

ral science courses which need the view of another discipline on humankind's intricate and subjective relationship to our environment.

The Garia: An Ethnography of a Traditional Cosmic System in Papua New Guinea

Peter Lawrence

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We are increasingly aware that Papua New Guinea is indivisible, and that an ethnography which supposedly deals exclusively with one of these cultures will answer theoretical questions about all of them. Although the diversity of these cultures is obvious, their family resemblance is no less compelling, though it is less easily demonstrated by our usual methods of analysis.

With this in mind, the late Peter Lawrence's very important book must be read as a somewhat general statement about New Guinea societies. As such, we must salute Lawrence's great versatility and honesty in constantly reappraising and revising his first perceptions. Lawrence's way of dealing with the religious and structural aspects of Garia culture has undergone notable transformations and acquired a contemporary awareness of the Papua New Guinea spirit world that has become the hallmark of the decade. As before, Lawrence subjects all of his ideas to the most severe empirical test possible — namely, his detailed data on the land tenure system. For this reason, the book will remain a model for others to follow.

Having paid Lawrence all these compliments, I must discuss the main theory of his book. Since this theory is enclosed within three separate rubrics whose appropriateness can no longer be assumed without debate, my discussion cannot help being somewhat polemical. The three rubrics are: descent (pp. 42-50), affinity (pp. 50-54) and special relationships (pp. 54-56). Descent retains the lion's share of space, though at a heavy price. An examination of Garia kinship terminology forewarns us of the difficulties of "descent" as a concept, and we are given three main rules. First, siblings of the same sex address each other as "*awai/amayai*," while those of the opposite sex address each other as "*ugi*." Lawrence keeps referring to "*awai/amayai*" as "brother" and to "*ugi*" as "sister," but this is a bad translation — or rather, the translation is correct only for a male speaker, and incorrect for a female speaker. Could Dr. Lawrence be an unrepentant male chauvinist? Secondly, cross-cousins call each other "*epei*," but children of cross-cousins of the same sex address each other as "sibling" (i.e., *awai/amayai* when of the same sex or *ugi* when of opposite sex). Thirdly, children of cross-cousins of the opposite sex address each other as "*epei*" (p. 38). As Lawrence states the last two rules with unintentional ambiguity, only later do we discover that the distinction which is being made refers to cross-cousins of the same sex and cross-cousins of the opposite sex (p. 46). We do not know of any full discussion of the theoretical significance of this particular way of subdividing the cross-cousin category, nor does Lawrence fully explore this point. However, while analyzing the Orokaiva and other Papua New

Guinea cultures, we are often struck by the essential ambiguity of the cross-cousin category: people of the same sex are the most desirable social companions, but when they are of the opposite sex, they are too close to marry, yet tend to become sexually involved with great regularity. Cross-cousins of the same sex are often dancing partners and often go out together to make sexual conquests. As Lawrence rightly points out, children of these first-degree cross-cousins are at the limit of the Garia "security circle." It is most interesting that at that level, they are marked as siblings (i.e., incorporated into the security circle), or as cross-cousins (i.e., *not* incorporated into the security circle), according to their linking parents' relative sex. The term "security circle" is borrowed by Lawrence from F.E. Williams (1930), who used it in analyzing Orokaiva society.

How does this help with a model for descent? Because of their exclusive guardian rights over both land areas and rituals which are "jealously" restricted to agnates, Lawrence treats the Garia as basically patrilineal. For most purposes, each individual is associated with a number of cognatic stocks, either on the basis of descent from males or on the basis of descent from females. As long as the degree of non-agnatic memberships is sufficiently close, Ego's security circle is composed of the sum of his stock memberships. In order to avoid perpetual discussion of "non-agnatic cognates," Lawrence adopts the new (though originally classical Latin) term "enates" from Fortes (1970:268). However, as Lawrence uses the term "enates," it means all persons linked to a patrilineal descent line, or claiming membership in a primary cognatic stock, through females" (i.e., not only sisters and mothers, but also wives, sisters-in-law and so on). Lawrence also describes the Garia as "members of mini-collectives" which he terms "patrilineages" (*faute de mieux*). This is how complicated the description of Garia society becomes when descent is regarded as the key principle.

Lawrence's discussion of affinity is much less clear. Following Meggitt (1965), Berndt (1964) and his own earlier analysis, Lawrence makes the Garia say: "We marry among those whom we fight." That is, their ideal is the distant marriage outside the security circle. At this point, one would like to see clear evidence for the following questions: What part of the community can really arrange these distant marriages? Are arrangements for distant marriages made by people from the better families? If the "stated rule is sometimes bent," by how much is it bent, by whom and how often? We are well aware that some societies in Papua New Guinea have this *ideology*, while others have the opposite ideology (i.e., prefer to marry very close-in). However, I am not sure whether there is a very great discrepancy in actual practice, and we lack demonstrations of any consistent pattern of distant marriages. Lawrence's discussion of land tenure leaves the impression of "gardens marrying each other"; hence the predominance of close-in marriages.

Although we are not told enough about these "special relationships," the possibility still exists that relations of descent and affinity as well as these "special relationships" form a single pattern along the lines suggested by Lévi-Strauss in 1984 ("clan, *lignée*, maison"). The advantage of such an hypothesis would be that the resemblance between the Garia system, the Sepik systems, the Orokaiva and so on might become much easier to recognize if we adopted a theory that does not reify descent.

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Elements de Grammaire et de vocabulaire de la langue ouest-groenlandaise
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Ce document est destiné aux Français qui désirent apprendre quelques rudiments de la langue ouest-groenlandaise. La rédaction d'un tel manuel répond au nombre croissant de Français séjournant plus ou moins longtemps au Groenland et qui, pour le plupart, n'ont pas accès aux dictionnaires et grammaires déjà existants qui nécessitent une connaissance de la langue danoise. Le manuel comprend deux parties : une grammaire qui expose le minimum indispensable de règles de coordination des suffixes terminaux, ainsi qu'une liste de quelques suffixes lexicaux (ou affixes) — un vocabulaire groenlandais-français et français-groenlandais. L'orthographe utilisée suit les règles de la nouvelle orthographe officielle. Toute la matière concerne la langue normalisée du Groenland de l'Ouest et ne touche pas celle du Groenland de l'Est.

Cette étude s'inspire, d'une part, des grammaires de référence de dialectes canadiens préparées par Louis-Jacques Dorais et, d'autre part, des cours de formation en langue ouest-groenlandaise par Keld Thor Pedersen, *Grønlandsk for begyndere, heft I og II* (Ministeriet for Grønland 1977). L'objectif spécifié présuppose que l'apprenti désire apprendre la langue à partir des canons de la pensée traditionnelle qui s'appliquent à la grammaire de sa propre langue. Il se peut que les catégories de la grammaire classique soient rassurantes pour toute personne qui a une formation française mais, hélas, faussement rassurantes. Les langues inuit polysynthétiques offrent plus de possibilités que nos langues européennes. Le mot se compose en discours selon le besoin de l'énoncé. Dans certaines circonstances de communication, un seul mot-phrase suffit sans amplification. Dans d'autres circonstances, l'énoncé se compose de plusieurs mots, et son style présente l'objet, le sujet et le prédicat dans cet ordre, l'ordre des éléments du mot-phrase composé. Du fait que