

CHAPTER 3

KIN LINKS AND LABELS

But when they enter into earnest, their Language is much more capable than our's, of whatever denotes Respect and Distinction.
Simon de la Loubère 1693: 54.

Kinship in Hua Kok coincides fairly closely in its main features with those described in the ethnography of Central Thai society (Blanchard 1957; Kaufman 1960; Lebar 1964; Riley 1972; Sharp et al. 1953; Soontornpasuch 1963). This literature is rather general in tone and so I propose to examine in greater detail those aspects most germane to the study of social organisation. If one is to single out any special feature of Thai kinship it is that there is no single set of clearly stated and effectively sanctioned norms of conduct between kin. In almost all those spheres of life which may be placed within the rubric of kinship, the range of variation in the behaviour of individuals occupying specified kinship positions makes generalisation and even the perception of order problematical. Only by reference to particular situations and the responses to these can the system - the order and regularities - of what we call kinship be revealed. My method, therefore, is to elucidate the structural principles used by informants and then examine what happened in particular situations, an approach which is facilitated by the range of situations being culturally limited. By examining the circumstances of a set of choices it is possible to specify important variables helping to determine participants' decisions. Thus the social and cultural milieu is to be conceived of as a set of defined restraints within which individuals make a series of unique decisions that, when compared with the decisions of others, are seen to be orderly, systematic and even predictable.

Kinship Linkage and the Growth of Hua Kok

The members of all households but that of the Chinese man and his family can be placed upon a single genealogy (Figure 2) with a total depth of seven generations. The manner in which this degree of interrelationship has been achieved provides a general perspective to the social organisation of the hamlet as well as a specific background to subsequent accounts of the use of kin terminology, marriage, marriage residence and the inheritance of house-sites.

The oldest living inhabitants of Hua Kok belong to the fourth generation of this genealogy. Khian, the last person belonging to the third level, died early in 1966 when about 96 years old. It was possible to locate only two couples belonging to the first generation, one of which is believed to have come from Vientiane though their names are now forgotten. This couple, and at least some of their eight children, lived in the vicinity of Bang Saphan and their grandchildren were the first descendants to migrate to Hua Kok. The other first generation couple are said to have settled in Hua Kok and are its first known residents. Their only recorded child, a daughter named Chaeo, continued to live in Hua Kok after marriage and her daughter Sit married a grandchild of the Lao couple from Bang Saphan who was called Pen. These earliest households were located in what is now the northern half of Hua Kok, on the west bank.

At level two, a childless couple named Tham and Phaeo settled in the southern half of Hua Kok. They adopted a daughter of Phaeo's sister and this girl, Urai, eventually married Ploi, another descendant of the couple from Vientiane, his mother being an elder sibling of Pen's mother. Informants said that Ploi came from Wang Thong and that although he had lands there they were not good. Surprisingly, it appears that the couple practised patrilocal or virilocal marriage-residence because their second child (Taeo, house 37) was born in Wang Thong before the move to Hua Kok. They were the first to settle on the east bank of the river, which their descendants continue to monopolise. Land on the west bank was also given by Tham and Phaeo to Oi, a daughter of Ploi and Urai. After the death of her husband Oi sold the housesite and associated land to Rang (house 47) who had married her elder sister, Ploi's and Urai's first daughter.

Pen who married Sit was the youngest of three children. He was eventually followed to Hua Kok by an elder sister, Khian. Khian was born in about 1870 and married a man reputed to have come from Bangkok. Outsiders to the region frequently did not live long in those days and he died soon after the birth of a daughter. His death might well have been caused by malaria which was endemic. Khian then became the minor wife of a local man and

continued to live in Bang Saphan, When her second daughter, Biab, was about five years old (circa 1909) the family moved to Hua Kok and set up their own house next to that of Pen. Sibling links were also the means by which the girl that Bang (house 13) married had moved to Hua Kok when her parents died. She and another sister, Phling (house 21), had joined their brother Chiak who was another early immigrant. From the early households of Sit and Pen, Khian, Chiak and his sisters, Ploi and Urai have evolved forty of the present forty-nine households which constitute Hua Kok. A further five households derived from another early immigrant couple, Chuang and Bat, can be placed on the genealogy because of the marriage of their eldest son to Phling, one of Chiak's sisters. Of the remaining four houses, one belongs to the Chinese (house 49), two were built by immigrants who can trace relationships via descent (house 48) or affinity (house 34) with the Lao couple, and the fourth contains the second wife of a man who married a woman from Hua Kok (house 25). [1]

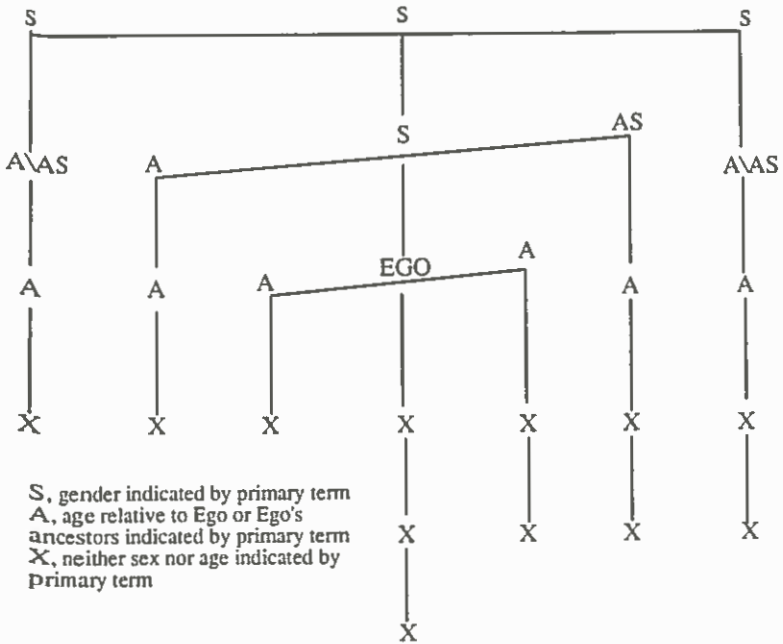
Systems of Address and Reference

The language of kinship supposedly describes genealogical connection but, since the attribution of kinship is a social process, social facts do not always coincide with the genetic. My interest in kin categories is not so much in the relationship between the social and genetic as in the management of terminology as a system of symbols and the factors governing its usage. In exploring the nature of these symbols and their use one must proceed beyond the narrow boundaries of kinship. Kin terminology in Hua Kok is associated with far more than kinship and affinity alone. The following discussion therefore includes much which is in itself extraneous to kinship but which is nevertheless functionally related in the situations examined.

A notable feature of the formal structure of the Thai kinship system, with its 'Hawaiian' cousin terminology (Murdoch 1965: 223), [2] is the stress placed upon age gradation and number of primary terms which are neuter in gender. Kin of Ego's generation are differentiated by their age relative to Ego or by descent from junior or senior siblings of Ego's ancestors. In the first ascending generation younger and elder siblings of Ego's parents are similarly distinguished. Sexual differentiation is not indicated by any of the primary terms for descendant generations, Ego's own generation, or those in the first ascendant generation who are junior to Ego's parents. In contrast, all primary terms for Ego's parents, parents' elder siblings and grandparents indicate gender as do the compound terms for great-grandparents. Even in a comparatively egalitarian part of Thai society like Hua Kok there are conceptually no equals and one of the most important bases of this inequality is age. In such a system the precision with which

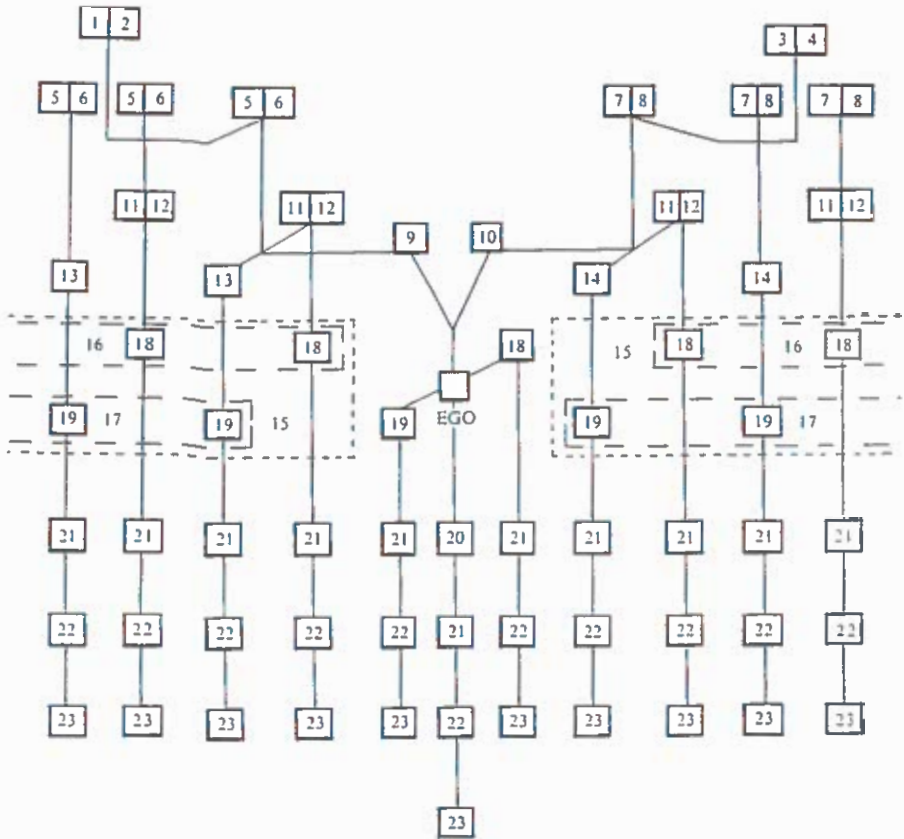
these distinctions of age are made must be greatest when the gap is narrow, within the same generation or in situations where such differences are given greater significance for the individual than is adequately indicated by generational distinctions alone, as is the case with parents' siblings. A general feature is thus the exactitude with which those who are senior or immediately junior to Ego are distinguished and the very broad categories for those who are clearly junior.

Figure 3. Age and sexual differentiation among kin: primary terms only



The key to Figure 4 gives the terms in everyday use. The only alternative that **must** be mentioned is *but*, child, used with the suffixes *chai*, son, and *ying*, daughter, in formal situations for reference only. *But* is Sanscritic in origin whereas *lik* has evolved, as have all the other terms normally used in Hua Kok, from roots common to all Tai speaking peoples (Benedict 1943). The nomenclature collected in Hua Kok is essentially that found in other

Figure 4: Kin terms: formal genealogical structure



- | | | | | | | | | |
|----|-----------|---|----|---|------------------|----|------|-----|
| 1 | pū-thuat | △ | 12 | ○ | pā | 21 | □ | lān |
| 2 | yā-thuat | ○ | 13 | □ | ā | 22 | □ | lān |
| 3 | tā-thuat | △ | 14 | □ | nā | 23 | □ | lōn |
| 4 | yāi-thuat | ○ | 15 | □ | lūk-phī-lūk-nāng | | | |
| 5 | pū | △ | 16 | □ | luk-phī | | | |
| 6 | yā | ○ | 17 | □ | lūk-nāng | | | |
| 7 | tā | △ | 18 | □ | phī | △ | chāi | |
| 8 | yāi | ○ | | | | ○ | sāo | |
| 9 | phā | △ | 19 | □ | nāng | △ | chāi | |
| 10 | māe | ○ | | | | ○ | sāo | |
| 11 | lung | △ | 20 | □ | lūk | △ | chāi | |
| | | | | | | ○ | sāo | |

descriptions of the Central Thai (Benedict, Bunnag, Kaufman, and Soon-tornpasuch). The differences which exist between the Central Thai and the Isan (Northeastern) and Lannathai (Northern) terminologies are mainly in dialect though Lannathai is structurally unlike Central Thai in possessing common terms for both paternal and maternal grandparents (Wijewardene 1968: 76-77) [3] and separate, sex distinguished terms for collaterals in the second ascending generation.

The distinction normally made between kin terminologies as forms of address and reference is sometimes misleading because of the exclusion from discussion of any use of kin terms where there is no genealogical connection or where the terms used do not accord with the known connections. These so called fictive and figurative uses of kin terminology (Pitt-Rivers 1968: 408-9) are all too frequently considered not as an integral part of a system of address and reference but as pertaining to something separate and distinct from 'real' kinship. In all kin terminologies people are classified within culturally significant categories that reflect the participants' concepts of kinship. In considering the use of terminology for reference anthropologists have focused upon the categories and criteria used for recruitment, for example, how siblings are classified, whether non-siblings are included in the same category, and so on. The importance of this function in the management of recruitment to kinship positions and groups varies, of course, with the extent to which descent constitutes an ideology for the ascription of social roles. Where the importance of this function is very limited, as in Hua Kok, one has to look elsewhere than to recruitment to social statuses in order to understand the significance of kin terms and their use.

The genealogical data that provides the information required to construct a list or chart of terms of reference is usually relatively easy to collect. Far more difficult to gather but of greater interest is information about the actual *use* of these terms of reference. For Hua Kok, it is one thing to give a structural account of the terminology and the principles upon which it is based and quite another to explain the use of terms in any given situation. In discussing such systems of usage one is concerned with the use of pronouns, nicknames, titles, and given names in addition to the kin terms which they may replace or with which they may be joined. Furthermore, these kin categories are used to refer to people with whom there is no known or even purported genealogical connection as well as to people for whom the genealogically correct term is ignored in favour of another.

It is probably because of the difficulties involved that the fictive and figurative use of terminology for reference is so frequently given cursory attention or even ignored in the literature on Thailand. One factor is that

there may be wide variations in individual practice, another is that selection of any term will in part be determined by the social situation in which it is used and vice-versa. The same difficulties are to some extent experienced in the study of forms of address, the kin terms used reflect the context and sentiments of the users. For these reasons a comprehensive study of terminological usage in Hua Kok would have been a major undertaking in itself. My intention here is to give as broad an outline as possible of local usages and situational determinants from which one may derive certain hypotheses about the symbolic 'messages' conveyed by reference to these categories and by their employment as titles of address. It must be emphasised that the following discussion concerns only Hua Kok though many of the practices described are certainly found in many other parts of the region and nation. [4]

Kin Terms

There are two somewhat different ways in which kin terms are used for reference. The first, which is the one usually discussed under the heading 'terms of reference', is concerned with the relationship as ordered by genealogical connection. The terms cited are those given in response to questions about what sort of kinsman of Ego is X. It is often assumed that, in the sphere of kinship at least, such a term specifies X's social identity in relation to Ego but this is not necessarily so. The answer to a query about X's relation to Ego may be 'specific', "He is my *nā*", yet the same speaker may reply to the question, "Who is that" with "That's *phī* X" and be observed to address X as *phī*. With this form of 'general' reference one is concerned with the use of kin categories in place of, or in conjunction with, pronouns, names, and other titles in normal everyday situations. When the form adopted for this general type of reference differs from the specific reference designation, which is the genealogically correct category, one is dealing with the 'fictive' use of kin terminology.

According to the formal scheme of kin terms outlined in Figure 4, persons of the category *lūk phī lūk nāng kan* [5] are *phī* if descended from elder siblings of Ego's ancestors and *nāng* if descended from younger siblings. This structural distinction is ignored in favour of recognition of actual relative age status, so that the child of a *nā* will be specified as *phī* if he or she is older than Ego. It is also appropriate to mention at this point that *lūk phī lūk nāng kan* is extended to those with whom exact genealogical connection is unknown and to those in the categories of *lān*, *lēn* and *lōn* not descended from Ego's own children or siblings. In fact *lūk phī lūk nāng kan* or simply *phī nāng kan* normally replace the word denoting kinship, *yāt kan*. The category of close kin which includes siblings and first cousins is spoken

of as *phī nāng chit kan* (or alternatively *phī nāng klai kan*) and that of distant kin as *phī nāng hāng kan*. However, unless this specific information is required the distinctions are little used. There is no formal point beyond which kinship is not recognised and for reasons discussed later kin terms continue to be used even when the exact genealogical linkage has been forgotten.

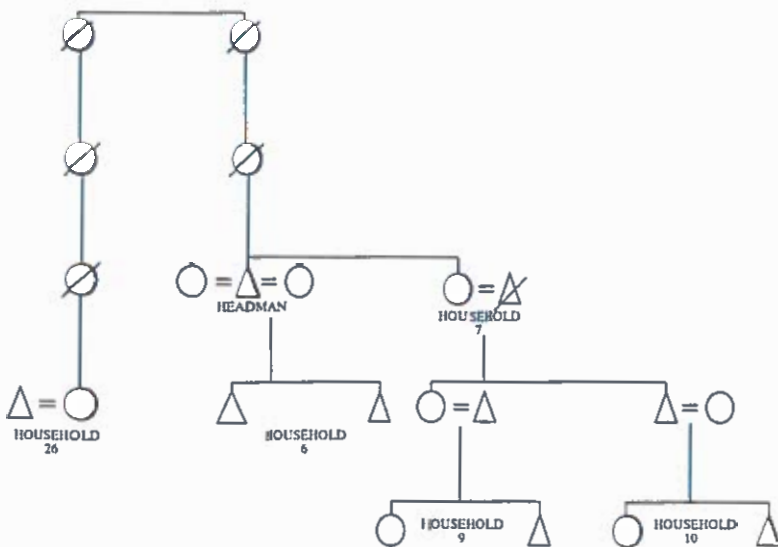
Apart from kin terms there are few other statuses which are regularly denoted by terms of address and reference. The most prestigious title given to a resident of Hua Kok is *phū yāi* which is used for the village headman, the *phū yāi bān*. All men who have left the Sangha after attaining the ideal of ordination are entitled to the honorific *thit* which is used either with a personal name or with personal name and kin term (*phī thit ...*) for both reference and address. When in the Sangha a man is spoken of simply as *phrā* by his family and others and is addressed either with this term or the polite pronoun *khun*. Although not at present used regularly to address or refer to anyone in Hua Kok the word *mā*, which is used for a wide range of medical practitioners, sometimes becomes the title by which an individual is popularly known. The prefix *nāi*, Mister, is used alone to address strangers or with a personal name when talking about someone to whom the speaker does not extend kin terms. The full title of *nāi* followed by personal and family names is used only for reference in formal situations: *nāng*, Mrs, and *nāngsāo*, Miss, appear not to be terms for address [6] but are otherwise used in a similar manner to *nāi*. Children, whether kin or unknown, are frequently addressed as *nū*, mouse, (also *ai nū* for males, *ī nū* for females) a practice which continues for girls beyond childhood to become a general term for young women in an inferior position such as waitresses. Personal names are used alone or with the prefixes *ai* and *ī* according to sex only in informal situations or towards inferiors, otherwise they are used with kin terms or titles such as *thit* or *nāi*. Surnames are generally irrelevant for anything other than official business and when questioned a number of young wives were actually ignorant of their husbands' surnames.

Beyond the idiosyncrasies of personal habit there are certain clearly discernible regularities. The most striking and important is the omission of kin terms for address and general reference when the one spoken to or about is of a generation junior to that of the speaker. Omission is also extended to Ego's own generation; younger siblings are rarely addressed as *nāng*, personal names with the prefix *thit* if appropriate or even *ai* and *ī* suffice in all conversations between adults. If still a child, *ai (ī) nū* or *ai (ī)* with a nickname may be used as befits sex and age. The most common situation in which people do address or refer to their juniors with kin terms is in the presence of young children, the practice of teknonymy serving to teach a

child correct verbal behaviour. Another readily observable tendency is for elderly people to become more informal amongst themselves in their use of language. Those who have known each other for most of their lives lapse into the use of personal names, often with the prefixes *ai* or *i* irrespective of who is the elder provided the age difference is not great (three or four years according to one informant).

When kin terms are used to address kinsmen who are older than the speaker the actual title used is likely to reflect the real age difference at the expense of genealogical accuracy. Of numerous examples I need cite only two (Figure 5). The wife of a rich and respected farmer (house 26) is a generation junior to her kinsman the headman. As both she and her husband are older than the headman they address him as *phū yāi* and he reciprocates with *phī*. It also happens that the headman's younger children are about the same age as the grandchildren of an elder sister. A discussion with his wives elicited the view that these grandchildren should ignore such intergenerational terms as *ā* and *nā* for the headman's children but retain the correct forms of address towards themselves, that is, *yāi* when related through a daughter of the headman's sister, and *yā* when through her sons. Such modifications emphasise the significance of terminology as an age-ranking system and the importance attached to the choice and use of terms which enable the actors to cope more comfortably with the face-to-face relationships in which they find themselves.

Figure 5: Genealogical relationships and the manipulation of kin terms



In addition to adjustments deliberately designed to reflect on-going relationships more accurately, other unconscious alterations also occur. Although kin terms are used so extensively genealogical information is little valued. Most individuals have only a limited knowledge of the subject which is reflected in the shallow depth of the genealogy (Figure 2). The oldest living inhabitants belonged to the fourth of the seven generations about whom information was available. Women tended to know more of their genealogies than men but sometimes even they were ignorant of, or could not remember, anything more of their grandparents than their names. Although kin and marriage ties are recognised between the members of all Hua Kok households but one, the exact lines of the relationship are frequently confused. In several cases genealogical connections are claimed on the basis of the address patterns used by parents or grandparents. A common result is structural amnesia and the usual form it takes is to claim that first cousins were true siblings. The other recorded form was one in which an affinal tie was thought to be cognatic (between households 6 and 34).

Affinal Terms

The specific reference terms for husband and wife are *phūa* (polite alternative *sāmī*) and *mīa* (alternative *phanrayā*). In referring to his wife's kin a husband should add *mīa* to the terms she uses; she should add *phūa* to the terms appropriate to her husband, for example, *phī phūa*. People married to kin of Ego in the same and descending generations are distinguished by the suffixes *khōei* for men and *saphai* (sometimes *taphai*, for example, *phī taphai*) for women which are added to the terms used towards their spouses, for example, *lān khhōei* for a nephew-in-law. The term for step-parent consists of the words for parents' younger siblings (*nā*) added to *phā* or *māe* (*phā nā*, *māe nā*). Couples related by the marriage of their children are *dong kan*, and one's child's mother- and father-in-law are *māe dong* and *phā dong*. The terms for a man's mother and father-in-law are *māe yāi* and *phā tā* respectively, while for a wife's they are *māe phūa* and *phā phūa*.

Attention is not usually drawn to the quality of affinity. People are frequently spoken of as kin when in fact the link is by marriage. Affinal terminology is also little used in modes of address except for forms used by married couples towards one another. When there are children an individual is said to *tām lūk khao*, follow his children, and address his (or her) spouse's siblings teknonymously. If there are no children a husband should follow his wife, her elder siblings should be addressed as *phī* but if they are younger than Ego this is unlikely in view of the general emphasis on the accurate rendition of age differences already noted. If very young, wives' junior siblings are addressed and referred to by such fairly vulgar terms as *ai ...* or *nū*; as

they mature the use of given names predominates. Informants insisted that to address the spouses of kin by affinal terms was a Lao custom. [7] Parents-in-law are more frequently referred to simply as *phā* or *māe* rather than *phā tāt/māe yāi* or *phā phūa/māe phūa*, though one informant spoke of his father-in-law (Rang, house 47) as *phā thao*, old father [8] and *tia* Rang. The latter was also used by Rang's grandson's wife, and was explained as being because Rang was of Chinese extraction.

Husband-wife terminology is notable for the wide range of available alternatives. Some are more correct than others, some are distinctly impolite. There is no prescribed usage and the terms used by a couple depend largely on individual choice. The choices made may consequently reflect something of their users' marital relationship or the social context. The main overall trend is that the longer the time a couple is married the greater the tendency to use informal, vulgar terms.

i	<i>māe ī</i> ...	<i>mae ai</i> ...	(with child's name)
ii	<i>mae</i> ...		(with wife's name)
iii	<i>māe mung</i>		
iv	<i>nāng</i>		
v	<i>yāi</i>		
vi	<i>nāi</i>		
vii	...		(wife's name)
viii	<i>ī</i> ...		(with wife's name)

The first example is another instance of teknonymy, mother of our child ..., the child referred to being the eldest. Numbers i) and ii) can be used only when there are children but number iii), consisting of the word for mother with the pronoun *mung*, you, may be used when there are no children. *Mung* is a somewhat vulgar pronoun when used alone but in this combination the full address title is considered "good". *Nāng* is considered to be more polite than *yāi* which is "hardly good". A wife is probably still fairly young if called *nāi*, tiny, a common way of addressing young women and children. Whereas *nāi* is still acceptable, to call a wife by her name alone is "not good" though many do so, and to resort to the name preceded by the female classifier *ī* is uncomplimentary and often a sign of displeasure.

The similar range in the terms used by wives to husbands is more readily ranked in terms of politeness. *Phī* is the most correct and respectful form that can be used. Where there are children many resort to teknonymy; if the child is still a baby the terms may be *phā (māe) ai (ī) ot (ot - a newly born child)*; later the formula may be *phā (māe) ai (ī) nū*. [9] The use of *phī* towards husbands differs from that to elder siblings in that the husband's

personal name is not attached although the honorific *thit* was, in one case, added. Even if a husband is younger than his wife as sometimes happens she should still call him *phī*. *Tā*, while not as respectful as the *phī* and *phā* forms, is frequently used. The word *kāe* is not a kin term but a second or third person pronoun. Other than among intimates its use is generally derogatory (Haas 1964: 42). As for use of the name alone this was described as *yāp nāi*, a little rude.

i	<i>phī</i>		
ii	<i>phā</i> ...		(with husband's name)
iii	<i>phā ī</i> ...	<i>phā ai</i> ...	(with child's name)
iv	<i>phā mung</i>		
v	<i>tā</i> ...		(with husband's name)
vi	<i>kāe</i>		
vii	...		(husband's personal name)

The Figurative Use of Kin Terminology

The employment of kin terms where there are no ties of consanguinity or affinity is but one of several forms of fictive kinship which occur in Hua Kok. There is also the inaccurate or speculative use of terms to one considered a kinsmen though the linkage be unknown and the incorporation of kin terms into the names and titles of religious phenomena. In distinguishing between figurative and fictive kinship Pitt-Rivers classifies instances of those genealogically related in one way who are addressed with forms appropriate to another as fictive. In the Thai case, though, it seems more accurate to treat these instances as another form of figurative usage to which they conform in "implying a quality of behaviour rather than a status" (Pitt-Rivers 1968: 408). [10] Indeed, one may question the conceptual assumptions implicit in the distinction drawn by Pitt-Rivers in that within the Thai context the extent to which kin terminology specifies jural roles and claims upon social statuses is very limited. Even where kin terms are used in strict accordance with ascriptive ideology the importance of kin terminology lies in other than the jural domain.

Phā is included in the names of famous images of the Buddha and popular titles of respect for bikkhus, for example, *luang phā ačhān*. *Māe* is used for certain non-Buddhist supernatural beings such as *māe phosop*, the Rice Mother. Generally, the terms *phā* and *māe* are not used figuratively though an instance was recorded where grandparents used the words *phā* and *māe* to refer to themselves and were addressed as such by grandchildren living in the same house. This occurred even though the children's real parents were also resident and themselves addressed as *phā* and *māe*. Such a usage throws

further light on the importance placed upon "quality of behavior", in this case at the expense of the formal status differences of those involved. [11] Finally, it appears that sometimes local strong men are referred to and addressed by the term *phā* though no such individuals resided in the vicinity of Hua Kok. [12]

When first and second ascending generation kin terms are applied to unrelated persons the forms chosen are those which would be apt should they be related through Ego's mother. It is the same when kinship is recognised but the linkage is unknown. Words indicating exclusive linkage through one's father do not appear to be used figuratively.

Conclusion

The functions of kin terminology in Hua Kok differ significantly from those in societies with large lineal descent groups. Other than within the nuclear family genealogical ties are not associated with sets of sanctioned rights and duties. In these circumstances the use of kin terms alluding to such ties may be far freer because it imputes no claim to major resources or jural roles. Consequently it is influenced by factors which would otherwise be submerged, such as relative age and sentiment. Thai kin terminology therefore offers a means of symbolically expressing important moral values such as oldness, affection and respectability which are not immediately derivable from genealogical connection.

The above by no means adequately explains the use of kin terms in this way and one has to look at what alternatives are available. A feature of the resort to kin terms requiring emphasis is the extent to which they are employed pronominally. Elders refer to themselves by a combination of kin titles and personal names, or even by titles alone. The practice may serve to inculcate correct usage in the young but probably more important is the message conveyed about the state or even the aspirations the speaker has of the relationship. The normal pronouns offer the opportunity to express various degrees of formality and hierarchy but a word that implies informality and intimacy in one situation is rude and even insulting in another. In these circumstances kin terms have the advantage of indicating certain positive values lacking in pronouns. Of course, pronouns are by no means totally avoided and play an important part in both influencing and reflecting the structure of relations. The pronouns *kū*, I, and *mung*, you, can be used in ordinary conversation with a child whereas their use when speaking to elders can be very insulting indeed. Thus, on such occasions as when a person is angry or disgusted with another, *kū* and *mung* are used exclusively with great effect as is the word *man*, it, used in the third person.

In the foregoing discussion the extent to which generationally correct terms are ignored in favour of age recognition reinforces the impression that a major function of terminology is ranking people by age though such an explanation is clearly incomplete. A second major function, especially when kin terms are used for non-kin, is that they establish a normative pattern for a relationship in which the terms employed affirm the appropriateness of sentiments of warmth and proximity which are the ideal of kinship. It has been suggested by some that the figurative extension of kin terminology matrilaterally is a reflection of the inferior status of woman (Bunnag 1973: 13-14). It could be that relations derived through one's father are more authoritarian than those traced through one's mother and that, due to the matrifocal bias in Thai society, contact with maternal kin is likely to be both less formal and more frequent than with paternal kin.

One may conclude that a third major value embodied in the terminological system is that it facilitates interpersonal relationships by putting achieved relations into the guise of ascribed kin ties with which are associated a series of positive values engendering good fellowship and respect. Indeed, the use of kin terms is a means of showing respect (*nap thū*) and it is said that where they are used one must not cheat (*mai tong kāng*) but instead behave as if the relationship was one of true kinship (*tong tham yāng pen yāt kan thē thē*).

Knowledge of the links which join people in the area is imprecise and unimportant to participants: what is important is that the assertion of kinship provides a *suitable* framework for inter-personal relations. [13] Another aspect of this use of symbol-bearing labels is that the quality of affinity is frequently ignored and made into a bond of kinship. It seems particularly significant that the terms used between husband and wife are those of kinship or kinship through their children (tekonymy) and never, apparently, of affinity itself. [14] The notion that a wife should call her husband *phī* may seem a little startling but in other respects is entirely appropriate to Thai marriage in making recourse to the closest and least unequal of all kin ties while simultaneously acknowledging the husband's seniority.

It is evident from the foregoing that the main problem of analysis lies not so much in the system of classification itself as in relating the ideas formulated in terms of kinship to the situations in which they are expressed. What emerges especially clearly is that genealogy and kin terminology are of relatively minor importance in functioning as an ideological charter of ascribed social relations, whereas their significance in constituting a means of ordering used in the expression of a social morality is readily apparent.

Notes to Chapter 3

1. The actual development of the hamlet was a little more complicated than indicated here. A number of other couples moved to Hua Kok but either left no resident issue or else a single daughter married to someone already represented on the genealogy.
2. One might also add that the following features normally associated with Hawaiian terminology are found in Thai society, bilateral descent, limited polygyny, the 'bilocal' extended family, generation terminology for aunts and nieces, bilateral extension of incest taboos and kindreds (Murdock 1965: 228).
3. Nor does Wijeyewardene make any distinction between maternal and paternal junior siblings. However, according to Kingshill who worked in the same province these terms are the same as those in the Central Thai system, *nā* and *ā* respectively. In other respects the system Kingshill reports is structurally identical with Wijeyewardene's description (Kingshill 1965: 235-37).
4. Treatment of the topic on a national basis would also require appreciation of the variables arising from geographical dispersal and the cultural differences between regions, the rural-urban dichotomy and the existence of a system of social stratification which associates linguistic usage with rank.
5. When speaking of someone in this category informants add the suffix *kan*, a reciprocal pronoun conveying the meaning together, mutually, etc.
6. The only exception of which I am aware is the use of *nāng* as one of a range of terms of address used by a husband to his wife (cf. Affinal Terms).
7. Lao in the nearby hamlet of Kok Mai Daeng were reported as using *phī phai* (an abbreviated form of *phī saphai*) to address the wives of elder brothers.
8. A similar usage for women was recorded when an informant stated that after her divorce her son went to live with his *māe kāe*, that is, his *yāi*. *Kāe* (low tone) is another word for old; *thao* and *kāe* are combined to form the word used for go-betweens in marriage negotiations and for businessmen (*thaokāe*).
9. Resort to teknonymy between spouses need not be reciprocal. One who was addressed as *phā ai* ... by his wife called her *nāi*.
10. The only forms of fictive kinship which occur in Hua Kok are when children are adopted.

11. In this particular case (recorded in 1975) the father spent little time with the children and one of the 'grandmothers', the headman's childless wife, had been closely involved in rearing (*liang*) the children, especially when the parents were away in a field house in Kok Mai Daeng during the agricultural season. This childless woman was also called *māe* by the children of her co-wife whom she had helped rear.

12. Also recorded in 1975, the man in question lives in the neighbouring district of Phrom Phiram. He is described as a *nak lāeng* (an indomitable person: rogue, gangster, hoodlum, thug. Haas 1964: 261).

13. A man (house 34) moving to Hua Kok in about 1961 asserted that he was a relative of the headman who he addressed as *tā*. This claim to a tie he could not document represented no special claim on the headman. Rather, it offered the new settler a means of integrating himself and his family into the life of Hua Kok since it implied some kin or affinal bond with almost everyone else in the hamlet.

14. The term *nāng*, which is used by husbands towards their wives, refers to the wife's married status and not to the specific affinal relationship between the speaker and his wife.