

Categories of Okinawan "Ancestors" and the Kinship System*

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This paper will present some basic data on Okinawan ancestor worship, which can then be used as a comparison to other societies, especially those of the Far East where various forms of ancestor worship are recognized as significant social facts. Rather than trying to present a general description of ancestor worship in Okinawa, I limit myself, in this paper, to one specific problem: how the Okinawans themselves conceive and categorize their ancestors, and how such concepts and classifications are related to the structure of Okinawan kinship.

In paying particular attention to the relationship between ancestor worship and the kinship system, I am following the tradition of the British social anthropologists (e.g., Fortes in 1959 and 1966, and Freedman in 1958 and 1966) whose views on ancestor worship are summarized in Fortes' general statement that "ancestor worship is rooted in domestic, kinship and descent relations, and institutions." (1965:122)

The usual procedure is to first identify the significant social units of the society such as the lineage and the household, and then to see the 'fitness' between the social structure, and ancestors as they appear at each level of social structure, as Freedman has done with Chinese ancestors (1958, Chapters 10 and 11). I shall begin, instead, with the emic categories and see where they lead. By so doing, the statements such as

... they [the ancestors worshipped by the Chinese in their halls] were the religious correlates of a social structure achieving permanence through time (Freedman 1958: 134); and

All the concepts and beliefs [concerning ancestors] are religious extrapolations

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of the experiences generated in the relationships between parents and children in societies with a social organization based on kinship and descent (Fortes 1959: 47. Italics mine).

remain hypotheses to be verified by the emic analysis.

I do not believe that, despite these statements, either Freedman or Fortes holds ancestor worship as a mere reflection of the social system. Otherwise, why, for instance, are ancestors worshipped in certain, but not all, patrilineal societies; or why does ancestor worship in societies with similar descent systems take different forms? Surely, the religious system of a society must be ultimately an independent system. Although it is functionally and/or structurally correlative with the social order of a society in many aspects, it cannot be explained *solely* in terms of the social structure. Anyway, whether the religious system (in this case, ancestor worship) and the social order correlate, and if so, how they fit, can only be determined after the kinship system and the religious system of a society are examined as independent systems.

This paper will consist of three parts plus a conclusion. In the first part, I shall examine the ideology pertaining to Okinawan ancestors: how they are conceptualized and categorized in relation to their descendants and among themselves. The second part will deal with several kinship principles that are relevant for the understanding of Okinawan ancestors and their relationships with their descendants. The third part will be a componential analysis of emic categories concerning ancestors, ancestral ceremonies, and sacred places and objects associated with ancestors. In conclusion, I shall summarize some of the results of the above analysis, and suggest, for a future comparative study, a few lines of inquiry which might shed light on the relationship between ancestor worship and the kinship system in the Far Eastern societies.

I. Ideology

The data I am presenting here were obtained through participant observation and inquiry during 16-month fieldwork¹ (from August 1969

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The description and analysis in this paper concerns, strictly speaking, only with this North Okinawan village. There are considerable regional, as well as temporal, variations in kin group organization, related customs, and the ideology. However, since my aim in this paper is to investigate the nature of the relationship between ancestral categories and the kinship system, I concentrate on the

to December 1970) in a small agricultural village² called Inoha, Motobu County, Okinawa. The village consists³ of a highly nucleated Main Village and three surrounding daughter villages where houses are scattered over larger areas. The village is largely endogamous, and without particular preferences and proscriptions in marriage rules based on kinship, virtually everybody is related to everyone else. At the same time, every individual belongs to one of the mutually exclusive, named, patrilineal descent groups, which are, however, neither property-owning, nor exogamous. Altogether the village in 1970 had the population of 567 who lived in 96 households.

However, these 567 persons represent only a fraction of the persons who belong to the village. There are uncounted and uncountable number of persons who have died but still belong to the village (collectively called *uya-faafuji*, which literally means "parents and grandparents". I shall hereafter use "forebears" for this term with the provision that the persons of descending generations with necessary qualifications join, upon their death, the ranks of the forebears). And then there are others who are yet to be born (*kwaamaaga* or "offspring"; literally, "children and grandchildren"). All these persons belong to the universe called "the village" (*shima*), which would not be complete if it lacked any one of these three categories. The forebears and offspring, as well as the living members of the community, are therefore all "villagers" (*shimanchu*) who have legitimate interest in the continuity and welfare of the village.

The status of the villager, or "citizenship" in Fortes' terminology (1969), is patrilineally transmitted from father to his children. Maternal descent status is irrelevant as can be seen by the cases of the children of female villagers by non-villager husbands. These children are not true "villagers" even if they were born and raised in the village. In contrast, the children begotten by male villagers are counted as villagers regardless of their place of birth, present residence, etc. Whether they were born in Peru (where the village sent many migrants), whether

customs and beliefs of this particular village which I had chance to observe intimately.

2. Throughout the article, unless otherwise stated, I use the term village as a socio-culturally defined unit, not as an administrative unit. In native terms, the former is called *shima*, while the latter is *ku* or *aza*.

3. Throughout this paper, historical present refers, strictly speaking, to the period of my fieldwork, 1969-70. However, I cannot imagine that the ideology and practice concerning "ancestors", which are the subjects of this paper, have changed drastically since then.

they can speak the dialect, whether they personally know a single Inoha resident, do not matter, so long as their fathers are "villagers". Practically, however, the distinction between paternal and maternal filiation is an unnecessary one, since the village being endogamous⁴, a "villager" is almost always a child of male and female villagers. All "villagers" are theoretically under the spiritual protection of the deity of the "sacred grove" (*utaki*) of the village. And, should any of the non-resident "villagers" decide to return to the village, his status within the village and his descent group will be immediately reactivated. The village as an ideological unit is thus conceived as a perpetual entity, the continuity of which is seen in the patrilineal (*shiji*) relationship binding the forebear, the living member, and the offspring. Superficial demographic movement hardly affects this ideological structure.

The concept of the social unit as a perpetual entity with the tripartite division of its members into the forebears, the living members, and the offspring appear repeatedly at lower levels of social organization: the patrilineal descent group (*munchuu*) and the household (*yaa*). Once established, the descent group or the household should never disappear, particularly if it is an old and therefore structurally significant one. Even if such a unit should physically die out, it is not allowed to disappear entirely. The old house site on which an important household once stood (*furu-yashichi*) remains unoccupied in the middle of the village, because it is taboo for anyone but patrilineal descendants to build a house on it. The presence of the household ancestors (*gwansu*) who have no proper offspring to take care of them are very visible in the forms of extra ancestral tablets (*ifee*) in the ancestral altar (*buchidan*), often separated by a board from the tablets of the proper ancestors of the household. They are unhappy, potentially dangerous "cold ancestors" (*hijuru gwansu*) for whom a proper heir must be found posthumously if possible at all, for the ancestors who lack a proper heir are not only pitiable and dangerous, but also unnatural and wrong.

I said tripartite classification. Actually, however, the tripartite division is two forebear-offspring relationships mediated by the living member, since the living member is at the same time the offspring of the forebear *and* the forebear of the future offspring. More accurately,

4. Of the total 124 unions of which at least one partner survives as a registered resident of the village, 103, or 84%, is endogamous, meaning that the union is between co-villagers, or between a male villager and a woman from one of the three neighboring villages which originated from Inoha. The endogamy rate of the marriages contracted before 1950 is 93%.

each of the three social units, the village, the descent group, and the household, is conceived as a series of forebear-offspring relationships. What then is the distinctive feature of the forebear-offspring relationship in this culture? The two native terms *uya-faafuji* and *kwaamaaga*, which I tentatively translated as "forebears" and "offspring" designate not only the past and future members of the three identified social units, but also certain living persons in domestic contexts. Egocentrically, a person's *uya-faafuji* are his parents (hereafter abbreviated as P. See footnote 5 for abbreviations for other kintypes. *uya*) and PP (*faafuji*), while his *kwaamaaga* are his C (*kwaama*) and CC (*nmaaga*). It is understood that these designata in the domestic context are logically prior to other usages. Ego's genealogical relationship with *uya-faafuji* and *kwaamaaga* in their primary meanings may be graphically shown as in Fig. 1.

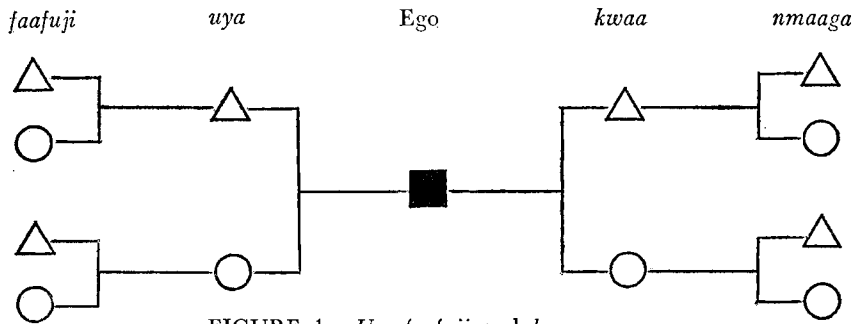


FIGURE 1. *Uya-faafuji* and *kwaamaaga*.

Ego may be either male or female. Categorization at this level of classification is purely generational, bilaterally symmetrical, with no sexual discrimination either in ascending or descending generations. The relationship between *uya-faafuji* and *kwaamaaga* with the ego at the center spans five generations, but the Okinawans conceive this as a series of

5. In the following, I use, with slight modifications, terminological abbreviations developed by the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute (Barnes 1967). Abbreviations are as follows:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| P parent | F father | M mother |
| G sibling | B brother | Z sister |
| + old (in front of G, B, & Z) | | |
| - younger (" " ") | | |
| E spouse | H husband | W wife |
| C child | S son | D daughter |

Numbers preceding S, D, B, or Z indicate the birth order among the siblings of the same sex.

The signs are used both in singular and plural forms.

P-C (*uya-kwa*) relationships, which they think is the axiomatic relationship of all forebear-offspring relationships. We must now examine how P-C relationship is conceptualized in the society.

The villagers subscribe to a philosophy that at least certain important happenings of life are pre-ordained by some mysterious force, which they call *inn*. All consanguineal relationships, or "blood relationships" (*kechi-inn*), fall into this category, but especially the relationship between P and C. The Okinawan ideology of "blood" (*chii*) as the natural substance which defines the relationships between consanguineal kin is strikingly similar to the American counterpart when Schneider describes it in the following words:

Substance or blood in its biogenetic sense is a state of affairs, a fact of life that nothing can change. Either it is there or it is not, and if it is there it cannot be altered or terminated. It is *involuntary*, then, in two senses: a person cannot choose to enter or not to enter into that state, and if he is in that state he has no control over it and cannot alter or terminate it. (Schneider 1968: 91)

There is, however, one fundamental difference between the two cultures. Americans are concerned with a state of affairs (Persons A and B are "blood" relatives, because they share "blood" in a certain way). For the Okinawans, the state of affairs is not enough. They need to know why, as well as how, persons A and B are related. The causal explanation is given by the notion of *inn*. *Inn* in itself is neither good nor bad. It is supposed to be just there, pre-ordained, even before a person is conceived. He is to be born on such and such a date as the male or female C of a certain man and a certain woman, grow up in a certain way, find a certain E, have so many C, etc., *because* mysterious *inn* has it so. P-C relationship in the Okinawan culture is, therefore, not just the relationship based on a biogenetic substance, but it is something pre-ordained by mysterious *inn*, which, like the Greek concept of fate, or the Tale concept of Destiny (Fortes 1959), is ultimately supreme over individual efforts and desires.

There is another dimension to the concept of *inn*, and that is the vaguely accepted notion that, however absurd and unfair an *inn* relationship from the point of view of a particular individual at a particular time point may seem, the totality of these *inn* relationships is somehow balanced and ultimately just, if not obvious fair. It is therefore not only foolish and futile, but also morally wrong, and unnatural to defy an *inn* relationship. P-C relationship, and all forebear-offspring relationships, are the most fundamental of all the *inn* relationships. To

act "improperly" toward one's P, and/or any forebear, is therefore to break "the law of universe" (*michi*, literally, "the way"). No wonder a person cannot violate this law, without forfeiting his moral standing as a respected and self-respecting human being (*chu*), since only the "non-humans" or "sub-humans" (*chikishoo*) are ignorant of the law.

It is in this spirit that filial piety and all kinds of ancestor worship are viewed in this society. Certainly, one of the motivations for such pious acts is to affect the dyadic relationship between the particular actor and the recipient from the side of the actor. A person venerates and supports his old P, and in return he expects them to be loving and proud of him. Similarly, he worships his ancestors, honoring them and offering them prayers, incense, foods, etc.; and he expects in return to be protected by them. But that is only a part of the picture, and a rather insignificant part at that. For no respectable Okinawan would think of retaliating towards his forebears (dead or alive) for their bad performance, by withholding his filial duties. Of course it would be much nicer and satisfactory if his filial acts are reciprocated by the forebears with their benevolence, etc. But, if they are not reciprocated, that would not free the Okinawan from his filial duties. For, in the final analysis, it is his very humanity (to be a "human", *chu*) that is jeopardized, if he does not fulfill his filial obligations. That is one reason why ancestor worship in this society is not amenable to quantitative analysis of reciprocity, or to a rationalistic interpretation in terms of simple cause and effect.

II. Structural Principles

With this general knowledge, let us now turn to structural principles underlying various forebear-offspring relationships, of which P-C relationship is the prototypical one. Two natural substances, "blood" (*chii*) and "semen" (*sani*), are believed to play significant roles in defining two different kinds of P-C relationships. Like American "blood", "blood" in the Okinawan ideology is perceived as a natural substance transmitted to a person from his genitor and genitrix in equal proportion. There is no qualitative difference between the relationship with one's F on the one hand and that with M on the other. Thus, relatives through F and corresponding relatives through M are treated alike, and equated terminologically (e.g., both FB and MB are *ujasaa*; FGC and MGC are both *itsuku*). The relationship through "blood" is bilaterally symmetrical, and in this sense, sharply contrasts with the "agnatic"

(*shiji*) relationship which is thought to be based on “semen”. Since semen is contributed only by the genitor for the C’s conception, the C’s agnatic status derives solely from his genitor. In other words, a person in this culture is perceived to be related to both genitor and genitrix in “blood”, but only to his genitor in “semen”. Seen from another angle, both man and woman transmit their “blood” status to their offspring; only man can transmit his agnatic status to the descendants through his semen. Thus, Ego’s M and her B are two of the closest “blood” relatives to the Ego; they are not related to him at all in terms of “semen”, unless they happen to be also his patrilineal kin. The two kinds of P-C relationships may then be summarized in the following two formulae:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{in terms of “blood”} \\ C=50\%F \text{ plus } 50\%M \dots\dots\dots (1) \\ \text{whereas in terms of “semen”} \\ C=100\%F \text{ plus } 0\%M \dots\dots\dots (2) \end{array}$$

This leads to another set of significant structural principles of Okinawan P-C relationship. Since C is made of 50% F’s “blood” and 50% M’s, from the genitor’s point of view his “blood” is “thinned” by 50% with the “blood” of the genitrix. Consequently, C’s identity with his F in “blood” is 50%, his identity with his FF would be only 25%, with his FFF 12.5%, and so on, assuming that the E of these forebears were not “blood” relatives prior to marriage. In contrast, C’s identity with his F in “semen” is 100%, and so is his identity with FF, FFF, . . . , since unlike “blood” “semen” never gets “thinned”. So, again in formulae, the second set of principles may be expressed thus:

$$\begin{array}{l} \text{in terms of “blood”} \\ C=1/2F=1/4FF=1/8FFF\dots\dots\dots (3) \\ \text{whereas in terms of “semen”} \\ \dots FFF=FF=F=S=SS\dots\dots\dots (4) \end{array}$$

The Okinawan woman is made of 100% “semen” of her F, FF, . . . just like her B; but since she cannot herself create semen, she is unable to transmit her agnatic status to her C. And, since she does not transmit her agnatic status based on semen to her C, she is the dead end of agnatic continuity. She retains her natal agnatic status throughout her life, worshipping the ancestors of her natal household (as well as those of her H’s household), participating in the affairs of her natal descent group, and joining village ceremonies in her capacity as a member of her natal descent group. But, upon her death, she joins her H’s group,

becoming an ancestress of her H's patrilineal descendants. A woman who dies unmarried is worshipped by the patrilineal descendants of her F; but her ancestral status in her natal household is peripheral. Either way, her ancestral status is not at all incontrovertible. The fact that she could not traditionally⁶ be buried, or worshipped, with her H unless she had born him a male C (while all males who live to the age of seven are entitled to unequivocal independent ancestral status regardless of their marital status or the existence of a male C) indicates that her ancestral status in her H's group is contingent upon her demonstrated ability to physically produce an heir, or in other words, her capacity to be a responsive receptacle for the H's semen. Even if she succeeded in producing a male heir, and was allowed to join the ancestors of her H's household, her ancestral status is not necessarily a glorious one. Her bones will be put in the same urn as her H's and placed in the position appropriate to her H's agnatic status. In short, her ancestral status is entirely dependent on her H. She hardly has an identity of her own. Her name and her origin relatively quickly forgotten, she is remembered and worshipped only as the W of her H after her thirty-third death anniversary is individually celebrated.

Such H-W relationship in agnatic contexts is radically different from the H-W relationship in non-agnatic contexts, in which the Okinawan woman is, in a significant way, truly equivalent with her H, though, of course, as a female she is given different roles. She has her own kinship identity, and she is supposed to be responsible for one half of her C's "blood" makeup, while her H contributes another half. Consistent with this ideology, relatives through M and relatives through F are terminologically and behaviorally treated alike. So, we get another set of formulae:

in non-agnatic context,

$$H=W \text{ (in that } 50\%H + 50\%W=1 \text{ household) } \dots\dots\dots (5)$$

whereas in agnatic context,

$$H \neq W \text{ (in that } 100\%H + 0\%W=1 \text{ household) } \dots\dots\dots (6)$$

The natives themselves do not consciously distinguish the two opposing principles of the H-W relationship. A very popular proverb, *mitumba tiichi* ("oneness, unity, or equivalence, of W and H") is felt to explain both situations. It explains, they say, why H and W con-

6. The custom has much changed during the last twenty years. Today almost all the married women are buried in her H's tomb, and her memorial tablet is enshrined in the altar of her H's household, even if she could not produce a male C.

stitute one ancestral unit, as well as why a maternal relative and a paternal relative of the same distance must be identified in the same kin term and treated the same way. I hope that it is quite obvious from the above discussion that the resultant "oneness" is obtained through two very different processes. The "oneness" in the first case is the unity based on the complete negation of W's status, while that of the second case is the equivalence of H and W.

Structural principles described so far indicate that there are two contrasting principles of kin classification in this society: the patrilineal principle of descent based on "semen" as it is expressed in formulae 2, 4, and 6; and the bilateral principle of filiation based on "blood" which finds its expression in formulae 1, 3, and 5. The latter defines a basically dyadic relationship between two kinsmen, while the former is the recruiting principle to permanent social units of the society; the village, the descent group, and the household.

We have so far automatically assumed that the siblings of the same sex are equivalent, because formulae 1-4 logically lead to that assumption. And, in fact, they are equivalent in terms of jural membership to the village, descent group, and household, as well as in terms of kin category allocation within the egocentric, ideological kin universe (e.g., M+B and M-B, as well as F+B and F-B, are all *ujasaa* to ego and his G). However, in other contexts, Okinawa G, particularly male G, are never equal. Terminologically, he or she is referred to as the 1S, 2S, . . . , or 1D, 2D, . . . , according to the birth order among the G of the same sex, rather than by personal name or simply as S or D. Even twins are not equal. They might have been born on the same day, but they could not have been born at the same moment. The ideological basis of the discrimination among the G is, therefore, the biological difference between sexes, and the unchangeable fact of birth order. Furthermore, both sex and birth order of a person are felt to be fixed by mysterious *inn*, and in this sense beyond the vagary of chance and human manipulation. They are, in short, absolute. What this practically means is that, if a person is a 2S by birth, he cannot take over the status of the 1S even if the latter is dead.⁷

Every person acquires his (her) unique status within his (her) G group by virtue of his (her) being male or female, and by the order

7. Persons who died in infancy, before reaching the age of seven, were traditionally not counted. So, if the 1S died in infancy, his oldest -B who was 2S by birth, became the 1S of the household in terminology and in status relationship.

of his (her) birth. This status position is not only irreplaceable but also irreducible. The uniqueness and the continuing existence of each individual after his death is expressed in the form of his memorial tablet (*ifee*, or *tootoomee*) which every Okinawan who has reached the age of seven at his death acquires⁸, and which is unduplicable. A person's memorial tablet can be properly taken care of only by his heir, who should be his 1S, and after him 1S1S... A -S can theoretically never replace the 1S in this role, even if the latter cannot properly perform this duty due to his early death, or to his mental and/or physical disability.⁹ In lack of his own male C, the Okinawan can adopt an heir, but such an heir must be chosen only from among the adopter's close male patrilineal kin of a descending generation.

The irreplaceability of B and strict primogenitural rule of succession are expressed in two taboos, the breach of which will inevitably (so they say) lead to a grave misfortune (e.g., prolonged sickness, recurrent accidents, failure to produce male C) among the descendants. The first taboo is that of *choodee kasabai*, or "mixing up brothers". Specifically, the taboo forbids the grown-up married B to live on the same household compound, let alone under the same roof¹⁰; and for dead B to be entombed in the same tomb, to be enshrined in the same an-

8. The C who dies before reaching seven is not counted as a true human being. Such a C was not, and is not, publicly mourned in a full funeral, and he is not buried in the family tomb. Normally he does not acquire a memorial tablet of his own. Occasionally, however, one can observe memorial tablets of persons who died in the last 30 years in infancy. It is difficult to ascertain exactly what caused such change in practice and attitude. The change seems to be definitely related to the recent drastic reduction of mortality rate among the infants. On the other hand, the fact that most of these C who acquired memorial tablets despite their early death died during and immediately after the Battle of Okinawa during World War II seems to indicate the prevalent feeling their lives are unnaturally cut short because of the War. Despite their belief in predestiny (*inn*), these tablets seem to be symbolically expressing the unwillingness by the part of the villagers to accept the unnatural early death of these C.

9. It is interesting to note here that the performance-conscious Japanese, who officially subscribe to the primogenitural rule of succession just like the Okinawans, would readily replace such an 1S with a -S, or even with an adopted son who may be genealogically unrelated.

10. According to the village household record (*kazoku-daichoo*), four of the ninety-six village households fall into the categories of "extended" households, each containing two or more married B and their families. However, a close examination shows that none of these four households are really "extended". In two cases, the -S and their families occupy separate buildings. Although the -S's house is built on the parental compound, the distinctness of his household is symbolized by its own hearth (*kamadu*), Fire Deity (*fi-nu-kan*), and its own gate (*joo*), indicating that the compound, though formerly one, is now split into

cestral altar (*buchidan*), or to be worshipped by the same set of patrilineal descendants. Each B must have his own independent and irreducible ancestral status. This principle of the non-equivalence, or structural incompatibility, of B, may be expressed as follows:

$$B \neq B \dots\dots\dots (7)$$

There is no comparable taboo between B and Z. With postmarital residence rule being virilocal, a Z leaves her natal household upon her marriage; but if she should divorce, or be widowed, or be temporarily separated from her H, she can come home without risking a misfortune. And should she die without attaining a proper ancestorhood at her H's household, she can be buried in the tomb of her natal household, enshrined with her patrilineal ancestors, and worshipped by the patrilineal descendants of the natal household.

The second taboo is called *chatchi ushikumii*, which may be translated "pushing aside the 1S". The taboo forbids, again upon ancestral retribution, that the 1S be replaced by a -S. It specifically applies to matters of succession and inheritance, and stipulates that the heir to the household headship should be the 1S of the present head, and he alone; that a -S cannot replace him while the 1S is alive; and that the 1S cannot be succeeded by his -B, though he can be succeeded by one of the latter's S. This taboo then, in effect, equates F with his 1S, while irrevocably severing the relationship with all other S. Thus:

$$F=1S, \text{ but } F \neq -S \dots\dots\dots (8)$$

In view of this last formula, we must now modify Formula 4, which should be, in matters concerning succession and inheritance:

$$\dots FFF=FF=F=1S=1S1S1S1S\dots\dots\dots (9)$$

The unity of this group vis-à-vis other members of the household is expressed in many ways. First of all, this vertical core of male patrilineal kin constitutes the permanent members of the Okinawan household, which is structurally of patrilineal stem type, allowing only a single marital pair per generation. Other members who belong to the

two units. In the case of the third household, the -S and his family actually reside in a shop in the nearby market town, not in the parental house. The fourth case is the household in which widows of two B and a S of one of these B live in a single house. The widows do not get along well with each other, and they are aware of the taboo between B; but they are poor and cannot afford to have their own houses. They cook and eat separately, and keep their respective Hs' memorial tablets in the opposite ends of the ancestral altar.

household by birth must, upon their social maturity, leave the household either to establish new units of their own, or to join other already existing households through marriage or adoption. Meanwhile, members of this core acquire their E from other households, who keep their agnatic identity of their own throughout their life, but upon their death permanently join the ranks of the "household ancestors" (*gwansu*) of their respective Hs' households. The household may also recruit a core member through adoption, when it fails to produce a natural heir (a S). If such an adoption is a "proper" one, then the adopted heir continues the household line as if he were a natural heir.

The identity of this male core group is so strong that the generational distinction of individual members becomes, sometimes, quite obscured in this seniority-conscious society. For instance, in a case depicted in Fig. 2 ego (B4), in certain contexts, identifies A3 (his FFZS) as a "daughter's child" (*winagungwa nu kwaa*), just as he would do with D6, who is a real DC, and performs the role of the "MF"; because B4, being 1S1S1S of B1, is in this context identical with B1, who is A3's real MF. Incidentally, none of B4's -B (or, for that matter, none of

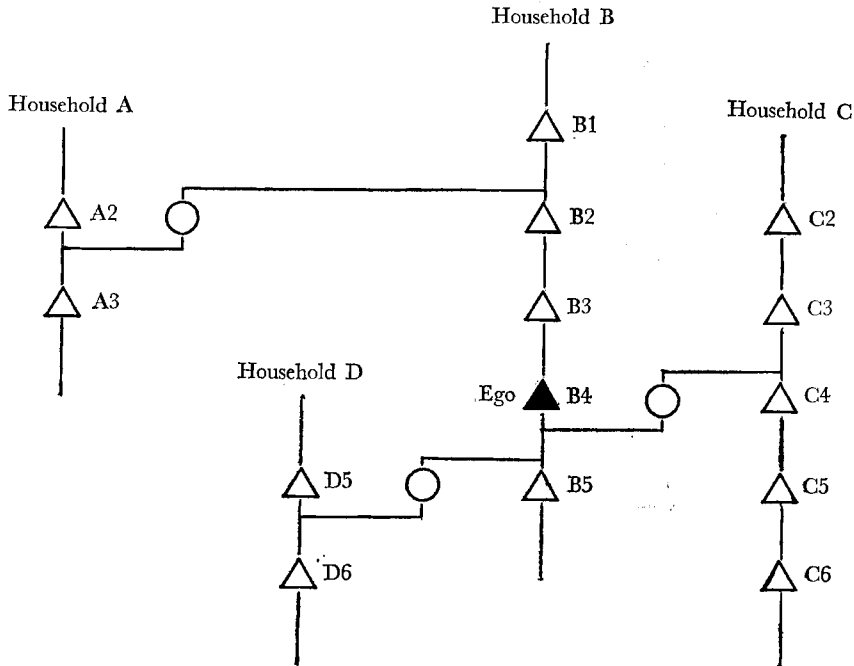


FIGURE 2. Inter-household relationship among households A, B, C, and D.

-B of B2 and B3) has this relationship with A3. If B4 has to be temporarily substituted, it is B4's W or S who represents him, not his -B. Again, following the same principle, B4's W would identify household C as "the house of my P" (*uya nu yaa*), even if C3, her real F, is long dead, and the household is now headed by her B(C4), B1S(C5), or B1S1S(C6). And, if the occasion demands, and if none of the senior core members of the household C is available, C6, her real BSS, plays the role of her "F".

Another aspect of this strong identity of the patrilineal core is the almost complete structural disjunction of -S from the parental household. Younger sons certainly keep their affective ties with their F and eldest B (they are close "blood" relatives after all), and their agnatic identity based on the concept of "semen" is strong; but in terms of succession and inheritance, they cannot replace or succeed to their F or eldest B, although their S might, through the fiction of adoption, if the parental household fails to produce a S.

I have identified several significant structural principles of Okinawan kinship, which, I feel, are pretty well summarized in the nine formulae. My next job is to identify cultural categories of Okinawan ancestor worship.

III. Componential analysis of "ancestral" categories

The Okinawans are very conscious about their ancestor worship which they identify collectively in a Japanese term of *sosen suuhai*. In their own native terms, they define it as "the act of *ugan* (honor and homage rendered to any supernatural in a culturally established ceremonial procedure) rendered to the *uya-faafuji* (forebear) by the *kwaamaaga* (offspring)". Ancestor worship may then tentatively be defined as "reverent honor and homage rendered to the dead 'forebears' by the living 'offspring' according to culturally established ceremonial procedures." This should eliminate, among others, all religious acts directed to various culturally important nature deities, such as Sea Deity (*un-gami*), Fire Deity (*fi-nu-kan*), Earth Deity (*ji nu kami*), and other deities associated with specific locales such as the deity of the household compound (*yaashichi gami*), and the deity of the well/spring (*kaa nu kami*).

Within this boundary, the natives distinguish three kinds of religious activities: *kami-gutu*, or "the affairs of *kami*"; *munchuu-gutu*, or the "affairs of the descent group"; and *gwansu-gutu*, or "the affairs

of the household ancestors". The purpose of Part III is to identify various categories of participants (both the worshippers and the worshipped), sacred objects and places, relevant religious events, etc. in each of these three kinds of ancestor worship; and to find definitive attributes of each identified category in order to discern structural principles underlying the classification of these categories. Though I find it impossible, in dealing with my religious data, to attain the degree of brevity and precision demonstrated by Goodenough in his componential analysis of Moala kinship terminology based on Sahlin's data (Goodenough 1968: 188-191); I shall certainly try to be as precise as I can, paying particular attention to the fact, or the possibility,

that the several expressions within a domain can be sorted into sets so that all the expressions in a set have mutually exclusive denotata at a given hierarchical level and differ from one another with respect to one or several dimensions of discrimination (*ibid.*, p. 188).

Frake's earlier analysis of Subanun "religious behavior" (1964) was operationally very useful in actually carrying out the following analysis.

"Ancestors"

All Okinawan "ancestors" as the recipients of the act of ancestor worship stand in the relationship of "forebears" (*uya-faafuji*) vis-à-vis their worshippers, who are always "offspring" (*kwaamaaga*). As such, they may be addressed as "parents" (*uya*) with various honorific embellishments (*mi-uya*, *uya-ganashii*, *uya-ganashi-mee*, *mi-uya-ganashii*, *mi-uya-ganashi-mee*). No other deities, indeed, no other supernatural beings may be addressed, or referred to, in this manner. On the other hand, living P may be referred to, but not addressed, as *uya-ganashii*, or *uya-ganashi-mee*.

1. The *futuki*

Terminologically, there are three kinds of "ancestors": *kami*, *gwansu*, and *futuki*. Every person upon his death automatically becomes a *futuki*, which is often used as synonymous with *sooroo* (literally "dead soul") and *gusoon'chu* ("people of the other world"). A *futuki* who can satisfy the following initial conditions will eventually graduate into a *kami*:

- 1) that he reached the age of at least seven when he died;
- 2) that he died a "normal" death¹¹; and

11. Suicide, murder, leprosy, tuberculosis, drowning, and burning were traditionally regarded as the "abnormal" causes of death.

- 3) that he has at least one surviving relative who is willing to host his funeral and to take care of his memorial tablet.

For the transformation from a *futuki* to a *kami* to take place, he has to successfully undergo the following procedures and ceremonies, for which he is entirely dependent on the living descendants, though he is believed to have retaliatory power if neglected:

- 1) a full public funeral (*sooshichi*, or *dabi*) attended by the representatives of all village households, financed by the village, and organized by the neighborhood (*rimpu*) under the direction of the village headman;
- 2) a series of public memorial services called *nanka-suukoo* (literally, “the seventh day incense burning”) performed on the 7th,¹² 14th, 21st, 35th, 42nd, and 49th days after his death (*ara-nanka*, *ta-nanka*, *mi-nanka*, *yu-nanka*, *gu-nanka*, *mu-nanka*, and *shinjuukunchi*, respectively);
- 3) a public memorial service on the 16th day of the First Month¹³ following his death (*misaa*);
- 4) a series of anniversary services called *ninki-suukoo* organized on the anniversary, the 3rd, 7th, 13th, 25th, and 33rd anniversaries (*ichi-ninki*, *san-ninki*, *shichi-ninki*, *juusan-ninki*, *nijuugu-ninki*, and *sanjuusan-ninki*, respectively); and
- 5) “bone washing ceremony” (*shinkuchi*) performed sometime between the the third year and the 13th anniversary.

The above ceremonies make up the *gwansu-gutu* (“the affairs of household ancestors”) in its narrow sense. A distinctive feature of the *gwansu-gutu* in its narrow sense is that the ceremonies in this category are performed for a particular individual forebear and him alone, while in all other ancestral ceremonies it is the collective ancestors of one kind or another who are worshipped. The timing of each *gwansu-gutu* is calculated from the death day of this individual automatically, except ceremony #3, which falls on the 16th of the First Month following the death, and the bone-washing ceremony (#5), the date of which is selected based on the complicated assessment of independent variables. Another distinctive feature common to all these ceremonies is that they are felt to be performed for the benefit of the particular ancestor, not for the benefit of worshippers.

All *gwansu-gutu* in its narrow sense, except the funeral, are organized by the household to which the particular dead person belonged in life; but all “relatives by blood and affinity” (*weeka*) of the person

12. In numbering this and all following memorial services and anniversaries, the death day (year) itself is counted as the first. The 7th day *nanka* ceremony is, therefore, performed on the 6th day after death.

13. All traditional ceremonies are performed according to the lunar calendar.

must help organize, as well as attend, the ceremony. These are the responsibility of all those who share "blood" with the dead person, and the degree of responsibility expressed in the amount of contribution (in money, labor, and/or food), and in seating order, roughly correlates with the degree of kinship distance as measured in "blood" between the dead person and the participant. In other words, the congregation for the *futuki* is recruited and internally classified according to the principles expressed in Formulae 1, 3, and 5. This bilateral makeup of the congregation is the third distinctive feature of the *gwansu-gutu* in its narrow sense.

And finally, *gwansu-gutu* in this sense are essentially a series of rites of passage, in which the newly dead person is, step by onerous step, separated from the surviving relatives and prepared for the full ancestral status of *kami*-hood. Thirty-three years between the death and the final anniversary service is then a transitional, precarious period, during which every detail of ceremonies must be meticulously attended to in order not to jeopardize this delicate state.

2. The *kami*

There are numerous kinds of *kami* in Okinawan ideology. As we have already noted, nature deities and local deities are called *kami*. And so are the living priestesses of all ranks. Furthermore, all Okinawan women are virtually *kami*, because the paired Z is called by her B his *wunai-gami* ("sister deity") in the belief that she is capable of spiritually protecting her paired B.

Within the boundary of ancestor worship as I defined it in the beginning of Part III, three kinds of *kami* are distinguished: the *kami* associated with the sacred grove of the village (*utaki nu u-kami-ganashii*); the *kami* of the descent group (*munchuu-gami*); and the *kami* enshrined in the household altar (*gwansu*).

2.1. The *kami* of the sacred grove (*utaki nu u-kami-ganashii*)

The *kami* of the sacred grove, being a *kami*, can manifest himself in any object, animate (e.g., a snake), or inanimate (e.g., a large tree, especially a large *kuba* palm); but he is primarily associated with the sacred grove, particularly with the three stones (*fi-nu-kan*) placed in the village shrine in the precinct.

I used the personal pronoun "he" for the *kami*. Actually, however, the *kami* of the sacred grove is only very vaguely anthropomorphized, despite his reputed ability to speak, to be seen, and to punish the villagers, collectively (in *kami-arabi*) or individually (in *kami-daari*).

He obviously also had the ability to reproduce, for all "villagers" are believed to be his agnatic offspring. Yet, the *kami* is so vaguely personified that people are not sure whether the *kami* is a single person in the form of the first ancestor of the village, or two persons in the forms of the first ancestor and his W, or more than two persons including all remote ancestors of the village. The villagers usually talk about the *kami* as if he were a single person, but the offering to the *kami* is always made in duplicate, "one for the male *kami* and another for the female *kami*." To complicate the matter further, the village priestesses tell me that there are seven deities¹⁴ (*nana-saka nu u-kami-ganashii*) who may be approached at the sacred grove.

The reader might wonder whether such a vaguely conceptualized deity as the *kami* of the sacred grove might really be included in the category of ancestors. The fact that the *kami* is addressed as "parent(s)" (see p. 45) does not necessarily prove that the *kami* is a kin category (Do not Christians address their God "Father"?). However, besides the terminological evidence, I have three other reasons for the inclusion of the *kami* among the ancestors. First, in some other villages of Okinawa though not in the village of Inoha, the *kami* of the sacred grove is definitely conceptualized as the founding couple of the oldest descent group of the village, whose bones are enshrined in the precinct of the grove. Secondly, according to geographer Nakamatsu (1968 and 1971), the sacred grove is the ancient common depository of bones of real village ancestors. He proved this theory by examining tens of sacred groves all over Okinawa and by showing the existence of a large amount of bones in or near the most sacred part (*ibi*) of the grove. Thirdly, as we have seen earlier, the congregation of the *kami* is not a residential category, but rather a descent category, since only those who were begotten by male "villagers" belong to this group. Newcomers with no previous patrilineal affiliation with the village are not represented through "ritual specialists" (*kamin'chu*). Neither do they actively participate in the ceremony. All these make it more likely that the *kami* of the sacred grove may be ancestors of the villagers not just metaphorically, but genealogically as well.

The *kami* of the sacred grove is honored and worshipped at a series of seasonal, agriculturally oriented, public ceremonies which are

14. This number of seven may not be just accidental, for the number of the original descent groups, whose founders, according to the oral tradition, first settled in the village, are also seven. However, no descent group of the village claims any direct relationship with any of the seven *kami*.

collectively called *u-machii*. All "villagers", though in varying degrees, participate in these ceremonies. As members of descent groups, villagers are represented by various ritual specialists (*kamin'chu*), all of whom occupy their offices by virtue of their membership in particular descent groups. As members of the village households, the villagers contribute labor, money and/or material for the ceremony. They may also personally participate in the ceremony as lay performers or as audience.

One further distinctive feature of the *kami* of the sacred grove, which sets apart this *kami* from all other "ancestors", is that the *kami* is approachable only through female specialists. There are several male ritual offices for this *kami*, but the roles of these priests and lay village dignitaries in the grove-centered ceremonies are only secondary, because they themselves cannot directly communicate with the *kami*. Only the priestesses can. In fact, the entire precinct of the sacred grove used to be taboo to the male population all the time, except the priests, who may enter the forecourt (*ibi nu mee*) of the grove during the ceremony. But even they could not enter the most sacred part (*ibi*) of the grove at any time.

It is interesting to note here that although the rules of succession to a ritual office are partly¹⁵ based on the membership in a particular descent group, the function of the ritual office in the ceremonial contexts is not lineage-focused, but village-focused. That is, the purposes of these public ceremonies for the *kami* of the sacred grove are to collectively honor the *kami* and ask for the general welfare of the entire village (particularly for the fertility of women and soil), not for the benefit of any individual or a descent group.

2.2 The *kami* of the descent group (*munchuu-gami*)

Compared to the *kami* of the sacred grove, the *kami* of the descent group have a clearer anthropomorphic status. They are definitely conceived as the patrilineal ancestors of the descent group (*munchuu*) headed by the founder and his W. However, none of these ancestors are individually identified by personal names, and the offerings are again made in duplicate, "one for the male *kami* and another for the female *kami*."

The *kami* of the descent group are primarily associated with the "senior house" (*mutuuji*) of the descent group, particularly with two alcoves (*u-tuku* and *u-tana*) located in the "First Room" (*ichibanja*)

15. A priestess, or a priest, must also be "of high ritual quality" (*saadaka*).

of the house (see Fig. 3 for the house plan); and the descent group tomb(s) called *munchuu-baka*, where until about four to five generations ago, "cleaned bones" (*funi*) of all members of the descent group, except those who died in infancy and those who died abnormally, were deposited.

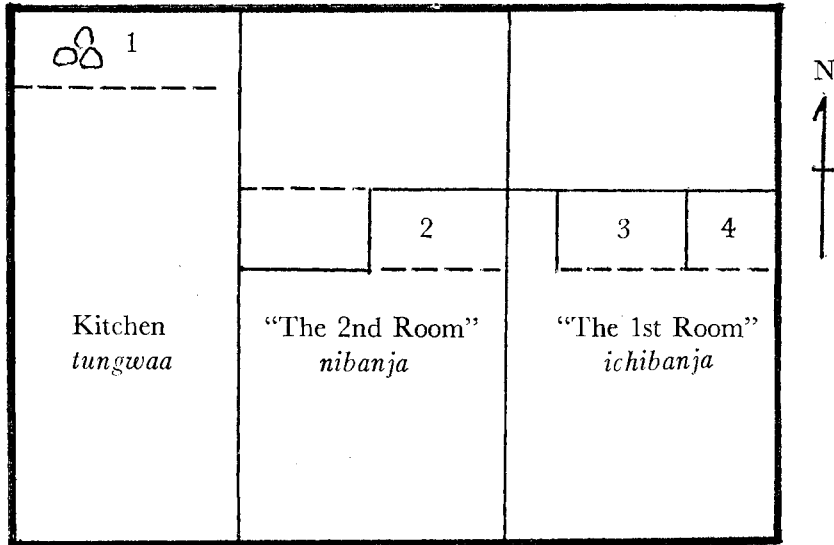


FIGURE 3. Plan of a Typical Okinawan House

1. *Fi-nu-kan* (hearth, or fire deity) represented by three stones. It is found in every independent household.
2. *Buchidan* (ancestral altar) contains individualized, unduplicable memorial tablets (*ifee*) of all household ancestors (*gwansu*) of the house.
3. *U-tuku* (alcove) found virtually in every household; but the *u-tuku* of the *mutuuji* (the senior house of the descent group) alone contains the scrol called *u-kwannun* depicting three deities.
4. *U-tana* (altar of the descent group ancestors) found only at the *mutuuji* household. It contains a collective *ifee* of all ancestors of the descent group.

Generally speaking, the descent group tomb is spatially divided into three sections (see Fig. 4 for the plan of the *munchuu-baka*). Closest to the entrance and occupying the largest area (Section 1) is the section in which the bones of the recent dead are placed, contained in individually marked urns (*kaami*). Behind the area, facing the entrance stands a large, house-shaped stone urn (*jiishi-gaami*) containing the bones of the founder of the descent group and his W, and

occasionally one or two other urns containing the bones of other important individual ancestors (Section 2). The third section, which is a kind of a shelf dug in the wall behind the urn of the founding couple, is the depository of older bones. As the space in the first section gets crowded, older bones are taken out of the individual urns and deposited in the third section. It is interesting to note here that the structure of the descent group tomb divides the ancestors contained there into three major subcategories: the founding couple plus a few other important individuals in larger house-shaped permanent urns usually made of stone; the individual recent dead in humbler round earthenware urns; and the rest of the ancestors whose bones are indiscriminately deposited in the third section.

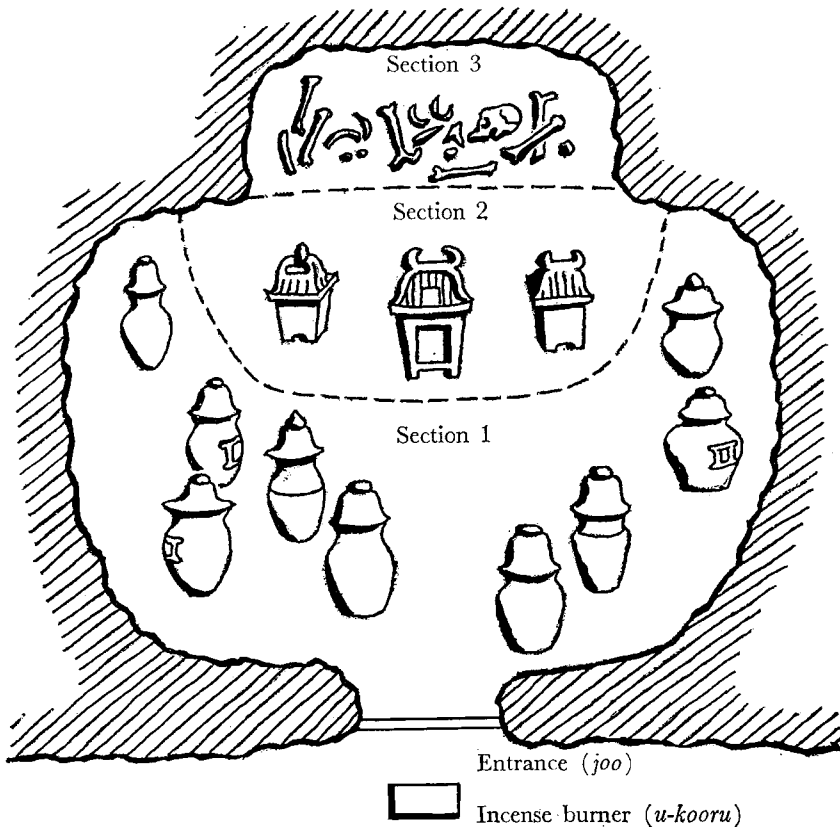


FIGURE 4. Plan of the Descent Group Tomb (*munchuu-baka*).

Rites for the *kami* of the descent group are performed on the fixed days of the year according to the lunar calendar, either in front of the two alcoves of the senior house (in the case of a series of ceremonies called collectively as *uganmee*); or in the front yard(s) of the descent group tomb(s) (in the case of *shiimii* ceremony). In addition, the group may send, every five or seven years, a delegation of representatives to the sacred places outside the village, all believed to be associated with their ancestors in some way (*agari-maai* when they visit sacred places in the Central and Southern Okinawa; *Nakijin-maai* when the destination is Nakijin area to the north).

The congregation for this *kami* consists exclusively of patrilineal descendants of the founding couple. Consequently, H and W belong to different congregations unless they happen to be patrilineal relatives. The ritual is led by the descent group priestess(es) (*ukudii*) and/or the head of the descent group, who as the 1S of the 1S line of the group is the head of the senior house. The priestess is ideally his paired Z (*unai-gami*); but, since both offices are kept for life, actual relationship between the pair varies.

In marked contrast to “the affairs of the sacred grove”, “the affairs of the descent group” in which the *kami* of the descent group are collectively honored and prayed to, are dominated by males, who sit in “higher” places, organize and lead the ceremony. The alleged purposes of these ceremonies are to honor and entertain the *kami* of the group collectively and ask them for the general welfare and prosperity of the entire group.

2.3. The *kami* of the household

The *kami* of the household are all “forebears” of the household since its establishment who have successfully gone through all the ceremonies described previously as the *gwansu-gutu* (“the affairs of household ancestors”) in the narrow sense (p. 46). The *kami* of the household and the *futuki* are, therefore, mutually exclusive. Together they make up the “household ancestors” (*gwansu*).

3. The *gwansu* (“household ancestors”)

The “household ancestors” of a household are all forebears of the household since its establishment. The category includes both the *futuki* who are going through individualized memorial services in order to attain the full ancestral status of *kami*-hood, and the *kami* who have gone through them. Each of the *gwansu* is individualized in the form of an

unduplicable memorial tablet called *ifée*, on which his name and the date of his death are recorded.

The *ifée* is a small rectangular wooden tablet of ca. 2.5×10 cm, lacquered red on the right side and black on the reverse. On the right side are written in gold the dead person's family name and personal name. The date of his death is inscribed in gold ink on the black side. Individual *ifée* tablets are arranged in a small house-like structure which is also called *ifée*, but I shall call it an *ifée* stand to distinguish it from individual *ifée* tablets. The *ifée* stand can accommodate between 16–24 individual tablets on the front side, and the same number on the other side. It is divided horizontally into two rows: the upper male row and the lower female row. On the central plaques of the two rows are written four Chinese characters signifying "souls return to their true domain." It is generally agreed that the right side, or according to a recently more popular system the central portion, of the stand is higher in status than the left, or the periphery; and that the upper male row precedes the lower female row in ritual status.

From the standpoint of a particular household, *ifée* tablets are divided into two major classes: "the *ifée* of the household", or "our *ifée*" (*wattaa ifée*), which represent true members of the household; and the *ifée* of someone else's, which are kept in the household only because there is currently no one else to take care of them. Only the *ifée* of the household can be arranged in "the *ifée* stand of the house" placed at the center of the ancestral altar (*buchidan*) in the "Second Room" (*nibanja*) of the household (see Fig. 3). Someone else's *ifée* is arranged in a separate *ifée* stand and placed on the periphery of the ancestral altar, often separated by a board from "the *ifée* stand of the house". Some households even build a separate second altar, or a shelf, to house other people's *ifée*. We may call the first kind of *ifée*, or the *ifée* of the household, "proper *ifée*"; and the second kind, or the *ifée* of someone else "anomalous *ifée*". Similarly, the household ancestors who are represented by "proper *ifée*" may be called "proper household ancestors", and those represented by "anomalous *ifée*" as "anomalous household ancestors".

What are then the criteria for distinguishing two classes of household ancestors and their tablets? What is "proper" and what is "anomalous"? Let us begin with the theoretical, or ideological, distinction between the two. All of my informants were unequivocally certain that the tablets of the following categories of persons should not be in the household altar, that these are not the "proper" tablets of the house-

hold:

1. unrelated persons (*tanin*);
2. "relatives through women" (*geeshichi weeka*), that is, consanguineal and affinal kin of the household head, exclusive of his patrikin; and
3. collaterals of all generations, including the unestablished male G of the head, because of the taboo against "mixing up brothers."

This leaves only the following two categories as the "proper" ancestors of the household:

1. household heads of all generations since its establishment, and their W. The genealogical relationship between any consecutive pair of heads must be F and his 1S. In the absence of a real 1S, the heir could be adopted from among the close patrilineal kin of a descending generation; but because of the twin taboos of "mixing up brothers" and "pushing aside the eldest son" no -S can succeed to his +B. And
2. Unmarried and/or heirless D of any of the lineal couples.

How are these ideological rules reflected in, or different from, the actual situation? I carried out a census of *ifee* tablets in 1970. Of 96 village households, I could not investigate three households for various reasons. Twenty-one households, all relatively recently established "branch houses" (*yaagwaa*), or to be more exact "junior son households" (*jisannanyaa*), did not possess any tablet.¹⁶ That leaves 72 households with at least a tablet. These 72 households among them owned 438 individual tablets, or the average of about 6 tablets per household. The number of tablets per household ranged from 20 to 1. Of these 438 tablets, 315 fell into either one of the two "proper" categories, meaning that the ancestors represented by the tablets are taken care of by the right kind of descendants at the right kind of place. These "proper" tablets are arranged in "the *ifee* stand of the household" according to the two principlex of sex (males horizontally in the upper row and females in the lower row) and generation (persons of an earlier generation occupying a ritually "higher" position than those of a later generation), and the rule that the marital couple should occupy the corresponding male and female column. "The *ifee* stand of the house" is invariably placed at the center of the ancestral altar, and it is to these tablets that the prayers and offerings are primarily directed.

The number of "anomalous" tablets amounted to 123, or roughly 28% of the total number of tablets. This is a very high figure, which

16. Unless the head of the -S household inherits a tablet of a collateral kin of an ascending generation, the newly established "junior son household" does not possess a tablet. It will acquire one, when one of the members dies.

is, however, at least partially, attributable to the ravages of the Okinawan Battle, in which, according to the Okinawan estimate, up to 150,000 civilians, or nearly one third of the then total civilian population of the Island perished.¹⁷

These 123 "anomalous" tablets fall into the following five sub-categories:

1. Tablets of the "unestablished" -S of the household for whom the heirs have not yet been found 39 tablets
2. Tablets of the "established" -S of the household, their W, and descendants 60 tablets
3. Tablets of non-patrilineal relatives 14 tablets
4. Tablets of non-relatives 3 tablets
5. Tablets of persons whose identity is forgotten 7 tablets

It is obvious that these tablets which are felt to be "not proper" by the people themselves are anomalous in terms of the social structure. The structural principles we have examined in Part II, particularly those expressed in Formulae 7 ($B \neq B$), 8 ($F = 1S$, but $F = S$), and 9 ($\dots FFF = FF = F = 1S = 1S1S \dots$) demand that the -S, whether he has established his own independent household at his death or not, be eventually expelled from the natal household. So is his memorial tablet to be separated from those of the "proper household ancestors".

However, the timing of the separation from the natal household varies between the -S who had established his own household, and the -S who had not. Just as an immature living -S is a legitimate member of the parental household, the tablet of an unestablished -S is initially arranged in "the *ifée* stand of the house" along with the "proper household ancestors". It is only when recurrent misfortunes in the household send a representative to a shaman (*yuta*) for a consultation, and only when the shaman diagnoses the misfortunes as the result of the breach

17. American sources estimate far more conservatively. For one thing, Americans count only those deaths which were directly caused by war action, while Okinawans include all those who died during and immediately after the Battle from battle-related causes, including complications from wound received during the Battle, malnutrition and epidemic during the post-War relocation period. It also includes 329 Tokashiki Islanders who were forced to commit a collective suicide by the commanding officer of the Japanese "defending" platoon who demanded that all able-bodied men and women work for the army, and the rest commit suicide to save the dwindling food supply. When the Americans finally arrived, the officer and his platoon surrendered without a single serious battle engagement.

of the taboo against “mixing up brothers”, that people seriously begin to look for a suitable posthumous heir for the dead -S. If an appropriate adult heir (who should be the dead man’s patrikin of a descending generation) is available, the tablet of the -S is formally transferred to the ancestral altar of the heir on an auspicious day selected by the shaman or a geomancer (*hiitui*, or *sanjinsoo*). If the heir is currently not available, or if the potential heir is not yet established as the head of an independent household, again on a selected day, a formal explanation and apology are offered to the deceased -S and all “proper household ancestors”. Usually at this time, the tablet of the -S will be taken out of “the *ifee* stand of the house” and put in a separate *ifee* stand, which will then be placed in the periphery.

Let us here briefly examine who these “anomalous” ancestors other than the -S of the households are. There is no way of knowing the identity of the subcategory #5. The three tablets of nonrelatives represent two indentured servants, F and S, who came to the village to work for the FFF of the present head of a village household; and a legendary lady singer named Chatan Mooshii who is said to have died in the village while avoiding a political turmoil in the Court.

The tablets of non-patrilineal relatives (subcategory #3) consists of the following three classes:

- 1) Eight tablets of the present head’s W’s patrilineal kin whose male descendants have died out.
- 2) Four tablets of the two men who married into two of the village households as “adopted sons-in-law” (*muku-yooshi*), and their W, who were the D of these households. The two couples failed to produce male heirs and were succeeded by the Ws’ patrilineal male kin. After their death, each of these couples were first treated as the proper household ancestors, but when the misfortune continued to strike the households, they decided to remove their tablets from the *ifee* stand of the house because these couples are not true patrilineal ancestors to the succeeding heads.
- 3) Two tablets of a man and his W who in the absence of a male C adopted for their D a patrilineally unrelated son-in-law. The D and her H thrived, becoming the ancestors of many offspring. Despite that, the descendants felt that they would have to separate the adoptor and his W from the “proper” ancestors of the household, i.e., the patrilineal descendants of the adopted H. Although the household was established by the adoptor, and the H was adopted for the purpose of continuing the household; the present occupants of the house feel that they are the descendants of the adopted H, not the descendants of the adoptor. Consequently, they have already changed their surname from that of the adoptor to that of the adopted H, and they moved the tablets of the adoptor and his W to the periphery and began worshipping the adoptee and his lineal descendants as the proper household ancestors. The result of all these maneuvers is that the household was virtually usurped by the adoptee and his descend-

ants. They inherited the compound, agricultural land, and household name from the adoptor; but they regard themselves as a branch of the adoptee's descent group. They might, in due time, even decide to return the tablets of the adoptor and his W to the descendants of the unfortunate man's B. For, there is a strong sentiment that it is not right to keep the tablets of non-patrilineal relatives if a patrilineally related male person is available. Should that happen, the very fact that the household was originally established by the adoptor might be completely forgotten in one or two generations.

These structurally anomalous tablets, with the exception of those of the unestablished -S which are initially undifferentiated from the proper tablets, are clearly distinguishable from the proper tablets of the household linguistically (someone else's *ifée* vs. "our *ifée*") and spatially (arrangement in a separate *ifée* stand placed on the periphery vs. arrangement in the *ifée* stand of the house placed at the center). The two categories of the household ancestors have also different status positions vis-à-vis the members of the household, and they play different ritual roles in various ceremonies, to which I now turn.

All ceremonies which involve all or any part of the "household ancestors" (*gwansu*) are collectively called "the affairs of the household ancestors" (*gwansu-gutu*) in its broad sense. In terms of the ancestral participants, the *gwansu-gutu* in this sense may be divided into three classes of ceremonies: those which involve pre-thirty-third anniversary futuki alone (*gwansu-gutu* in narrow sense); those which are directed to all "proper ancestors" of the household, both *kami* and *futuki*; and those in which all ancestors, "anomalous" as well as "proper", are honored and entertained. In terms of the living participants, there are two kinds: the ceremonies in which all available surviving bilateral kin within a defined range and their E participate; and those in which the members of the household alone are involved. The purposes for performing these ceremonies also vary. In one group of ceremonies (*gwansu-gutu* in narrow sense), the purpose is to assist a specific ancestor in his quest for achieving the proper ancestral status of *kami*-hood. Others are performed in order to report to the household ancestors an important event in the life of a member of the household (such as birth, entrance to and graduation from school, departure, homecoming, engagement, wedding, birth year celebration at the 13th (for girls only), 61st, 73rd, 85th, 97th birth year, and numerous other events) and to ask for ancestral protection and guidance. The third group of ceremonies are held to entertain and pay homage to all ancestors currently resident at the household and ask for the general welfare and prosperity

of the household. The timing may be seasonally fixed as in the cases of the New Year's Day (*soogwachi*), mid summer Buddhist festival for the dead (*ubun*), and Spring and Autumn Equinoxes (*higan*); or automatically fixed from the death day of the individual celebrant as in the cases of most *gwansu-gutu* in narrow sense. Still other ceremonies are performed whenever a major event happens in the household.

By way of summary, I shall list below discriminant variables for the classification of "ancestors" and "ancestral" ceremonies.

The bases for distinguishing among categories of "ancestors" are:

1. Sacred places associated with the "ancestors"
 - 1.1. "The sacred grove" (*utaki*) of the village
 - 1.2. "The senior house" (*mutuuji*) of the descent group, particularly its "First Room" (*ichibanja*) + "descent group tomb" (*munchuu-baka*)
 - 1.3. "The Second Room" (*nibanja*) of each household
2. Sacred objects associated with the "ancestors"
 - 2.1. Three sacred stones (*fi-nu-kan*) of the sacred grove
 - 2.2. The collective memorial tablet placed in the *u-tana* altar of "the senior house" + "cleaned bones" (*funi*) in the descent group tomb
 - 2.3. Individualized memorial tablets (*ifee*) in the ancestral altar (*buchidan*) + bones ("cleaned" and "not yet cleaned") in the individual and/or household tomb
3. Degree of personal identification
 - 3.1. Vaguely personified as the collective "forebear"
 - 3.2. Traceable patrilineal ancestors and their W, who have left real bones, but are not individually named
 - 3.3. Individually identified and named direct patrilineal ascendants and their W, plus some marginal patrilineal ascendants
 - 3.4. Recently deceased bilateral relatives
 - 3.5. Not definable in terms of kin relationship
4. Presence or absence of a patrilineal heir
 - 4.1. The heir present
 - 4.2. Hairless
5. Ancestral status
 - 5.1. "Established" ancestors who have successfully gone through individualized postmortem memorial services
 - 5.2. "Not yet established" ancestors
6. Ritual specialists, or dominant worshippers
 - 6.1. Their sex
 - 6.1.1. Female

- 6.1.2. Male and female
- 6.2. Their relationship with the "ancestors"
 - 6.2.1. Patrilineal descendants
 - 6.2.2. Patrilineal descendants and their W
 - 6.2.3. Non-specifiable in terms of kinship
- 7. "Ordinary" worshippers
 - 7.1. All "villagers"
 - 7.2. Exclusively patrilineal descendants
 - 7.3. Patrilineal descendants and their W
 - 7.4. Bilateral kin and affines
 - 7.5. Non-specifiable in terms of kinship

Table 1 shows how various categories of Okinawan ancestors may be defined using the above numbering.

TABLE 1. "Ancestors"

Ancestral categories	Bases for differentiation							
	1	2	3	4	5	6.1.	6.2.	7
<i>Utaki nu u-kami-ganashii</i> (<i>kami</i> of the sacred grove)	1.1.	2.1.	3.1.	—	—	6.1.1.	6.2.1.	7.1.
<i>Munchuu-gami</i> (<i>kami</i> of the descent group)	1.2.	2.2.	3.2.	—	—	6.1.2.	6.2.1.	7.2.
<i>Gwansu</i> (household ancestors)	1.3.	2.3.	—	—	—	6.1.2.	—	—
"proper" <i>gwansu</i>	1.3.	2.3.	3.3.	4.1.	—	6.1.2.	6.2.2.	7.3.
"anomalous" <i>gwansu</i>	1.3.	2.3.	3.5.	4.2.	—	6.2.2.	6.2.3.	7.5.
<i>futuki</i>	1.3.	2.3.	3.4.	—	5.2.	6.1.2.	—	7.4.
<i>kami</i>	1.3.	2.3.	—	—	5.1.	6.1.2.	—	—

The bases for distinguish among ancestral ceremonies are:

- 1. Recipient of the ceremony
 - 1.1. "The *kami* of the sacred grove" (*utaki nu u-kami-ganashii*)
 - 1.2. "The *kami* of the descent group" (*munchuu-gami*)
 - 1.3. "Household ancestors" (*gwansu*), both "proper" and "anomalous"
 - 1.4. "Proper household ancestors", both *kami* and *futuki*
 - 1.5. The *futuki*
- 2. Sponsor of the ceremony
 - 2.1. The village (*shima*)

- 2.2. The descent group (*munchuu*)
- 2.3. The household (*yaa*)
3. Timing of the ceremony
 - 3.1. Seasonally fixed by lunar calendar
 - 3.2. Individually fixed from the death day of the celebrant
 - 3.3. Occasional (whenever a major event happens in the household)
4. Setting
 - 4.1. The sacred grove and a few other public places
 - 4.2. The senior house of the descent group
 - 4.3. The descent group tomb(s)
 - 4.4. The household
 - 4.5. Individual or household tomb
5. Alleged purposes of the ceremony
 - 5.1. To entertain and pay homage to the collective ancestors, and ask for the general welfare and prosperity of the group
 - 5.2. To report events in the household and to ask for ancestral protection and guidance for a specific living member
 - 5.3. To assist the recently deceased ancestor to attain the proper ancestral status

Ancestral ceremonies and the matrix of variables are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2. "Ancestral" ceremonies

Ceremonies	Bases for differentiation				
	1	2	3	4	5
<i>Kami-gutu</i> (affairs of the deities of the sacred grove)	1.1.	2.1.	3.1.	4.1.	5.1.
<i>Munchuu-gutu</i> (affairs of the descent group)					
<i>ugammee</i>	1.2.	2.2.	3.1.	4.2.	5.1.
<i>shimii</i>	1.2.	2.2.	3.1.	4.3.	5.1.
<i>Gwansu-gutu</i> in wider sense (affairs of household ancestors)					
<i>soogwachi</i> (New Year's Day)	1.3.	2.3.	3.1.	4.4.	5.1.
<i>ubun</i> (mid-summer festival for the dead)	1.3.	2.3.	3.1.	4.4.	5.1.
<i>higan</i> (Equinoxes)	1.3.	2.3.	3.1.	4.4. & 4.5.	5.1.
various rites of passage	1.4.	2.3.	3.3.	4.4.	5.2.
<i>gwansu-gutu</i> in narrow sense	1.5.	2.3.	3.2.	4.5. & 4.4.	5.3.

Conclusion

I have described the ideology, structural principles of the kinship system, and ritual categories as more or less independent systems. As was expected, the fundamental correlation among these three systems is overwhelming. This was particularly evident in the emic classification of the household ancestors (*gwansu*) into "proper" ancestors (*wattaa gwansu*, or "our *gwansu*") and "anomalous" ancestors (*someone* else's *gwansu*). It was shown that these household ancestors are "proper" or "anomalous" in terms of structural principles operative in the society with a patrilineal stem system, whose principles I described in Part II.

This fact may be comparatively used to illuminate the similarities and differences of the systems in several Far Eastern societies, where patrilineal principles of one sort or another are dominant and where ancestors are worshipped or venerated in one form or another. I have not had time to carry out a systematic comparison; but some impressionistically interesting differences immediately come into my mind. For instance, in Okinawa dead -S of the household, as well as non-patrilineal relatives and nonrelatives, are "anomalous"; whereas in China (according to the data presented by Freedman, and Wang 1973) and in Japan (Smith 1966), the deceased -S of the household become "proper" ancestors. In Okinawa, memorial tablets are unduplicable and undestroyable, while in China and Japan they may be duplicated, and destroyed when the ancestor represented by the tablet is no longer personally remembered by a living descendant. In Okinawa, the tablet of a man can be properly taken care of only by his 1S, or in his absence, by a male patrilineal kin of a descending generation. In Japan, the heir is ideally the 1S, but in the absence of an able 1S, the heir could be a -B, a -S, a D's adopted husband or a genealogically unrelated adopted son. In China, the F's tablet may be inherited by the 1S, or duplicated and distributed among all or a part of the S. The potentially most dangerous class of ancestors in Okinawa is the 1S who died without male issue and for whom a proper posthumous heir is not yet available. In Japan, as well as in China, issueless males are taken care of in their natal households as "proper" ancestors, who therefore do not need posthumous heirs of their own. It would be fascinating if these differences could be related to structural principles operative in these societies.

For that kind of comparison, we need more detailed data and more rigorous analysis. For example, we need to know not just who worships who, but who (in terms of genealogical and/or other relationships)

participates in what capacity (as the sponsor, or just as a part of the congregation?) in which ceremony, and for which category of ancestors. We also have to know what the structural principles are which distinguish all these so-called "patrilineal" systems in the Far East: e.g., what is the nature of F-S relationship; are the G of the same sex equivalent; what is the woman's status; how are descent and filiation conceptualized; what is adoption in ideology and in practice,¹⁸ etc.

One of the recurrent controversies about the nature of Okinawan society is whether its indigenous kinship system is basically patrilineal or bilateral. Those who think that the institution of the patrilineal descent group (*munchuu*) and its concomitant agnatic descent principles were superimposed upon the basically bilateral system during the last few centuries (e.g., Tsunemi 1965, Ogawa 1965; also see Newell 1973) base their argument, among others, on the fact that ancestors are, and were, worshipped by the surviving bilateral kin. In my opinion, such a theory is a result of their failure to distinguish 1) various categories of ceremonies (e.g., *gwansu-gutu* in narrow sense which are the responsibility of all who are related to the ancestor in "blood" and marriage *vs.* other *gwansu-gutu* in which only the direct patrilineal descendants and their W are involved); 2) categories of various ancestors (e.g., "proper" *vs.* "anomalous"); 3) different roles of worshippers (e.g., "responsor" *vs.* "ordinary" worshipper); etc. The fact that the cult group for the recent dead (*futuki*) consists of bilateral kin (*weeka*) does not of itself prove that the Okinawan kinship is, or was bilateral, since, as I have shown, *gwansu-gutu* in its narrow sense which all dead persons must go through to attain the *kami*-hood is, and seems to have always been, the responsibility of bilateral survivors. I myself am inclined to think that a very strong patrilineal bias existed in Okinawan society from a very early time. I base this view on the structural principles discernible in origin myths and various historical documents, and the present social organization of the village. Needless to say, I am not advocating that bilateral principles are insignificant in this society. All I want to say is that the agnatic principles and the bilateral principles are operative in different, identifiable "domains" to use a convenient Fortesian terminology. I hope that the introduction of the concepts of "blood" and "semen" were helpful to illuminate the difference between these structurally contrasting principles, which must be distinguished clearly in order to understand various relationships and institutions of the

18. I plan to publish a separate paper on this subject.

society, particularly those converging on the household. Going back to the problem of the origin of the Okinawan descent group, it is strange, if the institution was introduced from Southern China into a society without patrilineal bias as it is said, that the kinship system of Southern China and that of Okinawa should differ so much.

And, this brings us to the uniqueness of the patrilineal stem system as against the classic patrilineal system like that of Chinese society. Although I did not have space or time to systematically compare the two systems in this paper, I hope that the analysis in Part II made clear several structural principles of a patrilineal stem system, particularly those of the non-equivalence of B (Formula 7), the unity of the male lineal core (Formula 9), and the complete structural disjunction of -S from this linear core (Formula 8). To treat this kind of system as a mere variation of the patrilineal system would be to obscure significant structural principles of the patrilineal stem system.

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The author is aware that a number of good papers dealing either with kinship or ancestor worship in various parts of Okinawa have been published by Japanese scholars in Japanese language since I wrote this paper in 1973. Although I could have rewritten the paper into a better documented and perhaps more concise form, I feel that there is some sense in publishing it in its original form since the paper won the 1974 Yonina Talmon Prize.

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