culture areas, should lead us to a better understanding of kinship in hunter-gatherer and other small-scale societies; and a recognition of the importance of universal kin categorization in these societies is a fundamental first step in their comparative analysis.

Notes

1. This article is a revised and expanded version of a paper read at the International Conference on Hunting and Gathering Societies held in Paris in June 1978. I am grateful to the conference participants for their stimulating comments.
2. The !Kung have additional kin terms for more distant affines, but these will not be discussed here (see Marshall 1976: 214-23).
3. There is apparently one exception to this rule. Some male same-generation affines termed *tun!ga* are avoidance partners (see Marshall 1976: 220).
4. This fieldwork was carried out between May 1974 and September 1975 and was supported by grants from the Swan Fund (Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford).
5. Silberbauer's earlier works dealing with kin terminology (1961; 1965) contain a number of orthographic errors which have been corrected in the later works (1972; 1973). I am grateful to Dr. Silberbauer, who has a much fuller knowledge of G/wikhwe social organization than I have, for clarifying a few points. However the interpretation given here is entirely my own, and I acknowledge sole responsibility for any errors.
6. This is the only term I am not certain about. Specifically, I am not sure whether I found this term in use or whether I or my G/wikhwe informants contrived it in order to discuss resemblances between Nharo and G/wikhwe systems more easily.
7. There are a few minor discrepancies between Heinz's kin term lists (1966: 159-61, 163-66) and his kin term charts (1966: figures 30, 31, and 32). Where these occur I have recorded the usages given in the charts, which are more complete and in every instance logically consistent.
8. This term is used specifically when Ego's spouse is deceased and implies potential levirate or sororate. Otherwise she is *≠e* or *//am* (see Heinz 1966: 1970).

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Summary

A system of universal kin categorization is a kinship system in which each individual applies kin terms to every other member of his society. In this paper, four such systems are discussed. All four are Kalahari Bushman systems, but there are some interesting differences between them. In particular, the systems differ with regard to the structure of kin classification and marriage rules. The author suggests that in spite of these differences however, the common features of universal kin categorization and a universal joking/avoidance dichotomy make comparisons fruitful.

Sommario

Un sistema di categorizzazione universale della parentela è un sistema di parentela in cui ogni individuo classifica in termini parentali ciascun membro della società. In questo articolo vengono presi in esame quattro sistemi di questo tipo, tutti dei Boscimani del Kalahari, ma che presentano tra loro differenze interessanti. In particolare i sistemi differiscono riguardo alla struttura della classificazione dei parenti e delle regole matrimoniali. L'A. suggerisce però che, nonostante queste differenze, le caratteristiche comuni della categorizzazione universale della parentela e una universale dicotomia "scherzo/evitazione" rendono utile il confronto.