

social positions with rights approaching exclusivity. The boundedness of Tait's kin groups (clans) is precisely their conceptualization as estates in the face of the holder-heir model (Goody 1971). As noted, normative succession/inheritance of superordinate kin-roles truncates the local group. It is this common origin of "owner of the people" and "master of the earth" which allows their appearance as an autonomous complex.

In the instances of the "owner of the people" and the "owner of the earth" forming a clan, the corporate estate¹⁸ is unitary. However, the relationship is hierarchical. The "owner's people" are superior to their counterparts. It is perhaps here that one may speak of substance or the potential for its appearance. In this relationship the two maximal lineages are contraposed and do not constitute compatible marital estates. Marriage as primary in the organization of human relations is supplanted in the contrapuntal clan as dependency between the designated units. Personal possessions are sought elsewhere not in intra-village affinal prestations. Contrapuntality is determined by socially differentiated transaction. This is an acknowledgement, not exclusively of generalized heterogeneous interest, but relationship conceptualized as hierarchy. Superiority logically entails a differentiation of labour and transaction internal to the localized kin group and supports heterogeneous individual and bilateral interests, including markets and relations of debt and credit generally. The division of roles belonging to the estate have autonomous values. The statuses of the two use their perceived value. Other forms of kin group or corporate estate organization such as the "unitary" and "compound clan" present compatible marriage estates in that there is no socially differentiated transaction. The gross "partibility" of property demonstrated in succession is constitutive of partibility in social relationships. The contrapuntal clan, at one level, is a local model of society founded on disjunction, the disjunction of jural delineation of some statuses at the expense of others, some political, others mystical and moral¹⁹ such as those of the earth

cult. That is, "earth's people" is not only a political idiom indicating exclusion from office.

In the light of pre-fissiparous selection, the person may be constructed as having, or being identified with physical, real, or mystical assets, which may or may not be transactable, or subject to different forms of transaction, or as excluded from such assets, or claim to them. In this way ego can be looked upon by others as part of or divorced from such interests or interests expressed by the objects.

The changes indicated in the antithetic quality of previous axes of the diagrammes (Figs. 1-4), represent contextual shift. Fig. 5 deals with the interplay of how ego views others', or some others', interest or disinterest and how others, or some others, are interested or disinterested in ego. Interest or disinterest subsumes conflict and common objectives. Interest or disinterest by one or the other or both parties may be deconstructed as religion, politics, kinship, economics, etc. Role is constitutive of the network of perceived interests at any given historical/situational juncture. Local modeling of society occurs in the context of the contrapuntal "clan." It is homologous with the village, the roles of "owner of the people" and "owner of the earth," including shrines and other integuments. The weakness of the village is its permanence of location. This permanence is exemplified in the rigidification of territoriality and the imposition of the ideology of lineality on key role complexes. It cannot undergo fission and remain a "village." The village implies administration in support of an economic territory, a convincing ownership. It is the dissonance between contraposed village and acephalous clan. Allocation of land in one has no convincing economic context while in the other such considerations can be entertained.

The unitary and compound clan exhibit the potential partibility of the estate: The fact that one may have compound clan districts is proof of this. The partibility of the estate at some point corresponds to marriage between its "lineages." The formally opposed elements of the contrapuntal clan are exogamous and the "territory" is not partible. The first represents general structural equality, the second, potential inequality. On an inter-district level the political relationship between clans of

18 Corporateness as it is used here does not carry with it implied permanence. It refers to a gross materialism. It cannot, however, be dismissed absolutely as in Verdon (1983: 2). It is reduced to sheer ownership since it is not an activity of a group.

19 The use of morality and ethics, although they are paramount in any discussion of the Northern Region groups, is beyond the scope of the present article. It can be approached at several levels, however, the one which I prefer is exemplified in Leach (1954: 10): "Action which is meritorious according to Shan ideas may be rated as humiliating according to

the *gumlao* code. ... This sounds difficult, but the reader need not imagine that such uncertainty is by any means unusual; in our own society the ethically correct action for a Christian business man is often equally ambiguous."