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**Proto Oceanic society (Austronesian) and  
Proto East Bantu society (Niger-Congo),  
residence, descent and kin terms ca. 1000 BC**

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*Proto Oceanic society (ca. 1000 BC) and Proto East Bantu society (ca. 500 BC) were expanding farming societies and are here held to have been matrilineal, matrilineal societies with bifurcate merging kin term systems. Matrilineality's motive in both instances is held to be the matrilineal response to migration and migration's warfare described by Divale with, in the instance of Proto Oceanic society, an additional association of matrilineality with long distance seafaring and its extended absences of men and, in the instance of Proto East Bantu society, an additional association of matrilineality with regular absences of men due to hunting. Proto East Bantu and Proto Oceanic parental generation kin terms agree in being bifurcate merging which is typical of lineal societies. Cognatic and patrilineal daughters speckle Oceanic's landscape while East Bantu societies seem always lineal, the prescriptive alliance systems of the East Bantu possibly holding lineality in bolder relief in the social ethos. It is also observed that Proto East Bantu society had male age-grade societies and Proto Oceanic society did not, another difference that may have conserved matrilineality in most Proto East Bantu society daughters as the age-grades gave opportunity and order to male political ambitions. Junod's suspicion of matrilineality in the past of the patrilineal Southern Bantu due to strong man's sister's child institutions is vindicated, Radcliffe-Brown's counter-example of Polynesia's Tonga now being dismissed as a case of another patrilineal society with a matrilineal past. Divale's notions concerning shifts to matrilineality upon migration and the subsequent devolvement of matrilineal institutions over two and three thousand year periods are affirmed in all details examined.*

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## Introduction

The Proto Oceanic language was a Proto Austronesian and Proto Eastern MalayoPolynesian daughter spoken around the Bismarck Archipelago at about 1000 BC. Descendants of its speakers ultimately spread through much of Island Melanesia, onto the northeast and southeast coasts of New Guinea, through all of Polynesia and through all of Micronesia but for two of its westernmost island groups (Map 1). The settlement of Polynesia was under way by about 950 BC (cf. Burley et al. 1999) and constitutes a convenient time to mark the last possible “moment” of highly unified Oceanic speech (cf. Green 2002, 2003, Pawley 2003, 2008). The Proto East Bantu language was a Proto Niger-Congo and Proto Bantu daughter that was spoken around the Great Lakes of East Africa. Descendants of its speakers ultimately spread through much of Eastern and Southern Africa (Map 2). Proto East Bantu was spoken ca. 500 BC, a date offered on the basis of certain antecedent archaeological traditions first arriving to the East Africa Highlands at about 1000 BC and the apparent spread of some of these peoples by 500 BC (cf. Nurse 1999).

This chapter compares and contrasts Proto Oceanic and Proto East Bantu residence, descent and kin terms. The kin term systems are treated first and were fully bifurcate merging<sup>3</sup> in their parental generation terminologies (below and Marck et al. this volume). Proto East Bantu had cross-cousin and prescriptive alliance terminologies. Proto Oceanic did not. Following Hage (Hage 1998, Hage and Marck 2003), Kayser et al. (2006) and

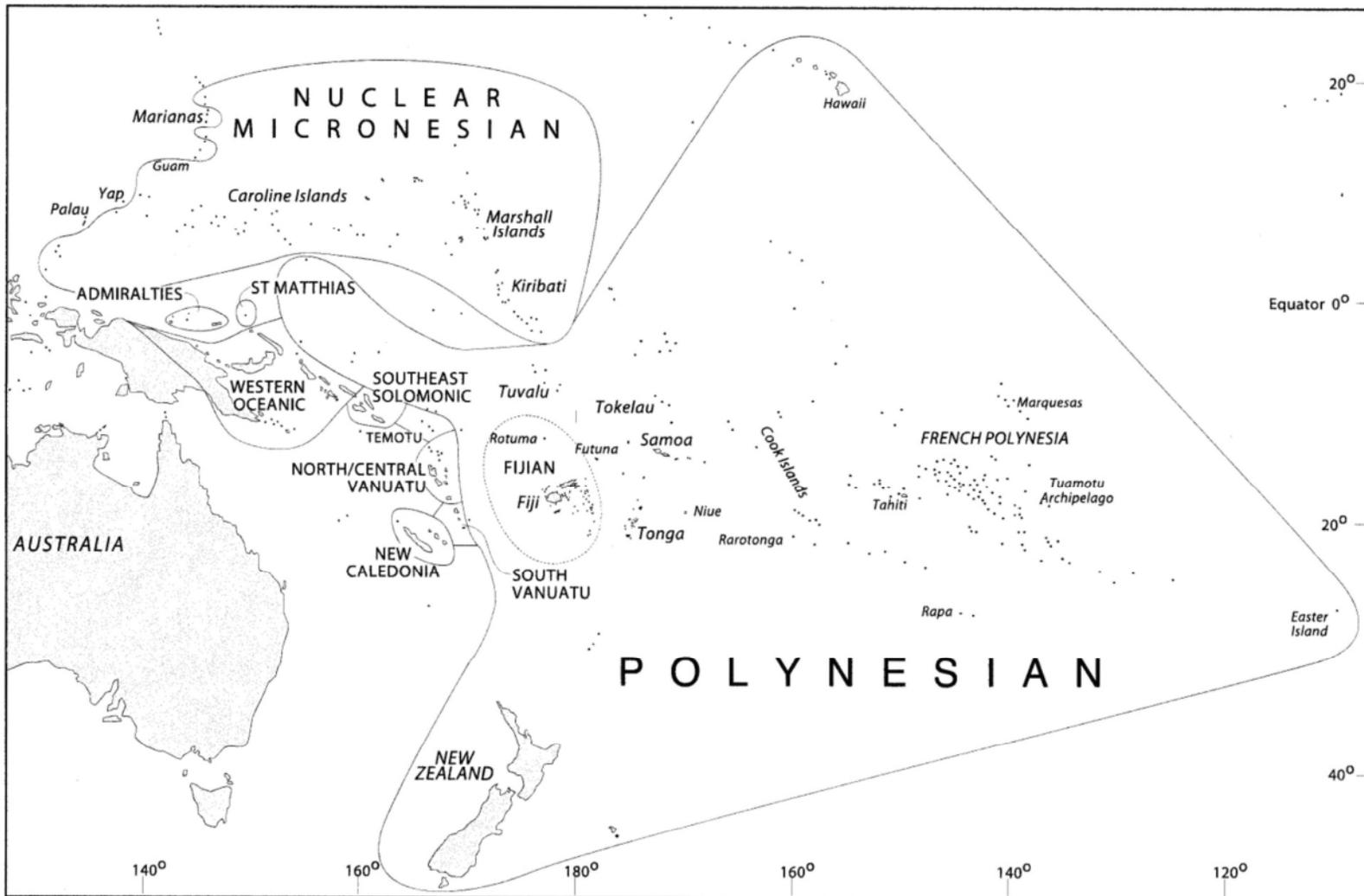
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<sup>3</sup> Bifurcate merging: F=FB≠MB, M=MZ≠FZ. Key: F father, M mother, B brother, Z sister.

Marck (2008), Proto Oceanic society is here held to have been matrilineal and matrilocal. We also hold the view that Proto Bantu society was matrilineal and matrilocal (Ehret 2001, Hage and Marck this volume) as, we here add, was Proto East Bantu society. In Proto Oceanic, Proto Bantu and Proto East Bantu societies, we hold that residence (matrilocal), descent (matrilineal) and kin terms (bifurcate merging in the parental generation) were concordant<sup>4</sup> and in archetypically perfect alignment and were probably so due to migration (Divale 1984) in their recent pasts (500-1000 years).

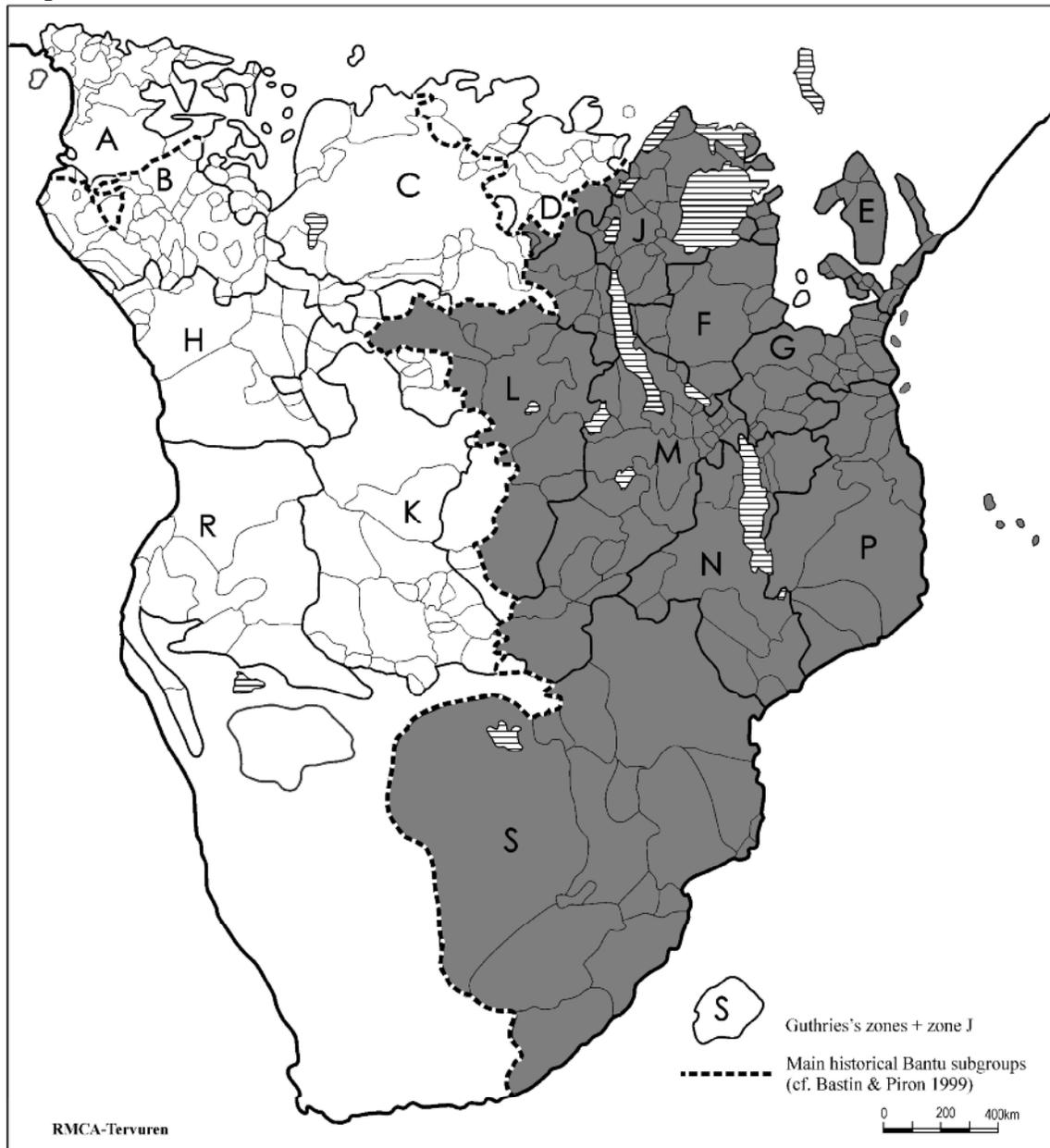
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<sup>4</sup> “Harmonized” in Lévi-Strauss’s (1969) parlance.



**Map 1: The Oceanic subgroups**

**Map 2: Guthrie's Bantu Zones and East Bantu**



Guthrie's (1967, 1970a, 1970b, 1971) Bantu "zones". The shaded area is Bastin and Piron's (1999) present estimation of what groups should be included in East Bantu.

We posit that both the Proto Oceanic and Proto East Bantu societies were matrilineal and matrilocal because they had, at some time in their past, become uxorilocal<sup>5</sup> then

<sup>5</sup> Matrifocal residence in the absence of formal matriline.

matrilocal<sup>6</sup> due to migration, as observed by Divale (1984) for many other migrant human societies. For Proto Oceanic society there was additional matrifocal residential pressure from extended absences of males due to long distance seafaring (Hage and Marck 2002, 2003, Marck 2008), a factor that continued in some areas up to the present as it is observed that most Oceanic societies that are still matri-/avuncu-local are still seafaring to greater or lesser degrees. For Proto Bantu society and Proto East Bantu society there may have been additional matrifocal residential pressure from regular absences of males due to hunting (Hage and Marck this volume). Divale's migration model revolves around the redirection of warfare from feuding and other intragroup rivalries and violence towards the "others" displaced upon migration and is expanded upon presently. Hage's "male absence" model for Oceanic (Hage and Marck 2003) and Proto Bantu (Hage and Marck this volume) continues Harris's (1980, 1985) thesis that oft absent males find their sisters better custodians of their property than their wives and that matrilocality easily accommodates this.

The Divale and Harris models give us reasons to believe that Proto Bantu society and Proto Oceanic society were doubly motivated to be matrilocal. Here we emphasize for East Bantu, as Marck (2008) recently has for Oceanic, that the modern ethnographic distributions of matrilineality, but for the evidence of human genetics, are better evidence than any for showing that those double motives, migration and regular male absences, had actually resulted in matrilocality in Proto East Bantu society and Proto Oceanic society.

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<sup>6</sup> Matrifocal residence in the presence of formal matrilineal.

In the main, historic East Bantu societies remain at least nominally matrilineal but for in the extreme northwest and the extreme south (Guthrie Zones J and S [Map 2]). Historic Oceanic subgroups with their less continuous island group geographies followed more varied paths to the present.

The following sections consider the kin terms (the linguistic evidence for lineality), the modern distributional situations with respect to descent and, finally, an old question about mother's brothers.

### **The kin terms**

Studies of social organization intersect with linguistics at the level of kinship terminologies and here we set out where the Proto Oceanic and Proto East Bantu kin term situations stood. This section is a linguists' report to the social organization specialists. Comparison of kin term systems can shed light upon past stages of social organization and help inform theories of change from various anthropological perspectives. Here we inventory the reconstructed kin terms of Proto Oceanic and expand reconstructions of Proto East Bantu kin terms (Table 1, Appendix 1) beyond those of Marck et al. (this volume). Both languages were spoken by expanding farming communities. Both languages spawned hundreds of daughters which provide excellent opportunities for terminological reconstructions (to the extent that they have published descriptions). Both were fully bifurcate merging in their parental generation terminologies. Both spawned

various systems among their offspring: more minimal systems in some instances, more complex in others. Both have at least one Dravidian society amongst their daughters (Hage 2001, 2006). For both languages there are, perhaps, some kin terms that existed that will remain unreconstructable due to the propensity of terms of certain categories to experience more replacement than others and due, of more moment to work at this point in time, to lack of description. For both languages the current report is exhaustive in terms of extant data and further knowledge of these ancient kin term systems would require targeted work in the field amongst their daughter languages.

As can be seen in the reconstructed kin terms of both (Table 1), there is a difference between the two where Proto East Bantu had prescriptive alliance terminologies ('spouse's F/M = cross-cousin's M/F') (Marck et al. this volume) while Proto Oceanic seems to have had no reconstructable cousin terms or prescriptive alliance terminologies of any kind (Hage this volume, Marck 2008).

**Table 1: Proto Oceanic and Proto East Bantu kin term reconstructions**

	Proto Oceanic	Proto East Bantu
grandparent	* <i>tubu</i>	
grandfather		* <i>céé-kódó</i>
grandmother		* <i>máá- kúdó</i>
father	* <i>tama</i>	* <i>cé</i>
mother	* <i>tina</i>	* <i>nìnà</i>
mother's brother	* <i>matuqa</i>	* <i>máá-dómè</i>
father's sister	* <i>aia</i>	* <i>cé-n-kádí</i>
elder same-sex sibling	* <i>tuqa(ka)</i>	* <i>kódó</i>
younger same-sex sibling	* <i>taci</i>	** <i>mununguna</i>
woman's brother	* <i>mwaqane</i>	
man's sister	* <i>papine</i>	
cross-cousin		* <i>bíádá</i>
child	* <i>natu</i>	* <i>jánà</i>
man's sister's child	* <i>(q)alawa</i>	* <i>mwipwa</i>
woman's brother's child	** <i>kadea</i>	
grandchild	* <i>makubu</i>	* <i>jíjòkòdò</i>
spouse's parent	* <i>rawa</i>	* <i>kwe</i>
spouse's father		* <i>tààtá-bíádá</i>
spouse's mother		* <i>mààmá-bíádá</i>
spouse	* <i>(q)asawa</i>	
husband		* <i>dómè</i>
wife		* <i>ké, *kádí</i>
sibling-in-law		* <i>dámó</i>
spouse's cross-sex sibling	* <i>(q)ipaR</i>	
spouse's same-sex sibling		
child's spouse	* <i>rawa</i>	* <i>kwe</i>
Source	Marck (forthcoming)	Appendix I

Note: Double asterisks (“\*\*”) indicate a reconstruction whose level of proto language or precise semantic reconstruction is problematic.

Lineality devolved in some Oceanic instances, most famously in the mainly cognatic systems of the Polynesians. Possibly it would not have so often devolved if the lines were tied together in the prescriptive alliance systems of the East Bantu. Most East Bantu

speech communities today seem still to be lineal although in the far south (Zone S) and the far northwest (Zone J) whole Guthrie zones have become patrilineal rather than matrilineal.

As can be seen in Table 1, the parental generation systems are of the same form with bifurcate merging terms. The outstanding difference from a social anthropological perspective involved the previously mentioned prescriptive alliance formula of Proto East Bantu ('cross-cousin's<sup>7</sup> F/M' = 'spouse's F/M'). Proto Oceanic had neither that nor any other prescriptive alliance equation. If Proto Oceanic society had cousin marriage of any sort there is no trace of it in the kin terms (Hage this volume, Marck forthcoming). It is common for extant Oceanic societies to proscribe first and second cousin marriage although we have not approached that problem systematically and can offer no synthetic statements here.

The Proto East Bantu 'cross-cousin' term has been discussed in various ways by Murdock (1959:383-4), Bastin (1971:36), Schoenbrun (1997:70-1, 1998:96-7), Fourshey (2002:146-147), Bastin et al. (2003) and Marck et al. (this volume). It is formed of the verb 'to bear, procreate'. Linguistically, we can be quite certain that the 'cross-cousin's F/M = spouse's F/M' equation existed at the Proto East Bantu level and one therefore posits that society at that time practiced cross (first) cousin marriage.

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<sup>7</sup> The level of cousin is established through comparative ethnography rather than linguistics. Linguistics can establish that a special term existed, not the degree of cross-cousin (first, second, third) who is marriageable.

Both Proto Oceanic and Proto East Bantu saw their first order daughter interstages develop in the first millennium BC. Reconstruction of these first order daughters commonly results in systems not so very different from Proto Oceanic or Proto East Bantu themselves and they often resemble Proto Oceanic or Proto East Bantu more than they resemble many of their living daughters. The present report considers only Proto East Bantu and Proto Oceanic themselves, for in doing so we presently posit that we capture the general nature of most of the daughters for the most of the first millennium BC.

The Proto East Bantu society pattern of matrilineality with cross (first) cousin marriage enjoyed great stability as it emerged onto the savanna. Later, communities in the extreme north and south of the East Bantu domain (Zones J and S respectively) shifted to patrilineality but did not, at the level of the Zones J and S proto languages, abandon the ‘cross-cousin’s F/M = spouse’s F/M’ equation or their bifurcate merging parental generation kin terms. Bifurcate merging is associated with lineality of every type (matrilineality, patrilineality and double descent). Exceptions in Oceanic seem mainly to involve cases of small populations that dropped bifurcate merging terms and became generational (F=FB=MB, M=MZ=FZ) (e.g., Proto [Nuclear] Micronesian [Hage and Marck 2002]). We are presently aware of no exceptions in East Bantu. In neither the Bantu shifts to patrilineality nor the Oceanic shifts to patrilineality or double descent is there evidence from the kin terms marking these shifts. The same bifurcate merging parental generation terms continued in most instances to be present in the societies so transformed.

## **Divale (1984) and the distributional social organization evidence**

With the reconstruction and comparison of the kin terms, the linguists' work is done but here we also review and expand upon the literature concerning questions of Proto Oceanic and Proto East Bantu residence and descent. It was mainly Hage who had been doing so for Oceanic (Hage 1998, 1999, Hage and Marck 2002, 2003) and Bantu (Hage and Marck this volume) but he died before developing the distributional arguments for Proto Oceanic, Proto Bantu and Proto East Bantu matrilineality and matrilocality.

Distributional arguments are a powerful complement to the other lines of inference Hage pursued and here we summarize Marck's (2008) distributional argument for Proto Oceanic matrilineality and matrilocality. We then turn to an examination of the distributional argument that can be made for Proto East Bantu matrilineality and matrilocality, expanding upon Ehret's (2001:33) notion that "... corporate matrilineal kin groups of some kind are likely to go back to proto-Bantu", a view held by Hage at the time of his death (Hage and Marck this volume).

We assert that one can most conveniently claim that the Proto Oceanic and Proto East Bantu societies were matrilineal because so many of their historical daughters are. Such a distributional argument must have a model of most likely changes and Divale (1984) has been our guide as to how matrilineal societies would be expected to develop and then change over time. The general thesis continues Murdock's (1967, 1970) observation that residence tends to seek a concordant descent system and that descent creates certain

regular patterns of kin terms (bifurcate merging parental generation kin terms being typical of lineal societies). Divale (1974, 1984) observed that societies sometimes become uxoriocal<sup>8</sup> and then matriloca<sup>9</sup> when they migrate. His 1984 work showed just how common this is cross culturally. Divale's theory of the formation dynamic is considered presently. In reference to Proto Oceanic society, we shall for the moment be concerned with the dynamic of what transpires after the migrant, matriloca societies begin passing some centuries and then millennia in their new homes. In a process Divale found to average 1800 years, the matriloca societies eventually become avunculocal<sup>10</sup>, then virilocal<sup>11</sup>, then drop matrilineality or briefly have double descent<sup>12</sup>, finishing off as virilocal cognatic societies or as patriloca<sup>13</sup> societies where formally reckoned patriline have emerged.

Marck (2008) argues that the Oceanic subgroups show matrilineal retentions and abandonments along the cline outlined by Divale, the cline skewed to some extent by unpredicted<sup>14</sup> matrilocality retentions involving groups that continued long distance seafaring (cf. Hage and Marck 2002) and unpredicted matrilineality retentions in societies which developed age-grade institutions (cf. Allen 1984) – the distributional evidence therefore supporting Hage's (1998) suggestion of Proto Oceanic society matrilineality. Lineality in Hage's model emerged in two major parts – in his initial defense of Proto Oceanic society lineality (Hage 1999) and *then* a specific matrilineality component (Hage

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<sup>8</sup> Matrifocal residence in the absence of matriline.

<sup>9</sup> Matrifocal residence in the presence of matriline.

<sup>10</sup> Marital residence is with a groom's maternal uncles (classed as a kind of matrilocality).

<sup>11</sup> Patrifocal residence in the absence of patriline.

<sup>12</sup> Formally reckoning both patriline and matriline.

<sup>13</sup> Patrifocal residence in the presence of patriline.

<sup>14</sup> Not predicted by Divale's model but noted previously for Oceanic speaking Micronesia by Hage and Marck (2002).

1998<sup>15</sup>). Hage's (1998) "Was Proto Oceanic society matrilineal?" was soon supported by studies of Polynesian mitochondrial DNA and Y chromosomes showing a pattern typical of matrifocal residence from their centuries in the Proto Oceanic homeland (Hage and Marck 2003, Kayser et al. 2006, Marck 2008).

The distributional argument is more obvious for East Bantu where most historical societies remain matrilineal. Only two East Bantu subgroups were patrilineal upon earliest Western contact: Zones J<sup>16</sup> and S (Map 2). The rest are matrilineal as are East Bantu's immediate Bantu neighbors to the west. Clearly it is Zones J and S which have changed.

Diffusion would be a poor explanation for the discontinuous geographies of Oceanic matrilineality (Marck 2008). Diffusion would also be a poor explanation in the East Bantu instance where we observe that East Bantu matrilineality is more easily explained as a continuation of Proto Bantu matrilineality. Abandonment is mainly outward from the Proto Bantu homeland far to East Bantu's northwest. This is just as Divale's model predicts (i.e., abandonment amongst formerly migrant societies which have been *in situ* longest). Diffusion of matrilineality over almost the entirety of Bantu's distribution is a hopelessly complex suggestion compared to the simple notion that Proto Bantu society was matrilineal to begin with. Diffusion of matrilineality is unattested ethnohistorically in Bantu speaking areas and Marck (2008) identified only one possible Oceanic language

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<sup>15</sup> There was some kind of publication delay in the instance of Hage (1999). It was obviously written before Hage (1998).

<sup>16</sup> And at least one member of the nearby Zone E, the Kikuyu (Kenyatta 1938), abandoning matrilineality in the historical period. It is noteworthy that the Kikuyu-Kamba are in Bantu Zone E, an isolate in what is otherwise Nilo-Saharan territory – there was no contiguity with other matrilineal Bantu.

case (between two or more Oceanic speaking groups<sup>17</sup>). Diffusion of matrilineality over the vast reaches of Bantu speech ends up being a very *ad hoc* suggestion. There seem not, in any event, to have been any recent opinions published suggesting subequatorial Africa's "Matrilineal Belt" arose through diffusion.

Following Divale's model, Proto Bantu society matrilocality was motivated most anciently by external conflict upon their ancestors' migration from closer to the Proto Niger-Congo homeland. They may have arrived to what became the Proto Bantu homeland (the Cameroon Grasslands) already matrilocal (from previous migration) or they may have become matrilocal *in situ* in the Grasslands. No opinion on that matter seems ever to have been published and we offer none here.

With reference to the formation of matrilineal societies (out of patrilineal, cognatic, etc.), Divale showed that in many instances, societies became uxoriocal as part of a general migrant process. Finely segmented patrilineal institutions which organize internal conflict (blood revenge, feuding, units of warriors, etc.) are abandoned as migrants' conflict becomes collectively directed towards "others". Every male becomes equally attached to the missions of aggression and defense with respect to aborigines of the land intruded upon. They become less attached to residing with agnatic kin and might, the present authors wonder, be inclined as migrants to find their wives happiest with their wives' own uterine kin. Divale (1984:24) suggests decisions at this level would be under natural pressure from prospective parents-in-law who could insist on uxoriocal residence for a daughter courted by a warrior, a status held by most able-bodied males. Divale's model is

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<sup>17</sup> The story of Oceanic / Papuan (non-Austronesian) contacts is more complex and was not reviewed.

a conflict model and he gives examples of historical societies that quickly became uxorilocal when external conflict emerged: a kind of ranging warfare amongst the previously patrilineal Osage of North America (Divale 1984:26), warfare upon migration amongst the Tupi of South America (Divale 1984:93-4) and many others.

Divale's general thesis of what then transpires in the centuries and millennia after migration is one of men incrementally taking back control of residence and descent in the progression summarize previously. More specifically (Divale 1984:26-8), a common first step involves a shift of residence to male control through avunculocality<sup>18</sup>. Then, as time passes, men become more concerned with passing land on to their own son's rather than their sister's sons and virilocal residence becomes an option. These societies are still matrilineal but, given enough time, matrilineality eventually determines little more than exogamy in increasingly virilocal contexts. These changes may happen earlier amongst the highest ranking families than amongst more average families or alternately it can be the average families that innovate while people of rank continue the old pattern (Marck 2008).

Turning now to the details of historical East Bantu societies, we have done what we believe is an exhaustive search for sources and have found few descriptions of matrilineality in East Bantu societies that go beyond simple assertions that the societies should be classed as matrilineal<sup>19</sup>. Most of those sources are for Guthrie's Bantu Zone M

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<sup>18</sup> Residence with a groom's mother's brothers on their matriland.

<sup>19</sup> The East Bantu speaking peoples who are best described are of the idiosyncratically patrilineal peoples of Zones J and S.

(Map 2). One is Colson (1951, 1958, 1961) who describes the matrilineal Plateau Tonga of what is now Zambia. She relates:

Clans are not corporate bodies. They own no property, have no ritual centers or leaders, and never on any occasion assemble as a group. At first glance they appear to be functionless... Inheritance, succession, provision and sharing of bridewealth, vengeance and a common ritual responsibility are functions of the group. A group does not hold a common estate in land or in movable property... Residence is usually virilocal but it is not otherwise determined by any rule which associates the husband residentially with a given body of kin...

(Colson 1961:40, 41,42)

The Bemba (Zone M) (Richards 1950, 1951) are described as matrilineal but little concerned with the avunculate. At least one Zone M group is patrilineal. The Nyakyusa, closely related to the Bemba, reside in herding groups organized around male age-mates (Wilson 1950, 1951) and residence is perhaps patrilocal. Wilson seems to describe actual patrilineal and mentions no matrilineal. Strong mother's brother – man's sisters child relationships are described for the Nyakyusa by Wilson.

For the Ila, another Zone M cousin of Bemba, Wilson (1950:236) relates a situation where:

It is a system which is described as matrilineal since clan membership is reckoned through the mother, and the avunculate is strong, but there is some evidence that the individual belongs to double descent groups, one patrilineal and the other matrilineal; succession and inheritance may take place from the father as well as the mother's brother and in the ancestral cult the patrilineal ancestors have precedence.

Fourshey (2002) reconstructs Proto Rukwa (Zone M), the ancestor of Wungu, Ndali, Nyakyusa, Malila, Nyiha, Lambya, Safwa, Mambwe, Lungu, Fipa, Nyamwanga, Pimbwe, Rungwa and Nyika, positing a matrilineal ancestral society.

Beyond Zone M, we have very little information about matrilineal East Bantu societies. But there is the case of the Yao (east of Lake Malawi, Guthrie Zone P, Map 2) (Richards 1950, Mitchell 1951, 1956) who are matrilineal and where chiefly succession is through the matrilineage and the avunculate.

Looking beyond East Bantu for some impression of life amongst matrilineal Bantu who have been *in situ* longer than any East Bantu group, we encounter Douglas's (1952, 1954) description of the Lele of Kasai (Zone C, Map 2) in what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As expected we find that she captures a matrilineal society which we maintain to be at a relatively late stage of matrilineality:

Lele kinship organization is weak and unstable, suffering competition from other forms of social grouping. The village is the political and ritual unit, but its population is fluctuating and, from a kinship point of view, heterogeneous. The most compact groups within the village are the cult societies and the men's age-sets, whose solidarity contrasts with the weakness of the matrilineal clans. The later are scattered by patrilineal<sup>20</sup> marriage, and their very dispersal contributes to the fluidity of residential ties. The main functions of clan membership are exercised by very small groups, sometimes only three or four adult men living in one village. They pay compensation for blood debts incurred by fellow members by transferring rights over clanswomen, and they exact blood compensation for the murder of members, allocating amongst themselves the wives so obtained from other clans. It is hard to judge whether this prime function of clan organization is a source of solidarity or disruption. All clan and kinship loyalties are weakened constantly by jealousy and sorcery accusations.

Douglas (1952:60)

The arrival of Bantu speaking people to Zone C began earlier than the 1000 BC of the East African Highlands. And still the Lele are matrilineal. But in a minimal and moribund

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<sup>20</sup> "Virilocal" in contemporary parlance.

way that wouldn't surprise Divale. The best explanation for the Lele's matrilineal institutions is that they are residual and from a matrilineal past which had more reason to be matrilineal. Certainly the Lele did not borrow this limited collection of matrilineal practices in some wave of sub-equatorial diffusion. Indeed, we might wonder why they remain matrilineal at all. Our first answer would be "because their neighbors still are" and that such societies may be collectively reluctant to restructure exogamy individually.

Our second answer comes from Divale's long (an average 1800 year) timeline for complete abandonment of matrilineality and is simply "cultural conservatism". By this model, tens of thousands of village palavers over Bantu speaking Africa in the last four millennia saw one and, incrementally, another matricentric practice abandoned. These customs are matters of law as understood by literate societies and are argued endlessly in village gatherings in preliterate societies. Precedents are upheld in matters of land inheritance and other practices of moment and the rights a child is born with are defended into the generations that follow. A third factor would have been the Bantu's Niger-Congo warrior schools<sup>21</sup>, their age sets, their rites of initiation and the consequent individual male opportunities for advancement in the society independent of one's matriline. Male rank and status may no longer follow the matriline but matrilineal exogamy continues to be practiced. Loss of matrilineality is also posited to have been slowed in Oceanic societies that developed male age-grades (Allen 1984). Those Oceanic societies seem to have developed age-grades locally and did not inherit them from their Proto Oceanic society past (Marck 2008). No one has ever suggested that Proto Oceanic society had

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<sup>21</sup> Marck (1997) argues that these were a feature of Proto Bantu (and thus Proto East Bantu) society.

male age-grade societies and the position taken here is that Proto Oceanic society had none.

### **The mother's brother**

Here we revisit the matter of the mother's brother as that topic exists in the works of Junod (1912 ) and Radcliffe-Brown (1924). We wish to recall that Junod wondered if the strong mother's brother institutions of the patrilineal Thonga in South Africa were due to a previous period of matrilineality. Radcliffe-Brown then held up the example of Tongan mother's brother institutions in Polynesia and noted that they were essentially the same as those of the Thonga and that there was no reason to believe Polynesians had ever been matrilineal. We leave off today with the knowledge that both the Thonga and Tongans had been matrilineal up to perhaps 2000 BP. So if the Thonga and Tongans can no longer be seen as possible examples of strong mother's brother institutions developing in the absence of past matrilineality, they can at least be held up as examples of societies in which strong mother's brother institutions persisted for as much as two millennia after matrilineality was abandoned.

### **Conclusion**

We began by emphasizing the central difference between the Proto East Bantu and the Proto Oceanic kin terms: Proto East Bantu had cross-cousin terms and terminologies of

prescriptive alliance (Marck et al. this volume) and Proto Oceanic did not (Hage this volume, Marck forthcoming). But it seems quite certain that both of these expanding farming peoples were matrilineal, with bifurcate merging parental generation kin terms and the human genetic evidence (Marck 2008) now persistently suggests that Proto Oceanic society was specifically matrilocal. Residence, descent and kin terms were perfectly concordant.

Divale (1974, 1984) is vindicated at every turn examined. He supplies us with a reason for matrilocality developing in migrant societies (a collective response to “external conflict” [conflict with their new home’s aborigines]). We find it a natural model for both the Proto Oceanic and Proto East Bantu cases – it doesn’t try to make water flow upstream as diffusionist and perhaps other models would require. Divale gives us a progression of how matrilineality then devolves (residence changes and then descent) and (Marck 2008) we see those processes at work in Oceanic speaking societies and (above) in our examples from Zone M amongst East Bantu speakers. Divale (1984) also gives us a timeline (an average of 1800 years between when a society becomes matrilocal and when that society has completely shed matrilineality) and note that East Bantu and Oceanic societies are not far off that age, some still matrilineal, others transformed perhaps long ago. Even the small difference in the age of Proto Oceanic (ca. 1000 BC) and Proto East Bantu (ca. 500 BC) seems to matter from Divale’s model’s perspective – it is the younger East Bantu group who still have more matrilineality than the older Oceanic group and, as our Bantu Zone M examples show, matrilineality is certainly devolving in that Zone rather than intensifying. Perhaps East Bantu societies would show

something more like Oceanic society variability if they, too, had the extra 500 years for matrilineality to devolve.

In addition to the possible conservative effects of male age-grade societies in all of East Bantu and here and there in Oceanic, regular extended absences of males are implicated in conserving/preserving matrilocality. In the East Bantu instance (regular male absences due to hunting), present ethnographic sources are inadequate to pursue the question systematically but in the Oceanic instance (regular male absences due to seafaring) it is clear (Hage and Marck 2002) that this has skewed Divale's cline quite systematically in Micronesia at least (only societies which have abandoned regular seafaring have abandoned matrilocality).

Proto East Bantu and especially Proto Oceanic provide convenient tests of Divale's (1974, 1984) migration and matrilocality model and affirm his main hypotheses. But our method has run its course and cannot be further applied. There are further data for neither East Bantu societies nor, in most instances, Oceanic societies that would allow the present sort of comparative study to expand.

## Appendix I: Proto East Bantu reconstructions<sup>22</sup>

Abbreviations used in this appendix are: P=parent, F=father, M=mother, G=sibling, B=brother, Z=sister, C=child, S=son, D=daughter, E=spouse, ms=man speaking, ws=woman speaking, e=elder, y=younger, x=cross, // =parallel.

### *Consanguines:*

\**cé-kódó* ‘grandfather (3s)’: D41:Konzo *sokulu* ‘PF(2s)’; G35:Ruguru *kaka sekulu* ‘PF’; J11:Nyoro *isenkulu*; J13K:Kiga *icenkuru* ‘PF’, *icenkuruza* ‘male ancestors’; M54:Lamba *shikulu*; R11:Ovimbundu *sekulu* ‘PF, PFB’; S10:Shona *sekuru* ‘PF(voc.)’.

*From Proto Bantu \*cé ‘F(3s)’ and \*kódó ‘adult, elder, senior’. See ‘father’ terms for 1s and 2s.*

\**nìnà-kódó* ‘grandmother (3s)’: J11:Nyoro *nyina-nkulu* ‘PM’; J13:Kiga *nyinenkuru* ‘PM, PPZ’; R11:Umbundu *maikulu (nyokulu)* ‘PM, PPZ’; S21:Venda *makhulu* ‘PP, PPG, EPP, EPPG, PPGE’; S41:Pondo *makhulu* ‘PP, EPP’; S42:Zulu *umakhulu, umamekhulu* ‘PM, PPZ’.

*From Proto Bantu \* máá ‘M’ and \*kódó ‘adult, elder, senior’. See ‘mother’ terms for 1s and 2s*

F21:Sukuma *mama* ‘PM’; F22:Nyamwezi *mama* ‘PM, PPZ etc.’; G11:Gogo *mama* ‘PM’; G12:Kagulu *mama* ‘female +2 relative’; G35:Ruguru *mama* ‘PM’.

G23:Shambala *wao* ‘PP, PPZ’; G34:Ngulu *wao*; G35:Ruguru *wao* ‘PM’.

N12:Nsenga *ambuya* ‘PP’; S10:Shona *ambuya* ‘PM’.

\**cé* ‘father (3s)’: F21:Sukuma *ise* ‘F(3s)’; F22:Nyamwezi *ise* ‘+1 male consanguines (3s)’; G11:Gogo *sewo* ‘+1 male relatives (3s)’; J11:Nyoro *ise*; J13:Kiga, J21 Nyambo *ice* ‘F’; J22:Haya *ishe* ‘F(ms)’; M54:Lamba *wishi*; M51-52:Ambo *usi*; S41:Pondo, S44:Ndebele *uyise* ‘F(3s)’. Cf. Guthrie (1970a:89).

*Proto Bantu and Proto East Bantu had suppletive possessives. The other singular forms were tààtá for first person (Guthrie 1970b:95) and có for second person (1970a:106).*

\**nìnà* ‘mother (3s)’: F21:Sukuma *nina*; F22:Nyamwezi *nina*; G11:Gogo, J11:Nyoro, J13:Kiga, J21:Nyambo, J22:Haya, M54:Lamba, M51-52:Ambo *nyina*; S41:Pondo, S42: Zulu, S44 Ndebele *unina* ‘M(3s)’. Cf. Guthrie (1970b:30).

*Proto Bantu and Proto East Bantu had suppletive possessives. The other singular forms were máá for first person (Guthrie 1970b:7) and nyòkò for second person (Guthrie 1970b:31).*

\**máá-dómè* ‘mother’s brother (1s) (lit.: “mother-male”): D41:Konzo *nyokulume* (2s); D61:Rwanda *marume*; F21:Venda *malume*; J11:Nyoro *nyinarumi* (3s); J13:Kiga, J21:Nyambo *nyinarume* (3s); N12:Nsenga *malume*; S21:Venda *malume*; S21:Basuto *malome*; S32:Lovedu, S41:Pondo *malume*; S42:Zulu, S44:Ndebele *umalume* ‘MB’. Cf. Guthrie (1970a:188), Schoenbrun (1997:97).

*See “mother” terms for second and third person singular. Curiously, where the first person singular is the common citation form for the MB term, the third person singular is the common citation form for the FZ term. Possibly there has been some difference in the frequency of use as terms of address.*

\**cé-n-kadí* ‘(3s) father’s sister (lit.: “father-female”): F21:Sukuma *sengi*; F31:Nilamba *shangáázi* ‘FZ’; G12:Kagulu *mai sangasi* ‘woman of first ascending

<sup>22</sup> This work benefited from unpublished materials supplied by Jean-George Kamba Muzenga from his collection of possessive paradigms for certain Bantu kin terms.

generation, of father's clan'; G23:Shambala *mnaa ngazi* 'FZ'; G34:Ngulu *mame sangazi* 'woman of father's clan, first ascending generation'; G35:Ruguru *shangazi, mai shangazi, mama shangazi*; R11:Ovimbundu *tatekai*; J11:Nyoro *isenkati*; J13:Kiga *cwenkazi*; J15:Ganda *senga*; J15:Ganda *sengawe*; J16:Soga *songa*; M54:Lamba *wisonkashi*; R11:Umbundu *tatekã*; M51-52:Ambo *usinkasi*; S21:Basuto *rakhali*; S32:Lovedu *rrakgadi*; S42:Zulu *ubabekazi*; S44:Ndebele *ubabakazi* 'FZ'. Cf. Schoenbrun (1997:99-100).

*See "father" terms for first and second person singular. This reconstruction is provisional. It attempts to account for the several forms that reflect \*sengi or something of the sort.*

\**kúǎǎ* 'elder same-sex sibling': F21:Sukuma *nkulu* 'eB'; F22:Nyamwezi *nkulu* 'e//G'; G12:Kagulu, G34:Ngulu *mkulu*; G35:Ruguru *kulu*; J11:Nyoro *mukuru* 'e//G'; J13:Kiga *mukuru* 'eG'; J15:Ganda *muganda omukulu* 'e//G'; J15:Ganda *muganda mukulu* 'eB(ms)'; J16:Soga *muganda omukulu* 'e//G'; J21:Nyambo *mukuru* 'eG'; J61:Rwanda *mu-kuru* 'eZ'; M54:Lamba *umukulu* 'e//G'; S10:Shona *mukuru* 'elder'; S32:Lovedu *moholo* 'eG'; S41:Pondo *mkhuluwe* 'eB(ms)'. Cf. Guthrie (1970a:308-309).

\*\**mununguna* 'younger same-sex sibling': F31:Nilamba *mununa* '//G'; G63: Bena *mununguna* 'yB(ms)'; S10:Shona *mununguna* 'y//G'.

*Given here with double asterisks as the above distribution does not allow assertion that the form occurred in Proto East Bantu.*

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*Other sibling term reconstructions were not accomplished. One might expect such terms as: 'cross-sex sibling', 'woman's brother' and 'man's sister'. Indeed such are found in many of the daughters but we found none to be cognate beyond a single Zone (in the small sample that extant descriptive data constitutes).*

*Also, we observe the following cognate set:*

A23:Kpe *ndome* 'xG'; A24:Duala: *ndome* 'B(ws)'; M54:Lamba *indume* 'xG'; M51-52:Ambo *ndume* 'B', *nkasi* 'Z'.

*Distributions such as this need not compel us to reconstruct Proto East Bantu as having "brother" from the word "male" and "sister" from the word "female" (PEB\*dǎmè and PEB \*kádí). Similar distributions are found if asking what Zones "husband" and "wife" are found with the "male" and "female" names as well. But one does not observe both meanings current at once in any living language. The "sibling" meanings are, perhaps, the more rare. Incidence is low and agreement local within Zones.*

*One might expect such terms as: 'cross-sex sibling', 'woman's brother' and 'man's sister'. Indeed such are found in many of the daughters but we found none to be cognate beyond a single or adjacent Guthrie Zones amongst the few languages beyond Zones J and S for which there is description. We observe, e.g., the following cognate sets:*

F22:Nyamwezi *ilumbu* 'xG'; G11:Gogo, G12:Kagulu *lumbu*, G34 Ngu:Ngulu, G35:Ruguru *lumbu* 'xG'.

J11:Nyoro *munyanya* 'xG'; J13:Kiga *munyanya*; J21:Nyambo *munyanya* 'xG'.

J15:Ganda *mwanyina*; J16:Soga *mwanhina* 'xG'.

\**bíádá* 'x-cousin': F22: Nyamwezi *myala*; J13:Kiga; J21:Nyambo *muzara*; J61:Rwanda *mubyara*; M54:Lamba *umufyala*; M51-52:Ambo *mufyala*; S21:Venda *muswala*; S21:Basuto *motsoala*; S32:Lovedu *motswala*; S42:Zulu *umzala*; S44:Ndebele *umza* 'x-cousin'.

Cf. Murdock (1959:383-4), Bastin (1971:36), Schoenbrun (1997:70-71).

- \**jánà* ‘child’: A23:Kpe *mwana*; F21:Sukuma *ng’wana*; F22:Nyamwezi, G11:Gogo, G12:Kagulu, G34:Ngulu, G63:Bena, J11:Nyoro *mwana*; J13K:Kiga *omwana*; J15:Ganda *mwana*; J21c:Nyambo *omwana*; M54:Lamba *umwana*; N12:Nsenga, M51-52:Ambo, S10:Shona, S21:Venda *mwana*; S42:Zulu *umtwana* ‘C’. Cf. Guthrie (1970:147).
- \**jìpóá* ‘man’s sister’s child’: G11:Gogo *mwihwa*, G12:Kagulu *mwihwa*, G30:Kwere *mwihwa*; G34:Ngulu *mhwa*; G35:Ruguru *mhewe*, *mpwawe*; G63:Bena *mwipwa*; J13:Kiga *omwihwa* ‘ZS(ms)’; J15:Ganda *mujwa*; J16:Soga *mwiwa* ‘ZC’; J21:Nyambo *omwihwa* ‘ZS(ms)’; M51-52:Ambo *mwipwa* ‘ZC’; M54:Lamba *umwipwa* ‘BS(ws)’. Cf. Guthrie (1970b:188), Schoenbrun (1997:86-87).
- \**jìjòkòdò* ‘grandchild’: F22:Nyamwezi, G11:Gogo *mwizukulu*; G23:Shambala *nwezuku*; G30:Kwere, G34:Ngulu *mzukulu*; G35:Ruguru *mjukulu*; J13K:Kiga *omuijukuru*; J15:Ganda *muzukulu*; J16:Soga *mwidhukulu*; J21:Nyambo *omuijukuru*; J22:Haya *mwíjukulu*; M54:Lamba *umwinshikulu*; N12:Nsenga *mzukulu*; M51-52:Ambo *musikulu*; S10:Shona *muzukuru*; S21:Venda *muduhulu*; S42:Zulu *umzukulu* ‘CC’. Cf. Guthrie (1970b:178).

### *Affines:*

- \*‘father’-*bíádá* ‘father-in-law (lit.: “cross-cousin’s father”): D41:Konzo *tatabyala*, G34:Ngulu *tate vyalu*, J13:Kiga, J21:Nyambo *icezara*, J11:Nyoro *isezara*, J15:Ganda *sezala*, M51-52:Ambo *usifyala*, S32:Lovedu *ratswale*, S42:Zulu *ubabezala*, S44:Ndebele *ubabazala* ‘EF’. Cf. Bastin (1971:36), Schoenbrun (1997:70-71).
- \*‘mother’-*bíádá* ‘mother-in-law (lit.: “cross-cousin’s mother”): D41:Konzo *mabyala*, G34:Ngulu *mame vyalu*, J13:Kiga, J11:Nyoro, J21:Nyambo *nyinazara*, J15:Ganda *nyazala*, M51-52:Ambo *nyinafyala*, S32:Lovedu *mmatswale*, S42:Zulu *umamezala*, S44:Ndebele *umamazala* ‘EM’. Cf. Bastin (1971:36), Schoenbrun (1997:70-71).
- \**kóì* ‘in-law’: D41:Konzo *mukwe* ‘DH’; J61:Rwanda *kwe* ‘EP, CE’; F21:Sukuma *nkwela* ‘EG, GE’; G11:Gogo *mukwe* ‘EP’, *mukwemulima* ‘CE’; G12:Kagulu, G34:Ngulu *mukwe* ‘affine not of one’s own generation’; G35:Ruguru *mkwe* ‘EP’; J11:Nyoro *mukoi*; J13K:Kiga *mukwe* ‘DH’; M54:Lamba *wukwe* ‘HG’; M51-52:Ambo *mukweni* ‘DH’; S42:Zulu *umkhwe-*, S44:Ndebele *umkwe-* ‘in-law’.  
This form meant “child’s spouse” and less certainly “spouse’s parent”. Schoenbrun (1997:91-92) gives \**kó* for ‘in-law’ citing Vansina (1990) and evidence of living languages. Cf. Guthrie (1970a:287) \**kó* ‘relative by marriage’, Bastin et al. (2003) *kóì*.
- \**káí* ‘wife’: E63:Old Moshi *mka*; F21:Sukuma *nke*; F22:Nyamwezi *nke*; G12:Kagulu *muke*; G33:Kwere, G34:Ngulu, G35:Ruguru *mke*; J15:Ganda *muka* ‘W’; M54:Lamba *muka-* ‘W of’. Cf. Guthrie (1970a:257, 270) *ká*, *ké*, Schoenbrun (1997:91) *ke*, Bastin et al. (2003) *káí*.
- \**dámú* ‘sibling-in-law’: G11:Gogo *mulamu* ‘WB, ZH (ms), ZH (ws), HZ, BW (ws), wife’s male cousins’; G12:Kagulu *mulamu* ‘affine, usually of ego’s generation’; G30:Kwere, G34:Ngulu, G35:Ruguru *mlamu*, G63:Bena *mulamu*, J11:Nyoro, J13:Kiga *muramu* ‘EG, GE’; J15:Ganda *mulamu* ‘WZ, HG’; J61:Rwanda

*muramu*, M51-52 *mulamu* ‘EG, GE’; S21:Venda *mulamu* ‘WB’; S21:Basuto *molamo* ‘HZ, BW’; S42:Zulu *umlamu* ‘in-law; S44:Ndebele *umlamu* ‘WB, WBW, WBC, WZ’. Cf. Guthrie (1970a:135), Schoenbrun (1997:73-74).

*Sources:*

A23:Kpe (Ardener 1956); A24:Duala (Ardener 1956); D41:Konzo (Taylor 1962); F21:Sukuma (Cory 1953); F22:Nyamwezi (Abrahams 1967); G11:Gogo (Rigby 1969); G12:Kagulu (Beidelman 1967); G23:Shambala (Winans 1962); G30:Kwere (Beidelman 1967); G34:Ngulu (Beidelman 1967); G35:Ruguru (Luguru) (Beidelman 1967); G63:Bena (Culwick and Culwick 1935); J11:Nyoro (Roscoe 1923); J13:Ciga (Edel 1957); J15:Ganda (Fallers 1960); J15:Ganda (Roscoe 1965); J16:Soga (Fallers 1960); J21:Nyambo (Edel 1957); J22:Haya (Dauer 1977); J61:Rwanda (Maquet 1961); M54:Lamba (Doke 1931); N12:Nsenga (Colson 1951); R11:Umbundu (Childs 1949); R11:Ovimbundu (McCulloch 1952); M51-52:Ambo (Stefaniszyn 1964); S10:Shona (Holleman 1952); S21:Venda (Kuper 1982, Stayt 1931); S21:Basuto (Ashton 1967); S32:Lovedu (Kuper 1982); S41:Pondo (Hunter 1936); S42:Zulu (Krige 1936); S44:Ndebele (Hughes and Van Velsen 1955).

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