



## MORGAN'S HYPOTHESIS AND OTHER NORTH ASIAN PEOPLES<sup>1</sup>

[129–141; 185–212; 235–246; —]

FORTY YEARS AGO, Lewis H. Morgan, in his *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity among the Human Family*, paid special attention to the problem of the relation between the Turanian and the Ganowanian systems of relationship. Under the term "Turanian," Morgan designated the system of relationship found among the Dravidian nations of India. Under the term "Ganowanian," he designated the system he discovered about 60 years ago, first among the Iroquois and afterwards among the numerous different Indian tribes all over North America. Morgan found these two systems to be so alike that in his *Ancient Society* both systems merged into one Turano-Ganowanian system. The similarity of the systems seemed to him so great that he found it impossible to admit even that these systems could have been borrowed from each other. His deepest conviction was that the cause for this similarity could be nothing else but the common origin of the Asiatic and American races. The peoples of America must have brought their system of relationship from their old home in Asia.

As Morgan wrote,

Although separated from each other by continents in space and by unnumbered ages in time, the Tamil Indians of the Eastern Hemisphere and the

---

<sup>1</sup> [**Editor's note:** The AMNH Russian typescript includes this material, without heading, directly following the Australian kin tables as a continuation of the previous chapter. The AMNH English typescript, which located this section after the Australian kin tables, as well as after the discussion of Morgan's hypothesis and the Gilyak kinship system, titled it "Morgan's Hypothesis as to the Asiatic Origin of the American Race and the Matrimonial Forms of the Nations of Northeastern Asia." The title from the AMNH English typescript, added by earlier editors, has a decidedly more Jesup ring to it, the overall expedition having been concerned with Siberian–American cultural links. Shternberg, *Giliaki*, which follows the sequencing of the AMNH Russian typescript in this and the preceding chapter, titled it more modestly, "Aspects of the Classification System among Other Peoples of Northeast Asia." Shternberg, *Sem'ia*, does not contain this section.

The AMNH English typescript, on which this chapter is based, contains a number of significant discrepancies with respect to the AMNH Russian and Shternberg, *Giliaki*, versions. On the positive side, quotations from Morgan have been added, and geographic descriptions have at times been made more specific. More interestingly, however, especially where the question of the Asian origins of the American race is concerned, the two Russian versions do not take North Asian peoples across the Bering Strait to Alaska, a theory made popular by Boas and still held today. These seemingly Boasian additions have been marked individually throughout the text.]

Seneca Indians of the Western, as they generally address their kinsmen by the conventional relationship established in the primitive ages, daily proclaim for a once common household. When the discoverers of the New World bestowed upon its inhabitants the name of "Indians," under the impression that they had reached the Indies, they little suspected that children of the same original family, although upon a different continent, stood before them. By a singular coincidence, error was truth.<sup>2</sup>

Morgan has not only shown the infallibility of his hypothesis, he has vividly represented how that system passed over from the continent and spread across America. He has identified the Columbia River as the center of diffusion of the system in North America.

A careful study of the geographical features of the continent of North America, with reference to its natural lines of migration and to the means of subsistence afforded by its several parts of the populations of fishermen and hunters, together with the relations of their languages and systems of relationships, all unite, as elsewhere stated, to indicate the valley of Columbia as the nursery of the Ganowanian family and the initial point of migration from which both North and South America received their inhabitants.<sup>3</sup>

On the Asiatic shore of the Pacific, Morgan identifies the Amur River as the system's point of origin, much the same as he announced the Columbia River as the means by which the Turanian system reached America and spread across that continent. No matter how one regards Morgan, his deep conviction—that traces of the Turanian system can be found from the banks of the Amur across all of northeastern Asia and including the Aleutian Islands—is slowly finding vindication in the survivals of cousin marriage found in various kinship systems. The Gilyak kinship system I lay out here is particularly useful in this context. If we follow Morgan's guide, these bearers of the Turanian system should have crossed to Alaska to reach the Columbia, and from there they would have spread across the continent.<sup>4</sup>

Deep as Morgan's conviction was, he missed certain important facts.<sup>5</sup> In Asia he succeeded in tracing the Turanian system, but only to the southern boundaries of Central Asia. From there to the outermost parts of northeastern Asia he had no information at all.

He knew nothing of the matrimonial norms of the Paleo-Asiatic peoples, such as the Gilyak, Chukchi, Yukaghir, Koriak, and Aleuts. As he remarked in the

<sup>2</sup> Morgan, *Systems of Consanguinity*, 508. [**Editor's note:** This quotation is found in the AMNH English typescript only.]

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 498. [**Editor's note:** This quotation is found in the AMNH English typescript only.]

<sup>4</sup> [**Editor's note:** This sentence is found in the AMNH English typescript only and may be regarded with skepticism, as Shternberg never mentioned the Alaska connection. I am grateful to Lydia Black for noting this discrepancy.]

<sup>5</sup> [**Editor's note:** The expository material beginning with this paragraph and continuing to the start of the section on Tungus is found in the AMNH English typescript only. One can see that while earlier editors sought to furnish the reader with a prefatory understanding of the Turanian system, the additions go much further in criticizing Morgan.]

concluding chapter of his *Systems of Consanguinity*, "The systems of the Tungusian and Mongolian stock yet remain to be ascertained." In another place he complains that a dearth of materials hindered him from understanding the Eskimo system.

In the absence of all knowledge of the forms which prevail in northeastern Asia, it is premature to indulge in conjectures, but there are features in the Eskimo which suggest, at least, the possibility that when traced to its limits it may furnish the connecting links between the Turanian and Uralian forms.<sup>6</sup>

Thus the necessary links between the Dravidian and Ganowanian systems were lacking in the time of Morgan. Now that great lacuna may slowly be filled. One missing link is the matrimonial system of the Gilyak. It represents the ideal Turanian type, in both its kinship terms and its sexual norms. In this system we also find a true specimen of the Punaluan family in a functioning state.

In tracing the Turanian system among other nations of northeastern Asia, it is necessary to bear in mind the essence of the Turanian system as presented in the light of modern knowledge. The following are the principles on which the system is based:

1. Marriage is obligatory in a certain group of blood relatives who bear certain rights and obligations towards each other, such as levirate, infant marriage, wedding ceremonies, and no payment for the bride.
2. The orthodox form of marriage is between children of brothers and sisters, both one's own and collateral, i.e., cousin marriage, cross or one-sided.
3. Individual marriage is combined with group marital rights.
4. The classificatory system of relationship is but an index of the rules of marriage.

We consider two groups of people here: those of the Amur region, the Gilyak, Ainu, and the Tungus tribes (Oroch, Ulchi, Gold, and Negidal), on the one hand; and the Paleo-Asiatics of the extreme northeastern part of Asia, the Yukaghir, Chukchi, Koriak, Kamchadal, and the Aleut, on the other. I have studied the peoples of the first group. As for the second, we will attempt to explain the facts of other investigators.<sup>7</sup>

**THE TUNGUS.** Let us begin with the Tungus nationalities [*narodnosti*]<sup>8</sup> spread all over northern Asia, from the borders of China northwest as far as the Ob River and north-

---

<sup>6</sup> Morgan, *Systems*, 510.

<sup>7</sup> The Chukchi have been studied by Mr. Vladimir G. Bogoraz; the Yukaghir, Koriak, and Aleut by Mr. Vladimir I. Iokhel'son. See their publications for the Jesup North Pacific Expedition listed in this volume. [**Editor's note:** This footnote is found only in the AMNH English typescript.]

<sup>8</sup> [**Editor's note:** In the Soviet period, the Russian word *narodnost'*, a nationality, ethnic group, or more literally, a small people, came to take on distinctive socioeconomic baggage, sandwiched between "tribes" (the ethnicity of primitive communism) and "nations" (the ethnicity of capitalism and socialism), leaving the more ambiguous *narodnost'* "the ethnicity of everything in between." Yuri Slezkine, *Arctic Mirrors: Russia and the Small Peoples of the North* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Univ. Press, 1994), 322–323. In Shternberg's prerevolutionary usage the term conveys a similar terminological ambiguity without the Marxist-Leninist trappings.]

east as far as Kamchatka.<sup>9</sup> I have studied marital norms only among their most isolated branch, the Northern Oroch, but I also have had occasion to get comparative and supplementary data among other tribes of the Amur region, namely, among the Oroch, Gold, Ulchi, and the Amgun Tungus [Negidal]. There are, of course, some differences in the customs and terms of relationship of the different Tungus nations, as greatly extended and divided from one another as they are. But in the main, the system of relationship and marriage is the same. A brief sketch of the marital norms of the Oroch will give a good idea of the Tungus system.<sup>10</sup>

Like the Gilyak, the Oroch are divided into exogamous patrilineal clans. In each generation of a clan, the men and women are divided into groups of older brothers and sisters and younger brothers and sisters (classificatory terms, *aga* and *nu ku*). The children of these groups are their common sons and daughters and, with reference to each other, brothers and sisters. The class of "brothers" live in group marriage with their wives in the same way as the Gilyak of the Eastern dialect, that is, younger brothers are the group-husbands of their older brothers' wives. As among the Gilyak, clansmen prefer to take wives from one clan, and we may conjecture that formerly, as among the Gilyak, marriage into one clan was imperative.

The marriage group also embraces one's wife's sisters even when the latter are married to unrelated individuals, but by analogy with brothers' wives, this form of marriage extends among some tribes only to the wife's younger sisters.

In two respects, group marriage among the Tungus extends much further than among the Gilyak. In the first place, a man has access not only to the wives of his older brothers, but also to the wives of his father's younger brothers, to whom he therefore applies the same class-term (*ara*) as he uses towards his older brothers. In the second place, in contrast to the Gilyak rules, marriage with daughters of a man's elder sisters is permitted, and this category of nieces is thus also drawn into the circle of one's group-wives.

From what we know about the origin of group cousin marriage, it is easy to realize that the marital right of a man to his father's younger brother's wife, so unusual in the Turanian system, is but a consequence of the right to marry one's elder sister's daughter.<sup>11</sup> Originally niece marriage must have been strictly forbidden, while the sole form of marriage was obligatory cousin marriage combined with group marital rights of all brothers and agnatic cousins. Marriage with nieces must have arisen much later, under the pressure of extraordinary circumstances. Once this new right had arisen, however, and men had begun to take the daughters of their elder sisters (lawful wives of their paternal nephews), the latter necessarily became partners in group marriage with the wives of their younger paternal uncles. The reason why the wives

<sup>9</sup> [Editor's note: The AMNH Russian typescript and Shternberg, *Giliaki*, consider the Ainu first, and then the Tungus peoples. Rather than restoring the Russian sequence, I have retained the order of the AMNH English typescript to maintain consistency.]

<sup>10</sup> My first report on the Oroch was made November 1, 1896, before the Geographical Society of Vladivostok and was published in extract form the same year. See Shternberg, "Orochi Tatarskogo proliwa," *Vladivostok*, nos. 47, 48, 50, 51 (1896).

<sup>11</sup> [Editor's note: While the above material is an already modified version of the sections on Tungus in the AMNH Russian typescript and Shternberg, *Giliaki*, the material beginning here and ending at the section marked "Ainu" is found in the AMNH English typescript only.]

of paternal uncles older than the father are forbidden is quite clear, since these women are group-wives of the father, and are mothers to the persons concerned. This new group marriage right originally applied only to paternal younger uncle's wives when nieces of the latter gradually extended to every wife of their uncles, whether they were nieces or not. It is worthwhile to mention here that traces of this right are found in the terminology of some Turkish nations like the Karagass [Karagasi, Tofalar], Yakut, Abakan Tatars, and Mongols, among whom, I have been informed, the same term is applied to a man's elder brother and to his father's younger brothers. From Chinese sources we know also that the old Turks used to marry the widows of their paternal uncles.<sup>12</sup> Niece marriage in connection with group cousin marriage is in no way a particularity of the Tungus and Turkish peoples. We find this institution in the birth-place of Morgan's Turanian family, in India, and with the same details. In Mysore, for instance, a man generally marries either his niece (the daughter of his elder sister) or his cousin (the daughter of his mother's brother or his father's sister).<sup>13</sup> Among the Kasuba, a forest tribe of the Nilgiri, a man marries either his first-cousin (the daughter of his mother's brother) or his niece (the daughter of his sister).<sup>14</sup>

But niece marriage is subsidiary to cousin marriage, being a natural outgrowth of obligatory consanguineous marriage. Thus the Tamil caste of Kallans in Madurai "marry nieces, aunts, or some other near relatives, only failing a cousin."<sup>15</sup>

The niece marriage institution among the Tungus can be explained by their mode of life. They are roving nomads who live many hundreds of miles from one another, and even if for a short time they come together, they are always in small number and the choice of wives is rather limited. Under such conditions, the deviation from old rules can be explained as the *force majeure* of necessity, as in the case of the Tamil cited above. Another important peculiarity of the Tungus is that, in contrast to the Gilyak, they are allowed to marry one another's sisters. It is now even the most favorite form of marriage. Considering that the Tungus, like the Gilyak, prefer to marry from the same clan of their mother, it seems right to conclude that the original form of marriage among the Tungus was exchange-marriage between the children of brother and sister two-sided cross-cousin marriage.

**THE AINU.** Since the time of von Schrenck, the Ainu have been ranked with the Amur tribes, although in culture, language, and other ethnographic traits they belong to quite a different group of nations. In spite of the close proximity of the northern Ainu to the Gilyak, the matrimonial system of the Ainu stands closest to the nations of northeastern Asia.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>12</sup> Cf. Radlov, *Aus Sibirien*, *passim*. [**Editor's note:** This footnote is found in the AMNH English typescript only.]

<sup>13</sup> Hebbalalu Velpanuru Nanjundayya, *The Ethnographical Survey of Mysore* (Bangalore: Government Press, 1906), 1, 10, 11; cited in Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, vol. II, 271 et seq. [**Editor's note:** This footnote is found in the AMNH English typescript only.]

<sup>14</sup> *Anthropos*, no. 4 (1909), 178–181. [**Editor's note:** This footnote is found in the AMNH English typescript only.]

<sup>15</sup> Frazer, *Totemism and Exogamy*, vol. II, 225. [**Editor's note:** This footnote is found in the AMNH English typescript only.]

<sup>16</sup> [**Editor's note:** This short section on the Ainu abridges the longer paragraph in the AMNH Russian typescript, 130, and Shternberg, *Giliaki*, 236–237.]

**THE NATIONS OF FAR NORTHEASTERN ASIA.**<sup>17</sup> These consist of three groups: (1) the Yukaghir, (2) the Chukchi, Koriak, and Kamchadal, and (3) the Aleut. Far apart as these three groups are in language, origin, culture, and geographical position, they are unified through fundamental common traits in their matrimonial institutions, which is very important for Morgan's approach.

At first glance the matrimonial institutions of all these nations seem to have nothing to do with the Turano-Ganowanian system. All these systems seem quite different from one another. Upon closer inspection, however, we find traces of classificatory terminology, cousin marriage, and survivals of group marriage. All this does not lie on the surface as with the Gilyak or the Tungus. Here, under specific local conditions, the primary Turanian rules of marriage underwent a radical change, resulting in the Turano-Ganowanian system and acquiring typical traits of the Malayan system, so designated by Morgan.<sup>18</sup> This change is clearly seen in the classificatory terminology of some of these tribes. The main characteristic of the Malayan system is the merging of the paternal and maternal line into one class; among the Aleut, this class of cousins even exercise the obligatory right of group marriage.

We are dealing here with the same kind of case as found by Dr. Rivers in the Torres Straits, where the Malayan features are so justly explained by Dr. Rivers as distortions of the primary Turanian system. Indeed, here in northeastern Asia as among the aborigines of the Torres Straits, we find Turanian traits combined with Malayan. The distortion is not due, as Mr. Rivers thinks, to the natural advance of society but to disintegrating forces. The true cause of the change undergone by the Turano-Ganowanian system is due to the passage from strict exogamy to endogamous practices forced by unfavorable conditions. It is easy to see how this new practice changed and distorted the old forms of the Turanian system.

As we know, the Turanian system is based on the principle of exogamy in each of the two principal lines, among the descendants of brothers on one side, and among the descendants of sisters on the other side (in each of these lines intermarriage being forbidden). Now let us imagine what would happen when a scarcity of women occurs and the men are forced to marry in the exogamic line. Under the old principle, the daughter of my mother's brother (I being male) is my wife; if she is now forced to marry her collateral brother, according to the old rule of group marriage I become a partner in marriage with the latter, and my former cognatic cousin becomes my class-brother. Thus every distinction between cousins, on the paternal as well as on the maternal side, disappears, not only in the terminology but in the group marriage rights as well.

<sup>17</sup> [**Editor's note:** Here again the AMNH English typescript diverges from its AMNH Russian counterpart and Shternberg, *Giliaki*. Where the latter two move from the Ainu and Tungus materials straight into considerations of Yukaghir, Chukchi, and Aleut systems, the AMNH English typescript offered this longer introduction, beginning at "The Nations of Far Northeastern Asia" and ending below with the paragraph beginning "I shall now begin with the Yukaghir."]

<sup>18</sup> By this I do not intend to endorse the view of Morgan that the Malayan system preceded the Turano-Ganowanian stage of marriage. From what follows it will be seen that my opinion is quite the opposite. At the same time, however, it cannot be denied that the Malayan kinship system exists. [**Editor's note:** This footnote is found in the AMNH English typescript only.]

In the above case, the new endogamous practice led to the widening of the marriage group. But the actual effects may be directly the opposite. According to the old rule, all members of the clan belonging to the same generation (all agnatic cousins) have up to the present been "brothers" and partners in group marriage, with their common wives taken from another clan. But now, after the infringement of the rule of exogamy it may happen that my collateral brother may marry my own sister (I being male); consequently our husband-partnership must cease immediately. So it will be with all clan brothers.

Thus the passage to endogamous practice may in some cases bring diametrically opposed results: In one case, group marriage may be extended to all cousins of every line; in the other case, it may be prohibited to all. This is the case with the nations of northeastern Asia. Among the Yukaghir and Koriak, as well as among the Ainu, for instance, the new practice produced the abolition of group marriage altogether. On the other hand, among the Aleut it produced a further extension of group marriage, to such a degree that all kinds of male cousins, on the maternal as well as on the paternal side, became partners in group marriage with all their female cousins from both sides.

The intrusion of endogamy can be explained only as due to the unfavorable conditions of life in the Arctic regions. Marriage difficulties arise mainly from the isolation of the population, whose scanty numbers are spread over an enormous area. In some cases this scantiness is caused by the dying out of the people through degeneration, epidemics, famine, and so on; in other cases, it may be caused by their economic pursuits, such as the herding of reindeer, which necessitates several families to divide in order to have enough pasture land for their herds. The very beginning of the process of endogamy may be observed even now among the isolated Arctic Tungus tribes in the region of Turukhansk, whereas among the less isolated or more sedentary southern Tungus tribes this process is wholly unknown.

Following these few introductory remarks, it should now be easier to understand the individual traits of these tribes.

I shall begin with the Yukaghir. Their classificatory system has at the same time traits of both the Turanian and Malayan systems. This merging of the two systems becomes especially clear in the first ascending line. As in the Turanian system, so here all paternal uncles (father's brothers, one's own and collateral) are "fathers," "big" or "little," literally as among the Dravidians. Similarly, all mother's sisters, one's own and collateral are "mothers"—"big" or "little." At the same time, in complete discord with the Turanian system, we find a typical Malayan trait: namely, that the class of father's brothers embraces not only agnatic, but also cognatic, cousins. Similarly the class of mother's sisters embraces agnatic as well as cognatic cousins.

If in the ascending line we find mixed traits of both systems, the line of one's own generation becomes truly Malayan. I refer to the men of the so-called class of *emjepul* including (to use the words of Iokhel'son) "not only brothers and sisters, but also first and second cousins, and so on, on the father's as well as on the mother's side."<sup>19</sup>

<sup>19</sup> Iokhel'son, *The Yukaghir and the Yukhaghirized Tungus* (Leiden: E. J. Brill), 68. [Editor's note: While Shternberg, *Giliaki*, references this source, only the AMNH Russian and English typescripts include the quotation in the main text. In the AMNH Russian typescript, the quotation is written out by Shternberg in longhand.]

This phenomenon is in perfect accord with class VII of Morgan's Malayan system.<sup>20</sup> The sole cause of this mixture of terminologies is the intrusion of endogamy while the traditions and feelings of exogamic practice still persist, and the struggle between the old and the new forms of marriage goes on under our very eyes. "Wise people," say the Yukaghir, "follow the custom of *n ekhi iini*." That is, they marry according to the norms of avoidance, and the avoidances of the Yukaghir are of a truly Turanian nature. Nevertheless, in reality, "Yukaghir marriages are closely endogamous."<sup>21</sup> The reasons are quite clear. The Yukaghir, numbering only a few hundred people, are scattered over an enormous area and are obliged to marry with the clan, and sometimes even into the same family. Judging from their folklore, endogamous practice among the Yukaghir has been going on from far ancient times.

The theory of the former existence of group marriage is attested to by Turanian terms of relationship which are still found among the Yukaghir. Thus, for instance, the elder and younger brothers and cousins of the father are designated by the terms "big fathers" and "little fathers." Similarly, the elder and younger sisters of the mother are called "big mothers" and "little mothers." Particularly conclusive are the avoidances (1) between elder brothers or elder male cousins and the wives of their younger brothers or younger male cousins; and (2) between the elder brother or elder male cousin and the wife of the younger brother's or male cousin's son. The first avoidance we find among both the Gilyak and the Tungus, where younger brothers and cousins have marital rights over the wives of their older brothers and cousins. Sexual intercourse is not only forbidden between the elder brothers and cousins and the wives of the younger ones, but there is also a strict avoidance taboo between them. The second avoidance is easily explained by the Tungus rule according to which the paternal nephew has marital rights over the wife of his younger paternal uncle, while the reverse is not permitted. Therefore the uncle is under an avoidance taboo in regard to his nephew's wife. The only difference between this directive and the Yukaghir rule is that, among the Tungus, the interdict relates both to the younger paternal uncle and to the elder (whose wife is forbidden to the nephew). Among the Yukaghir, Mr. Iokhel'son gives only the second case; however, it is not impossible that he has overlooked the first. In every Yukaghir case the interdict between the uncle and his nephew's wife suggests that group marriage extended not only to brothers and cousins but also, as among the Tungus, to certain categories of ascending and descending generations.

There is another avoidance which testifies strikingly to the former state of Yukaghir marriage—the avoidance between members of the class *emjepul*, which embraces brothers and sisters and cousins of both lines, agnatic and cognatic. This is salient when we consider that in modern as well as in olden times, cousin marriage (with the exception of first-cousins) was lawful. It is clear that this avoidance must originally have embraced only agnatic brothers and sisters (one's own and collateral), between whom intercourse has been forbidden, as it is now among the Gilyak and Tungus. Further, there are indications that marriage with certain blood relatives

<sup>20</sup> [Editor's note: Neither the AMNH nor the 1933 Soviet editions indicate a source here for Morgan.]

<sup>21</sup> Iokhel'son, *The Yukaghir*, 86.



was obligatory. Until now the Yukaghir knew no religious marriage ceremonies, nor was it their custom to make payment for the bride. They do, however, have the custom of bride-service, but this, as we shall see later in the case of the Koriak, is but another proof of the old law of obligatory marriage.

Finally, the existence until now of the clan among the Yukaghir is conclusive proof that in former times the Yukaghir were a strictly exogamous tribe.

Let us now turn to the vast group of northern Paleo-Asiatics, which includes the Chukchi, Koriak, and Kamchadal. Of this group, the most typical are the Chukchi. Among them endogamous practice is far more in use than among the Yukaghir. Endogamy, indeed, is the only system of marriage. Accordingly, the classificatory system of the Chukchi has more traits of the Malayan system than the Yukaghir. With the loss of exogamy, the Chukchi also lost the clan. The usual form of marriage is between cousins, when possible, even in the same family. When this is impossible, marriage is with cousins of further degrees. Only marriages between uncles and nieces are prohibited. Noting that the Chukchi used to exchange sisters, we see here the typical form of cross-cousin marriage. Formerly cousin marriage in this tribe was undoubtedly an obligatory institution. That is the reason why the Chukchi, like the Yukaghir, are unfamiliar with bride payment and why marriages until now have been concluded during childhood. Children are betrothed by their parents even before birth. Among the Chukchi this custom is even more common than among the Gilyak. As Mr. Bogoraz said, "The majority of marriages are concluded in childhood."<sup>22</sup>

At the present time cousin marriage is permitted in every line, between agnatic as well as cognatic cousins. It was not originally so. This fact is clearly shown by the peculiar form of group marriage. There are two forms of group marriage among the Chukchi. One of them is expressed by a formal stipulation between several men as to their mutual marital rights over their individual wives. Such a stipulation may be concluded also between persons not related to one another, but "second and third cousins are almost invariably united by ties of group marriage."<sup>23</sup>

Considering that the favorite form of marriage is between cousins, the Chukchi group marriage is a union between cousins married to cousins. One detail of the group marriage stipulation shows that primarily the partners of the group marriage were cousins of the agnatic line only. "The persons concerned make sacrifices and anoint themselves with blood, first in one camp, and then in the other. After that, they are considered as belonging to one fireside, as do the relatives in the male line."<sup>24</sup> The children of such marriage unions are regarded as cousins, because as brothers and sisters they cannot marry each other. Such a survival is the best witness that this form of group marriage was previously exercised exclusively between brothers and cousins in the male line only, as it is now among the Gilyak.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>22</sup> Bogoraz, *The Chukchee*, 602.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid. [**Editor's note:** An excellent source on concepts of group marriage proposed by ethnographers of the Chukchi is Peter Schweitzer, "Spouse-Exchange in North-Eastern Siberia: On Kinship and Sexual Relations and Their Transformations," *Vienna Contributions to Ethnology and Anthropology* 5 (1989), 17-38.]

<sup>24</sup> Bogoraz, *The Chukchee*, 603.

<sup>25</sup> [**Editor's note:** This section abridges the longer discussions of Bogoraz' work in the AMNH Russian typescript, 134-138, and Shternberg, *Giliaki*, 240-242.]

**THE KORIAK.** Among the Koriak, although of the same race and linguistic stock and on the same cultural level as the Chukchi, the process of endogamization has gone further than among the latter and has taken a direction similar to that of the Yukaghir. Like the Chukchi, they have lost all feeling for exogamy; they have lost the clan and every trace of the Turanian classificatory system. Like the Yukaghir, they have passed to strictly individual marriage, but unlike the Yukaghir, they have evolved a new code of virtue—chastity among women.

Nevertheless, even here we find traces of the old Turanian system. Conspicuous among these is the institution which was aptly named by Frazer the “sororate,” that is, the right of a man to the sisters of his living or deceased wife. Morgan looked for the origin of this institution in the Punaluan family, although in every case it is undoubtedly a consequence of primary obligatory marriage of blood relatives.<sup>26</sup>

Having abolished group marriage, the Koriak prohibited a man from marrying more than one sister; they even forbade two brothers to marry sisters or even cousins. The sororate in the case of a deceased wife became not a right but a duty, and what is particularly significant is that the Koriak sororate is of the pure Tungusian type. The duty of the sororate embraces not only sisters or female cousins of the deceased wife but also her nieces. “The widower,” says Iokhel’son, “must marry the younger sister, younger cousin, or niece (daughter of sister or brother) of his deceased wife.”<sup>27</sup>

If this institution of the sororate indicates by itself the primary right to marriage, the inclusion in the right of the sororate of the niece of the deceased wife confirms in the clearest way the fact that the deceased wife of a man must have been his blood relative. Otherwise his right over her niece would be quite inexplicable unless the niece of the deceased wife had not been at the same time the niece of the husband. It becomes understandable only in the light of the peculiar form of Turanian marriage found by the Tungus and some Tamil tribes (see above) under which a man is obliged to marry his cousin or his niece. Thus the primary Koriak marriage must have been of Tungusian type.

Mr. Iokhel’son tries to explain the institution of sororate (or as he calls it, “double levirate”) among the Koriak in another way. He sees the origin of the institution in the desire to sustain religious bonds between marriage mates, and in the reluctance to admit an alien element to the sacred hearth.<sup>28</sup> Such an explanation might become plausible if the deceased wife had been in due time brought into religious communion with the family hearth of her husband by a special religious performance. But as Mr. Iokhel’son himself states, no religious marriage performances are in vogue among the Koriak.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, the absence of religious wedding performances itself shows that the mates originally must have been blood relatives, cousins or nieces of

<sup>26</sup> Morgan, *Ancient Society*, 432. [**Editor’s note:** This footnote is found in the AMNH English typescript only.]

<sup>27</sup> Iokhel’son, *The Koryak* (Leiden: E. J. Brill), 748. [**Editor’s note:** This footnote is found in the AMNH English typescript only.]

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 749–750. [**Editor’s note:** This footnote is found in the AMNH English typescript only.]

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, 748. [**Editor’s note:** This footnote is found in the AMNH English typescript only.]

the husband, naturally bound by ties of common ancestral worship. The usual levirate among the Koriak is also of the Tungusian type.

At the present time only marriages with female cousins and nieces of the second degree are permitted, but these restrictions are apparently of recent origin. In Steller and Krasheninnikoff, as well as in the old tales, no mention is made of them.<sup>30</sup>

Two wedding customs—bride-service and the ceremony of struggle over the bride—bear witness that the endogamous practices among the Koriak are not original, but of later origin.

As may clearly be seen from Mr. Iokhel'son's description, bride-service is in no way an economic institution. All the details show that its aim is ostensibly to humiliate the groom and his relatives. Such humiliation can be explained in but one way—that it is performed *in fraudem legis* to assuage the ancestral gods for infringing on the old marriage laws. The same explanation must be given to the second ceremony, the struggle to catch the bride and tear off her clothes in order to touch her genitalia. Here again, such a struggle can only be understood according to Mr. Iokhel'son as a ceremony *in fraudem Deorum* to test the groom. However, to test the groom by humiliating his relatives, to test him after years of hard service by a symbolic struggle with the bride, the issue of which depends upon the goodwill of the bride herself, seems to have very little reason.

**THE KAMCHADAL.** Very little can be said about the Kamchadal. At the present time they are completely Russianized and have lost all their old culture. Steller and Krashennikoff, however, describe their customs as being very similar to those of the Koriak. Nonetheless, it is particularly interesting to note Krashennikoff's testimony that cousins commonly married.<sup>31</sup>

**THE ALEUT.** Let us now turn to the Aleut, whom Morgan regarded as the connecting link between Asiatic and American peoples. We have little information as to their marriage norms, but the little we know is of great interest from our point of view, especially as the data are furnished by the well-known Father Veniaminov, an observer who at the beginning of the 19th century spent many years among these people and who understood their language.<sup>32</sup> In the first place, we find that among the Aleut the common form of marriage was also cousin marriage. Veniaminov gives no

<sup>30</sup> [**Editor's note:** The reference to "Steller and Krasheninnikoff" [Krasheninnikov] is found in the AMNH English typescript only. While the Russian versions make an oblique reference to "Krasheninnikov (II, 124)" in the body of the text, the AMNH English version, citing no source, refers to "Steller and Krasheninnikoff." Shternberg was likely referring to Stepan P. Krasheninnikov, *Opisanie Zemli Kamchatki* (St. Petersburg: Imperatorskaia Akademiia Nauk, 1755).]

<sup>31</sup> [**Editor's note:** While neither the AMNH Russian typescript, 137, nor Shternberg, *Giliaki*, 242, has more than a sentence to note about the Kamchadals, the AMNH English typescript sets it aside here as its own section.]

<sup>32</sup> [**Editor's note:** For an English-language source on Veniaminov, see Ivan (Ioam) Veniaminov, *Notes on the Islands of the Unalashka District*. Translation of Veniaminov, *Zapiski ob ostrovakh Unalashkinskago otdela* (n.p., 1840) by Lydia Black and R. H. Geoghegan. Edited with an introduction by Richard A. Pierce (Kingston, Canada: Limestone Press, 1984).]

details but says definitely that "the daughter of one's uncle was most frequently elected for one's bride."<sup>33</sup> Still more interesting is his description of polyandry among the Aleut: "A woman was permitted to have two husbands, of whom one was the principal husband, the other an associate, or as the Russians say, a half-husband" [*polovinschchik*]. Far from being censured as immoral, such a woman was respected for her thrift. The second man, while fully exercising the rights of a husband, shared the latter's obligation to work for the support of his wife and family. Erman furnished similar information, without however indicating the relationship between the common husbands, or their relations in case of the marriage of the second associate.<sup>34</sup> We are not justified, however, in concluding that the content of Aleut marriage was exhausted by these facts. Mamiya Rinzo, as stated before, had described Gilyak marriage in expressions almost identical with those used by Veniaminov for Aleuts, whereas we found among them a typical Gilyak form of group marriage. Such descriptions of group marriage as are given by Veniaminov and Rinzo are to be expected from nonprofessional observers. The most striking form of group marriage is that in which the second husband is not individually married, as we find for instance in Gilyak traditions: "Two brothers had supported one wife." But when several men, especially when each one is individually married, are parties to a group marriage, the fact generally escapes the notice of the nonprofessional observer.

In confirmation of my assertion, I want to adduce an example from the Todas, a Nilgiri mountain tribe. An early author, W. E. Marshall, describes marriage among the Todas in the following terms: "If the husband has brothers or very near relatives, all living together, they may each, if but she and he consent, participate in the right to be considered her husband also."<sup>35</sup> According to this description, cited by Westermarck (an antagonist of Morgan), Toda marriage is pure polyandry like Tibetan marriage or Veniaminov's version of Aleut marriage. But here is a description of the same marriage by Short, a trained observer. He writes,

Among the Todas, the inhabitants of the Nilgiri Mountains, a girl, upon her marriage, becomes the wife of all her husband's brothers who, in their turn, become the husbands of all her sisters. In such cases, the first child born is regarded as belonging to the older brother; the second, to the next elder.<sup>36</sup>

This description reveals a typical group marriage—an ideal form of the Punaluan family. It is worthwhile mentioning that the description was made in 1869, 8 years

<sup>33</sup> [Editor's note: While the AMNH Russian typescript contains the incomplete reference, "Veniaminov, Zapiski ob ostrovakh Unalashki . . .," the AMNH English typescript refers to *Trudy Arkhiespiskopa Innokentii*, vol. 3, 323–324. The AMNH Russian typescript and Shternberg, *Giliaki*, refer the reader to *Tvoreniiia Innokentiiia*, vol. 3. See also Ivan Platonovich Barsukov, *O zhizni i podvigakh Innokentiiia* (n.p., 1893), translated into English as Barsukov, *The Life and Work of Innocent, the Archbishop of Kamchatka, the Kuriles and the Aleutian Islands, and Later the Metropolitan of Moscow* (San Francisco: Cubery, 1897).]

<sup>34</sup> Adolph Erman, "Ethnographische Wahrnehmungen," *Zeitschrift für Ethnologie* 3 (1871), 162–163.

<sup>35</sup> W. E. Marshall, *A Phrenologist among the Todas* (London: n.p., 1873), 213.

<sup>36</sup> John Short, "An Account of the Hill Tribes of the Nilgiris," *Transactions of the Ethnological Society of London*, n. ser., vol. 7 (London: J. Murray, 1869), 240.

prior to the publication of Morgan's *Ancient Society* and simultaneously with his *Systems of Consanguinity and Affinity of the Human Family*. Thus the writer could not have had any of the modern ideas regarding the Punaluan family.

These lines had already been written when I met the well-known ethnologist, Mr. Iokhel'son, who had just returned from his expedition to the Aleut. The data he was able to furnish me finally confirmed my suppositions. He kindly informed me that among the Aleut, as among the Tungus and the Gilyak in former times, the younger brothers were in group marriage with the wives of their elder brothers, and at the present time this institution is preserved among cousins. What is most remarkable is that this is not an optional institution but an obligatory one. To participate in group marriage is the duty of all cousins. Another interesting fact given to me by Mr. Iokhel'son is that the term "cousin" among the Aleut is used as a general term for cousins of every line. We have here, then, the same Malayan feature as we have seen among the Yukaghir and Chukchi.

The peculiarities of the Aleut marriage system are not restricted to the Aleutian Islands. In words almost identical with Veniaminov's, they are described on the northwestern coast of America down to the Columbia River, which Morgan regarded as the point of origin of the Ganowanian system. Similar marital norms we find among the Koniaq [Alutiiq], inhabitants of Kodiak Island, about whom the old traveler Davydov writes,

Some women have two husbands. The first is the real husband, who selects the second with the wife's consent. The latter also acts as a servant, carries water, fuel and executes other jobs. He may sleep with the wife only in the absence of the principal husband, on whose return he loses that right. Such husbands are called by the Russians *polovinishchiki*.<sup>37</sup>

In this description, which seems to be taken from Mamiya Rinzo, Veniaminov, and the Tibetan travelers, we again miss an indication of the relationship between the husbands. But we have the valuable statement that the second husband may exercise his rights only in the absence of the first, as well as the clear presentation of the inferior position of the second husband. This inferiority of the second husband is well observed among the Gilyak. Its reason, however, does not lie in any provision of the marriage contract but in the fact that the older brother usually assumes the part of the master of the house. Moreover, in view of the prohibition of conversation between the two brothers, the relations of the younger to the older may appear to an outsider as those of servant and master. This institution is more definitely described by Veniaminov among the Tlingit, who clearly states, "The second husband must be either a brother or a near relative."<sup>38</sup> This statement throws light upon the true nature of the institution. A similar phenomenon was noted by Ross among the Central Eskimo.

However, we shall not go into detail about America, the home of the Ganowanian system which is so closely allied to the Turanian. Our purpose has been to bridge

<sup>37</sup> Gavril I. Davydov, *Dvukratnoe putesthestvie v Ameriku ofitserov Khvostova i Davydova*, vol. 2 (1810-1812), 50-51.

<sup>38</sup> *Tvoreniia Innokentii*, vol. 3, 619. [**Editor's note:** This footnote is found in the AMNH Russian typescript and Shternberg, *Giliaki*, only.]

the gap that separated the native land of the Turanian system from the land of the Ganowanian. And I hope, after the present review, we have the right to say that it is accomplished. The system of the Dravidian nations of India is no longer separated from its American counterpart. The connection, so strenuously sought for and ingeniously foreseen by Morgan, is now found. This connection is represented by the great Tungus family and by all the Paleo-Asiatic nations.