Consumer Notice

1. This is a rough draft. That means criticism is even more welcome than usual. As it stands it's maybe overly technical in bent, choppy in prose, and needs more worked-out examples and suggestions about the "regional differences" continually alluded to. That's what I think, anyway, and we'll work on that, if other readers with fresh eyes take a look at it.
2. This is noncanonical material. If you're a purist, even reading this far has been a sordid waste of time.
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4. Thus any resemblances to Tekumel canon, living or buried, could be regarded as coincidental.
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Working Notes on Marriage Patterns & Practices in Tsolyanu

GENERALITIES

The Tsolyani are marriage-mad. It is expected that every adult is married, or at least wanting and trying to get married. Marriage is the glue and nails that hold together the many elements and myriad participants in Tsolyani society – without its bonds, economic life would cease, political structure would collapse, social aggression and violence would flare out of control, and the world would end in anarchy, chaos, madness, and despair. To live a fully human life as a Tsolyani, you must be married. Your wife doesn't need to bear children, and might be dead, or have a penis; but you gotta have her.

What exactly is meant by "marriage", though? For the purposes of this article it will be defined as an explicit agreement between two kinship units to cooperate in their reproduction through the socially recognized union of at least one member from each of the units. Marriage exclusively limits "legitimate" sexual intercourse to one's spouse (however strictly or, more often, loosely observed), and more importantly, it defines legitimate lines of descent from generation to generation, guiding inheritance and the allocation of wealth and power in the next generation.

For purposes of this article, the viewpoint assumed is that of patrilineal Tsolyanu, not the aberrant northern parts of the empire where descent is often reckoned matrilineally. Nevertheless, for the most part the descriptions given here could be applied also to the matrilineal north by reversing the gender markers (e.g., substituting "male" for "female", "matrilineal" for "patrilineal", "wife" for "husband", etc.) though this is misleading in many points and may create a falsely "matriarchal" conception of northern Tsolyanu. The kinship structures, family patterns, and social organizations of this part of the empire demand separate investigation and description, and are specifically not covered by this article.

Also, in this article the "ego" or "point of view" is to be considered to be male, unless otherwise specified.

<u>Personal Functions of Marriage (for a husband, at least)</u>

- Legitimizes children;
- Secures sexual access;
- Assures necessary balance of division of labor within household;
- Allows for acquisition and affirmation of prestige and status within the community.

<u>Social Functions of Marriage (for communities and society at large)</u>

- Reduces sexual competition between individuals and social groups, thus limiting a source of social conflict;
- Links families and households together by necessitating cooperation (or at least non-belligerence), reduces violent conflict, and helps provide individual units with sources of outside support in times of need or unexpected crisis;
- Increases the political interdependence of minimal social units through obligatory exogamy.

Marriages in Tsolyanu are almost invariably "arranged marriages". Neither the bride nor groom has a say in the selection of their future spouse; rather the decision is made by one's parents, often considerably influenced by their own siblings and parents. For a man, when it comes to second, third, and additional marriages, he is typically older and has more power and wealth than when he was young, and he accordingly he has more say in whom else he might choose to marry.

The arranged nature of marriages in Tsolyanu is due not merely to the "importance of the clan" as such, but the young age at which (first) marriages need to be negotiated and the relatively high cost of doing so (more on this below). A young person is not considered mature and experienced enough to select a mate himself (or herself), nor even capable of funding such an undertaking on his own in the majority of cases. In any case, romantic love and even compatibility (psychological, aesthetic, or sexual) are rarely considered to be primary criteria in selecting a marriage partner. Pre-existing relationships with the family in question, their lineage, location of residence, status level of the lineages or households, their wealth, the personal prestige of the individuals in question, and other kinship bonds between the families: all these are instead the things that a Tsolyani family looks at when considering whether someone is a good match for their young bachelors and maidens.

In fact, the Engsvanyali legal code strongly encourages arranged marriages. Under it, marriage is prohibited unless the "senior members of the houses" give their "explicit consent and blessing" to the union. (How these two quoted phrases are interpreted varies widely among the various schools and traditions of law that descend from the Engsvanyali age, of course.) Thus in Tsolyanu, a young couple crossed in love simply can't elope together; there is no acceptable way they can be legally married without their families' approval.

Tsolyani disapproval of non-arranged marriage runs deeper than simple collectivism and paternalism. It is seen as psychologically damaging as well – the intense emotional forces at play in a relationship founded on romantic love, when combined with the institution of marriage, are considered to be socially isolating, separating people from their families and friends. It reverses the natural order of human interaction, the Tsolyani think: a relationship comes first, and out of it an emotional bond later grows.

INCEST & SEXUAL RESTRICTIONS

Tsolyani society is widely regarded as sexually permissive, or even promiscuous. No human culture, in reality, gives a person free sexual access to anyone who is (or could be) a potential sexual partner. Though limitations and restrictions vary widely from society to society, they always are present – legal, social, and moral.

For example, it is already well-known that the "good clan-girl" (i.e., the vast majority of Tsolyani women) are expected to be sexually faithful to their husbands. They are not,

however, expected to be virgins before marriage. In many cases they are also not required to be celibate as widows, though this is fairly widely expected of them. Tsolyani men, on the other hand, have no such requirements placed on them in terms of sexual continence.

In many areas of Tsolyanu, perhaps the majority of the empire, children of many households and lineages are raised together in their clanhouse, sharing a dormitory. There is considerable variation in how this is physically arranged: in some places a given clan compound has only one collective "nursery" in which all children of all ages live; others may divide the children's dormitory into two or three buildings according to age group but not sex; others do segregate the sexes' formal dormitories but without the expectation of "exclusive space" in practice; many others, especially in larger or more internally stratified clanhouses, have several different children's dormitories specific to individual lineages or groups of allied lineages. In most clanhouses, children are expected (and encouraged, in some cases) to experiment sexually with one another and carry out a number of sexual liaisons prior to marriage. This is regarded as providing them experience and prepare them – emotionally as well as physically – for married life. Pregnancy resulting from such liaisons is always to be avoided – unmarried teenage girls are obliged to take contraceptive drugs, and either abort or secretly give up the infant for adoption if they should fail. Thus, premarital sex is approved and encouraged for girls, but premarital pregnancy highly stigmatized.

Sexual experimentation with other children from outside one's own dormitory is strongly discouraged and frowned upon. Likewise, sexual contact with adults is generally forbidden across the board. These strictures are largely due to the Tsolyani emphasis on rank, combined with generalized mild xenophobia. No parents want their children associating with people of significantly different statuses or origins – let alone forming attachments with them! People from outside the clanhouse certainly qualify as dangerously inappropriate, and so do adults: age and status are closely linked in Tsolyanu. As mentioned, larger and more stratified clanhouses may contain lineages or groups of lineages that feel they are distinct enough in status that their children should be kept somewhat separate from those of other lineages, and encouraged to socialize amongst themselves. This gives rise to multiple "semi-private" children's dormitories in a given compound. For the genuine elites, their children are raised more or less within their parents' household, and they may have much more limited contact with other children.

[Sex with slaves: for male children vs. female]

Like all human societies, Tsolyanu also has incest taboos. These are prohibitions on sexual intercourse with certain categories of close relatives. How the category is defined again varies widely from society to society. In Tsolyanu, though, it can generally be defined as "those belonging to your own lineage, or who are members of your natal household". Because Tsolyanu reckons descent unilinearly, one or the other of your parents is not a member of your own lineage. Tsolyani incest taboos thus permit sexual contact with some much closer relatives than our own would tolerate (e.g., half-siblings by your off-descent parent, cross-cousins), while forbidding sexual contact with a much

wider category of people that we would probably consider barely related at all (anyone sharing the same "last name"!).

[Note on lineage fission frequently being driven by need/desire to establish marriage bonds between two families for whom an incest taboo exists]

In general, Tsolyani also disapprove of intergenerational marriage and even any kind of intergenerational sexual intercourse, unless the parties are clearly unrelated – i.e., not only from different lineages, but different clanhouses and not connected indirectly by marriage bonds. In effect, it is only truly acceptable (tasteful) where it is thus impossible to state categorically whether two people belong to the "same generation" or not anyway. The difference in status between successive generations is considered deeply significant, if not fundamental, and improper to bridge in this way: it is thought to disorder the fundamental structure of the family and to confuse the ancestors as well. Note that there is no objection to sex and marriage between people with large differences in age – just so long as it can't be shown that they do belong to different generations.

[EXAMPLE: Intergenerational liaisons]

PREFERRED PATTERNS

In human societies there are two different types of rules of marriage partner selection, operating simultaneously. The first type are rules of exogamy, which require that marriage be outside some defined group. The second type are rules of endogamy, requiring that marriage be within some (larger) defined group. Endogamy rules are usually more flexible and broad compared to exogamy rules; they indicate who is preferred or potentially acceptable. Rules of exogamy are comparatively strict and rigid; the incest taboos mentioned above are among them.

A Tsolyani youth must find a marriage partner who is not part of his or her exogamous group but who is within his or her endogamous group. Thus, marriage to overly close relatives is forbidden, while overly distant or alien outsiders are also discouraged as spouses.

Tsolyani culture defines a the preferred choice of spouse to be a specific type of cousin – that is, certain relatives who are not forbidden by exogamy rules, but who are not more distantly related than through the grandparents' generation. While this is the ideal form of marriage, it is often not achieved. Perhaps two-thirds of all Tsolyani marriages are with a cousin, though the proportions vary considerably depending upon region and rural/urban communities.

Systematically speaking, are two types of cousin: parallel cousins and cross cousins. Parallel cousins are those related through sibling parents of the same sex (i.e., your father's brother's children or your mother's sister's children). Cross cousins are those related through sibling parents of the opposite sex (your father's sister's or your

mother's brother's children). When combined with the Tsolyani pattern of unilineal descent (see elsewhere; predominantly patrilateral except in some northern parts of the empire), the social impact of parallel cousin versus cross cousin marriage is significant.

Both parallel and cross cousins fall into two subtypes: patrilateral and matrilateral, depending on whether the linking sibling is your father's or your mother's.

Your ...		consist of your....
patrilateral	cross cousins	father's sister's children
	parallel cousins	father's brother's children
matrilateral	parallel cousins	mother's sister's children
	cross cousins	mother's brother's children

Parallel Cousin Marriage

Marriage between patrilateral parallel cousins – that is, marrying your father's brother's daughter – helps strengthen the solidarity of extended families and patrilines, while reducing obligations (social, economic, and ritual) outside of them. Where it is practiced, it tends to mean that family groups or local lineages become relatively socially isolated, closed to outsiders, and economically autonomous. However, the majority of Tsolyani consider sex with your patrilateral parallel cousin (much less marriage) to be incest.

On the other hand, matrilateral parallel cousins (your mother's sister's children) are neither members of your own lineage nor your mother's. Rather, they belong to that of your mother's sister's husband. Such cousins are typically either too closely related (within the exogamous group, because your mother's sister's husband often turns about a member of your own lineage) or else too much "outsiders" (outside the endogamous group) to be very acceptable marriage partners. It is much more common than patrilateral parallel cousin marriage, but still accounts for only a small minority of marriages in Tsolyanu.

Neither type of parallel cousin marriage forms the basis for any widely distributed or significant patterns of spouse selection. Where such patterns are found, they are typically limited to small communities or sub-communities that occupy specialized or extreme social niches.

Cross-Cousin Marriage

Cross-cousin marriages, on the other hand, involve individuals marrying either their father's sister's children (patrilateral cross cousins) or their mother's brother's children (matrilateral cross cousins). In either case, the cross-cousin is considered a member of a different lineage. The practice of preferring these kinds of marriages has the effect of uniting separate lineages through the continued pattern of marriage exchanges between them. Ties between the lineages are reinforced with each subsequent generation of marriage exchange, creating reliable allies and close bonds with people outside one's own household or lineage segment.

Three subtypes of cross-cousin marriage can be identified:

1. Bilateral cross-cousin marriage, between pairs of lineages (also called "direct exchange marriage");
2. Matrilineal cross-cousin marriage, between an indefinite number of lineages (also called "assymmetrical" or "indirect exchange marriage");
3. Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage, which results in a combination of the two other forms.

In general in Tsolyanu there is a strong preference (or in some cases, even a requirement) that men take wives from the same lineage that their fathers did; in effect duplicating the pattern of marriages that were made during the previous generation. Thus a man's wife is ideally from the same lineage as his mother. (Conservatism runs very deep in the Tsolyani mindset.) In the larger cities of Tsolyanu there is considerably more fluidity, as there is also among the upper reaches of the nobility. While even there the ideal of cross-cousin marriage is still dominant, there is less pressure for marriage to specifically match the previous generation's.

Bilateral cross-cousin marriages are found in situations where only two lineages exchange brides with each other over several generations. In its most basic form, this is two men marrying each other's sisters. Over time, a dense layering of kinship roles results. It thus is not uncommon for one woman to be 1) your wife, 2) your father's sister's daughter, and 3) your mother's brother's daughter. In other words, your spouse is related to you on both sides of the family. This erases the distinction between patrilateral and matrilateral cross-cousins that was given above; one instead has "bilateral" cross cousins. Due to unilinear descent ideology, even in such a case marriage with a bilateral cross cousin is not automatically considered incest.

This arrangement is fairly common in much of Tsolyanu, particularly in rural areas. Many clanhouses are composed of only two lineages. In effect this dual lineage arrangement is a moiety system, and the expectation of marrying your bilateral cousin is a fixed rule; breaking it is a grievous sin against the social and possibly spiritual order. Given that many villages consist of only a single clan in a sprawling and often discontinuous "clanhouse", it seems likely that a majority of all settlements in Tsolyanu exhibit such a moiety system of organization.

Elsewhere one finds systems of so-called "circulating connubium". Here, a closed group of lineages are linked together through a series of paired matrilateral cross-cousin marriages. Each lineage is directly tied to only two others (the one it receives brides from, and the one it gives brides to), but it is unavoidably connected to all the others in the circle.

A ----------> B ----------> C ----------> D ----------> A
(gives bride) (gives bride) (gives bride) (gives bride)

While such chains occur spontaneously or coincidentally fairly often, they are usually short (rarely more than three or four links) and exceedingly unstable (usually lasting

only one or two generations). However, in a few areas of the empire and among certain communities, there is a strong overt preference for such cyclical marriage rings. Some have lasted for centuries, and may consist of as many as twenty separate lineages at a given time.

Patrilateral cross-cousin marriage chains are superficially similar, but have an added twist: in alternating generations, the direction of bride transfer reverses.

1. A ----------> B ----------> C ----------> D ----------> A
   (gives bride) (gives bride) (gives bride) (gives bride)

2. A <---------- B <---------- C <---------- D <---------- A
   (gives bride) (gives bride) (gives bride) (gives bride)

3. A ----------> B ----------> C ----------> D ----------> A
   (gives bride) (gives bride) (gives bride) (gives bride)
(etc.)

The alternating reversal rule links each lineage with both of its neighbors as mutually exchanging pairs – that is, in the example given, B is tied to A by reciprocal bride exchanges, and is also tied to C by reciprocal bride exchanges. If the same lineages practiced matrilateral cross-cousin marriage instead, B would only give its daughters to C in marriage, and never to A, and would only receive brides from A, never from C.

In this way, patrilateral cross-cousin marriage patterns can be said to combine the features of the matrilateral pattern ("indirect exchange") and the bilateral pattern ("direct exchange").

In status-conscious Tsolyanu, however, such a pattern is difficult to sustain. There is a basic cultural value of hypergamy, namely that women should marry men of (slightly) higher status than themselves. Accordingly, a given lineage tends to be unwilling to give its daughters in marriage to a lineage it has previously received brides from, as that was seen as confirmation that the other lineage is more lowly and inferior. Therefore it is found primarily where there are a number of lineages of only minutely differentiated status, with relatively low levels of intra-clan competition and prestige-jockeying, and also where there is relatively strong endogamous sentiment (i.e., marked unwillingness to marry outside the clanhouse or outside of very similar lineages; or, generally, an attitude of "closed-offness" from the rest of society). [EXAMPLES: angry redneck types]

From the perspective of many modern Western observers, the Tsolyani preference for marrying one's cousin is tantamount to institutionalized incest, and as a result the entire population is, by those standards, massively inbred. According to Tsolyani conceptions of the world, though, one's cross-cousins are not particularly close relatives at all, certainly not members of the "immediate family" to which the rules of exogamy and incest apply. The Tsolyani are no less horrified by incest than Americans (each according to their own definitions). They are nearly as appalled, though, by marriage with people who are "too far" outside the known and safe circle of decent relatives and

respectable neighbors. Cross-cousins are, in their view, the perfect balance between the demands of exogamy and the desire for endogamy.

There is a possible additional benefit to cross-cousin marriage, on a psychological or psychosocial level. For a young Tsolyani woman, leaving her home and her relatives to go live with her new husband, to be under the authority of her mother-in-law in a new household and among members of a different lineage than her own, amounts to a nerve-wracking or even truly frightening prospect. Marriage between cousins eases this transition, as it simply adds an additional layer of kinship relations to those already existing: the man you already know as your father's sister's son now becomes your husband as well. When a stable pattern of cross-cousin marriage persists through several generations, the layering becomes increasingly dense – so that as a bride, your mother-in-law or perhaps your grandmother-in-law may well be a close kinswoman of yours and a member of your own lineage.

The following table summarizes the gross demographics of marriage preference patterns throughout the entire Tsolyani empire, regardless of region, residence, class, religion, or status. It should absolutely not be used to "roll for random marriage partner" by players or GMs!)

Pattern	% Marriages	Especially common in:
Patrilateral parallel	1%	Isolated/marginal groups
Matrilateral parallel	3%	Northern mountains; Khirgar
Bilateral cross	40%	Rural
Matrilateral cross	18%	Chakas; Mu'ugalavya
Patrilateral cross	5%	NW plains; Kurt Hills
Non-cousin	33%	

Status Considerations

Considerations of status and the expectation of hypergamy are such that families of paramount status (the ones at the "top of the social food chain" within a given community; e.g., the Vriddis in Fasiltum or the Itos in much of the Chakas; and probably every other empire-wide clan too, on a local level in one place or another somewhere in the empire) are faced with a problem in marrying off their daughters.

As the highest-status group within their social circles, there is no higher family to which their daughters can be married. Since daughters "always" marry higher-status husbands, marrying their daughter to someone would, in effect, be recognizing the other family as being of "higher status".

This conundrum is most often handled by some variation on the theme of having one of the elite family's client lineages or clans formally "give away" the bride. That is, a high-ranking member of such a client group receives the bridewealth and presides over the marriage ceremonies on behalf of the bride's real family. The best-known and most deeply rooted example of this is the Black Stone Tomb clan in the Chakas, which has served as these "stand-in fathers" for Ito princesses throughout most of recorded

history. The Tlakotani of the central empire also rely on neighboring allies of other clans to stand in for them when they marry their daughters to non-Tlakotanis.

BRIDEWEALTH & DOWRY

Marriage in Tsolyanu invariably involves a negotiated agreement to transfer wealth, in some form and in some quantity, from one core social group to the other. Such transfers can amount to very substantial sums, and given the general economic autochthony of clanhouses, they may actually account for the bulk of wealth circulation within a given community.

Marriage wealth transfers fall into two general categories: bridewealth (also called "brideprice" or sometimes "progeny price"), where the groom's family gives valuable property to the bride's family, and groomwealth, where the bride's family gives valuable property to the groom's family. Within each category there are many variations, of course. In Tsolyanu both categories occur, even simultaneously. However, bridewealth payments are a universal norm in Tsolyanu, while groomwealth payments are less common and restricted to special circumstances and needs (often of a political nature).

Marriage wealth payments have, within any given region and community, a customary and traditional nature – in terms of quantity, quality, timing, and ritual conception of them. To a large extent, they are predetermined. That said, such details are always somewhat flexible and circumstantial. Serious and sometimes intense negotiations are carried out between the families, sometimes lasting for months or years. In cities and even in larger towns, lawyers are often hired to advise and draft formal written contracts specifying the details of the marriage payments. (Indeed, in the Engsvanyali-Tsolyani legal tradition, the "marriage lawyer" is considered one of the three fundamental professional specialties of legal practice, and the oldest.)

Generally, the form bridewealth takes is that of portable, fungible goods, whether luxury items or functional, which are not themselves either consumables or currency, and which can be amassed in quantity rather than as unique items. Thus grain is not suitable, nor is a special antique necklace, nor bags of coins. But livestock very frequently serves as bridewealth, as do bolts of high-quality cloth or silver ingots.

Large domestic animals (chlen and tsi'il) are often so employed, as are hma or hmelu in pastoral parts of the country; in fact, for much of the empire these animals can only be exchanged outside the family in the form of bridewealth, and cannot be marketed. Seashells are used elsewhere, or bricks of rock salt, or antique coins, or bags of particular spices, or stones cut in a particular shape. They may therefore have little or no objective or marketable value and thus constitute "counters" in a specialized, compartmentalized system of social and political exchange. A certain type of long thin seashell (similar to the Terran dentalium) thus has a disproportionate value to the people of the high mountains north of Avanthar, because it is a key component of

bridewealth payments. In this region these shells generally cannot be bought on the open market, they are so closely held and prized.

In Tsolyanu real estate, commercial investments, and entitlements (honors and special privileges) are never used in bridewealth, but may used for groomwealth payments.

Bridewealth

In general, Tsolyani custom demands payment of bridewealth rather than dowry. One cannot have a truly legitimate wedding without having a transfer of bridewealth; payment of groomwealth may be practically necessary but is never culturally or legally obligatory.

Specifically, a groom and his family must deliver a significant amount of valuable goods to his future wife's family in the course of contracting the marriage, or else the marriage itself cannot be completed. The payment of bridewealth is seen as having several distinct but key functions:

1. It cements the rights of the husband's family to any children resulting from the marriage. Children born to marriages without bridewealth are "illegitimate" (i.e., they belong, by default, to their mother's kinship groups and not their father's).
2. It compensates the bride's family and lineage for the time and effort taken to raise a daughter, who is, as women are, destined to be sent away to live with and work for outsiders.
3. It legitimizes the exclusive sexual rights of the groom with regard to the bride.

[NOTE: possibility of "stealing" children from a lineage/clan by demonstrating that bridewealth given for their mother was tainted/inadequate/fake]

For the Tsolyani, the first two functions directly reflect the conception of bridewealth as a type of compensation: it is payment for the bride's future productive capacity (of children, for the new family) and for the "capital investment" represented by the bride (by her natal family).

Because the bridewealth payment is so strongly construed as payment to secure rights in children (and other "productivity" of the marriage), there are long-term restraints upon disposition of the wealth or goods given. This is because if the bride fails to provide children, divorces or leaves her husband, or becomes aridani, the bridewealth must be returned to her husband's family.

Any wealth received as a marriage payment thus cannot easily enter general economic circulation; the bride's family does not have "free and clear" rights to it. However, it can easily be used to make bridewealth payments for their own men, and this is indeed what is normally done with it. Because incoming bridewealth has often already been "spent" (as outgoing bridewealth for one's own menfolk's marriages), it can be very difficult or sometimes impossible for the bride's family to repay her bridewealth if her marriage ends. Bridewealth thus exerts a powerful force to stabilize marriages, as the wife's family

has a significant economic interest in ensuring that marital problems of the couple are resolved and the union remains intact.

If a marriage ends, for whatever reason, and the couple has had children, then the wife's family does not need to return the bridewealth which was originally received for. In effect, the husband keeps the children instead of the bridewealth. (It is for this reason that bridewealth is sometimes termed "progeny price".)

The Tsolyani groom is not individually responsible for obtaining the bridewealth, of course. His family and his lineage-mates – particularly his father and paternal uncles – assist him in earning, borrowing, or otherwise collecting all that is necessary to make the payment. In the course of time he will naturally be responsible for helping his own son (and possibly his brothers' sons) pay for a wife of his own. A father's contribution to his son's bridewealth is considered part of the son's inheritance in the lineage, and no repayment is expected or obligation created between for it. However, contributions from lateral relatives – one's father's brothers and so on – are couched as loans, despite the fact that they are also technically lineage-mates from whom one inherits (and in fact usually called "father" in Tsolyani). Nevertheless, such contributions create a debt that must be repaid. Normally the new husband makes repayments in installations over several (or many) years following his marriage. This need not be in the form of future bridewealth payments, but may be in other coin. However, an older man who has helped his brother's son obtain a wife will often later call on him to provide bridewealth materials in order to obtain a second or third wife of his own.

A given Tsolyani man is thus likely to have to contribute to at least three bridewealth payments in his lifetime: his own, his son's, and his paternal uncle's. Given that Tsolyani families are often fairly large, and given the possibility he may marry more than once himself, he may end up being responsible for half a dozen and contributing to many more. This massive economic burden makes having too many sons a liability, and gives rise to a number of solutions, including the phenomenon of "gay marriage" (see below).

The bridewealth payment is made to the bride's father and paternal uncles. While the bride's family is obliged to return the payment if she fails to produce children or breaks the marriage (by abandonment, legal divorce, or "emancipation" through the aridani tradition), her family is otherwise allowed to use the wealth and goods received to fund marriage payments for themselves. In this way, large amounts of wealth are continuously circulated through society. When overlaid with the strong patterns of marriage partner preference described in the previous section, bridewealth further strengthens bonds of solidarity and obligation between separate lineages, helping to create important and durable ties outside the extended family household and local lineage segment.

The constant circulation of bridewealth has given rise to a marked preference for a particular birth order among Tsolyani parents. The ideal result is to have a girl followed by a boy. In this way, one receives a brideprice for the older daughter, which can then be used to obtain a bride for the son. A reversal of this order – particularly if there is a large

age gap between a male child and his little sisters – can pose a serious problem for the family, as they struggle to find a way to accumulate the wealth needed to marry him off.

Potentially bridewealth could exert a leveling influence, reducing inequalities in wealth among participating linked lineages. However, in practice it creates and supports situations where the groups exhibit lasting, durable imbalances of status and wealth. Specifically, elite lineages within a given community are able to publicly validate and actually forcibly maintain their preeminence through the bridewealth system itself.

Because of the near-universal expectation of hypergamy, bridewealth payments flow from higher-status groups to lower-status groups, while women move from lower-status groups to higher-status groups. But as the amount of payment is in part dependent upon the status of the bride's family, those at the top of the social structure stockpile more bridewealth than they are forced to give out: they are structurally obliged to hypogamy, giving their daughters to lower-status families in marriage. There is therefore a net flow of both women and bridewealth toward the higher-status participants in the system. (This relative abundance of bridewealth goods allows the elites to obtain many more wives themselves, which does have some effect on redistributing wealth downwards.)

Because they are likely to be able to take wives from multiple sources, the elites enjoy a much broader network of social ties and exert more power – political, economic, and social – over a wider part of the community. (Of course, local elites also contract some number of their marriages with other elites from outside their own community – neighboring villages or nearby cities, for example – which follow a traditional hypergamous pattern, and in which they will in fact be the "junior partner".)

For the elite of the elites – the aristocracy and the high nobility in the strict sense – wives and bridewealth are truly a political currency: they receive wives as symbolic "tribute" from the various constituencies of their domain, while redistributing parts of their amassed wealth back out to the lower-ranked groups in the form of bridewealth. In areas of the empire where the autonomy of the local aristocracy has persisted, the local chieftains and kings could have up to a hundred wives at a time. [insert examples]

Bridewealth has more pervasive social and indeed political implications as well. Because of the amounts of goods needed, some time is required for a prospective groom and his family to accumulate the necessary payments. This gives older men a significant advantage in contracting marriages, as they have had more time to collect wealth, have established more ties and alliances with others to assist in this, and have more power within the household, lineage, and clanhouse to draw on such resources for their own use. In addition, once they have acquired one wife, her own contribution to his prosperity and productivity can be used to generate further leverage for more marriages. Within the same socioeconomic strata (say, the same lineage within a given clanhouse), an older man will have been able to marry several times before his juniors have been able to. In addition, given the scarcity of specific goods needed for bridewealth payments, one man's success at obtaining even one wife potentially makes the task of other unmarried men even harder. (In many Tsolyani communities, marriage genuinely is a zero-sum game.) The bridewealth regulation as a whole thus supports the institution

of polygyny, despite appearances it may have of "leveling the playing field". It also is the chief reason why having multiple wives is taken as demonstration of wealth, prestige, and status: not because one must be wealthy to support them – Tsolyani women are recognized as being economically valuable, or even vital, in their own right – but because one must be wealthy to get them.

Dowry

The reverse of bridewealth is groomwealth, where the bride's family makes a payment of valuables to the family of the groom. This is more familiar to Westerners as "dowry", in which the wealth is given specifically to the groom for the establishment of a new household (c.f. the "hope chest" and custom of the bride's family paying for the wedding ceremony and festivities). The property of such a dowry is vested in the marriage bond itself and is normally inherited directly by children that result from the marriage, and is not owned by the groom's family. In the interim, it can be considered the form that the bride's share of her inheritance from her father takes: the daughters receive their share of his property when they are married, rather than when he dies.

Groomwealth of a different nature is practiced in Tsolyanu, when it is given at all. Such a payment becomes property of the groom's family, conditional upon the survival of the marriage. However, failure to bear children is not grounds for returning groomwealth, unlike bridewealth: the woman is always held responsible for childlessness, in such cases. Only severance of the marriage bond (abandonment or divorce) requires the return of a groomwealth payment.

The Tsolyani themselves describe groomwealth as being given to "make up for" the difference in status between the bride and groom; in essence, it is an "incentive" for the groom's family to ally themselves with the lower-status family of the bride. It is indeed true that groomwealth is much more commonly paid in cases where there is an unusually large difference in status between the families of the couple, but also if there is something personally "unfitting" about the bride (ugliness, poor temper or disagreeable personality, sickly health, shortcomings in deportment, personal disgraces or embarrassments in her or her immediate family's past, and so forth) and it is almost always paid in marriages across clan lines or other "foreign" unions. However, it is also considered normal in many parts of the empire (at least for wealthier and higher-status families in a community) for the first (or "senior") wife of a young man to be accompanied by groomwealth. In effect, the lower-status families with eligible daughters in such an area use groomwealth to compete with each other to win an advantageous match with the local upper class.

The form groomwealth payments take is always distinct from those used for bridewealth. It is through groomwealth that families use marriages to exchange valuables such as land, buildings, businesses and investments, and even titles and honors.

RESIDENCE RULES

In Tsolyanu, it is exceedingly rare for a newly married couple to establish their own residence. The expectation is that they become part of an existing household, within a clanhouse occupied by their relatives. Except in the matrilineal northern parts of the Tsolyani empire, the norm is patrilocal residence: the new couple resides in the groom's father's household, or at least within the same compound as his father. Where descent by patrilines is the norm, this allows men to continue living throughout their life in the company of their lineage-mates and male relatives. Women, however, must leave the household of their birth and upbringing and their lineage-mates and move to a "foreign" setting.

Where descent is reckoned in the mother's line, residence rules are accordingly matrilocal – that is, the newly married couple should live in the bride's mother's household. In these cases, it is men who are separated from their fellow lineage members and must move to a new home when they marry. In the elite social strata of such areas – that is, among the aristocracy, major landowners, and rich merchants – one is more likely to find avunculocal residence patterns, where the new couple moves to live with the groom's mother's brother. This is because men in such settings inherit through their mothers but primarily from their male relatives: they are the heirs and successors to their maternal uncles, not to their own fathers. By living with his mother's brother, a young man is more easily able to learn the skills and knowledge necessary for his future role in life as holder of the relevant statuses, obligations, privileges, wealth, and powers that he will inherit.

In larger urban areas, residence after marriage is more fluid. Some couples may find that they have considerable choice in deciding whether to live with the groom's natal family, or whether the groom might instead move in with his wife's family. They may also change residences as they grow older and the previous generations of their family begin to retire and die, leaving "openings" in clan compounds, economic enterprises, and power structures.

Establishment of new households that are separate from both spouses' natal families is, as mentioned above, very uncommon in Tsolyanu. It is most likely to occur in cities (where kinship ties are relatively weakened and economic situations often more volatile), but it is also essentially the type of residence pattern followed by some married priests and soldiers. Certain military legions place strong demands upon their members that they live in the legion's barracks. If such soldiers are permitted to marry at all while serving their legion, then their spouse (and children, etc.) must then move into the barracks with them. Likewise, certain temples – that is, specific sub-sects or individual temple establishments, not entire "religions" – may also require its priests, most often specific temple functionaries and holders of higher posts, to reside within the sanctified temple grounds. Their wives, children, and other dependents must follow suit. These small households – whether in barracks, temple residences, or genuinely "independent" homes – fairly closely resemble the "nuclear families" familiar to modern-day Westerners. They typically consist of only one, two, or sometimes three generations and have few or no lateral members.

With these exceptions, the stereotypical household in Tsolyanu is built around a family that is extended, or joint, or both. A joint family consists of two or more relatives of the same generation (typically brothers) who live together in a single household with their spouses and children, as well as their parents (and possibly grandparents, grandchildren, and so on).

[Insert text on 'collapsing parenthood' re prev para]

An extended family adds lateral relatives and relatives of different generations – most often widowed aunts or uncles and their nuclear family units, bachelor cousins, and juvenile nieces and nephews. An extended family continuously grows from generation to generation, branching wider and accumulating more members. This results in severe strains on available resources (emotionally as well as materially). At a certain point these strains outweigh the efficiency and relative strength gained by the collective labor and cooperation of the large household, and drives such households to fission into smaller segments. This is a regular cycle over several generations.

POLYGAMY

Nowhere in Tsolyanu is having a single spouse a cultural or religious value in itself. Having multiple wives, and often husbands, whether consecutively or simultaneously, is taken for granted. In practice, however, relatively few have multiple wives or husbands, and monogamy is likely the common reality – though not the common ideal. Tsolyani, if questioned, will say that monogamous marriages encourage discord between the husband and wife, which having multiple partners (at least for the man) helps prevent.

Polygyny

Polygyny – for a man to have more than one wife simultaneously – is the more common, or at least more prestigious, form of polygamy in Tsolyanu.

As described above, some men – the wealthier, more powerful, or those older than their competitors – are able to acquire several wives at the expense of other men, who can manage to get married for the first time only much later in life, if at all. This constitutes a division within male society as a whole: on one hand, the older, married, likely polgynist men, and the usually younger bachelors. Institutions such as the military legions and religious life (as acolytes or dedicated temple servants) absorb many of these young men and often formally require that they stay unmarried while they remain low-ranking or junior members. Having multiple wives is one of the most important ways in which a Tsolyani man can demonstrate his power and status within his community.

For their part, Tsolyani women generally regard having co-wives as an overall advantage. The wives are able to help each other in domestic work, childcare and

rearing, and in whatever economically productive tasks their husband's family might be engaged in (e.g., spinning or weaving, marketing, etc.) Often a wife will be heavily involved in her husband's search for another wife, and helps investigate candidates and weed out unsuitable prospects.

Among the disadvantages of polygyny, the Tsolyani identify jealousy between co-wives as the most common. Establishment of separate "suites" within the husband's household, or entirely separate households altogether, are one traditional way of dealing with this – and of further displaying the man's wealth and importance. Another more basic means of controlling jealousy is the automatic ranking of wives in order of status. In the vast majority of cases, the wife who is married first is the most senior and important, and can exercise considerable authority over the other wives. Third and additional wives may be ranked either by marriage order or by the status of their families of origin. This is generally decided by the husband (and his own relatives), and can be manipulated to suit passing needs and goals. In larger polygynous households, every wife (except the lowest) has at least one other wife she's automatically superior to, and every wife (except the highest) has at least one other wife she's always answerable to. A third way the Tsolyani attempt to control strife in such households is through simultaneous marriage of sisters – under the assumption that they will be more able to get along and "share" a single husband and household than strangers would be. The phenomenon of the ganged-up-upon husband whose wives have joined forces to force him to do their will against his own is common enough in Tsolyani folklore and stories, and not unknown in reality either.

The greatest source of disruption and instability in a polygynous marriage comes from the children, however. The higher the status of the father and his lineage, the more bitter the rivalry can become, as there is more at stake in the inheritance. While the Tsolyani and their lawbooks insist that such problems are avoided by the clear definition of heirs according to clan, clanhouse, or lineage tradition from time immemorial, in reality there is more than enough contradiction and vagueness within customary law and the courts to allow great scope for intrigue and struggle among siblings and half-siblings.

Polyandry

Polyandry is a form of polygamy in which one woman is simultaneously married to several men. In many senses it is the mirror image of Tsolyani polygyny: aside from the obvious gender reversal, it is more common among the lower strata of society, and is "counter-prestigious" for the men engaged in it.

Men are faced with, on one hand, the expense of acquiring a bride in Tsolyanu (and the not infrequent local scarcity of unmarried women), and on the other hand the overriding need to ensure the continuation of their line of descent. Voluntary bachelorhood is rare and considered exceedingly strange, except perhaps for the holy. A solution presents itself: several men who don't have the resources to obtain wives individually for themselves can pool their resources and share one.

Because the ultimate goal in such an undertaking is to propagate the lineage, such polyandrous marriages are almost invariably examples of "fraternal polyandry" – the brothers of a given family will band together and share a single bride. Often a male patrilateral parallel cousin (that is, a son of one's father's brother) may be included as a "brother" in such a marriage; by Tsolyani standards of kinship reckoning the difference between such a person and a brother is relatively minor.

The brothers in such a marriage continue living together under a single roof, probably as they would even if they had married different women; the joint household is very common in Tsolyanu. Paternity of their wife's children may be automatically assigned to the oldest brother, or attributed to different husbands based on whatever criteria are acceptable to the parties, even when biological paternity cannot be established. In any event, such a marriage exerts a powerful "concentrating" effect on that generation's lineage network, halting the normal process of division and subdivision into separate lines of descent and inheritance. This can be very beneficial, since if the brothers are already so poor they have to share a wife in the first place, keeping their family property from being further broken up and shared amongst their children is likely a major worry. (Of course, if their wife has a large number of sons, sharing the family estate just amongst them can still be a problem in its own right!) A further advantage to fraternal polyandry is that there is usually relatively little rivalry or friction between the brothers over their wife, or among her children for her attention.

Polyandry is thus usually found among those with sharply constrained economic means, perhaps combined with relatively high need for reproduction. This is not to say it is limited to the poor of Tsolyanu or the commoners by any means; many high-status and even elite families have been forced into it. Rather, it is the recourse of families who are relatively disadvantaged within their local social network. It is their own social peers with whom they must compete for brides and status, after all. Accordingly, entering into a polyandrous marriage is tantamount to admission that you "can't keep up with the Jonses" for a Tsolyani man; while not dishonorable or distasteful as such, it is a definite blow to one's prestige and standing.

Polyandrous marriages are probably even less liked by the wives and their families. A polyandrous wife is expected, and legally obliged, to meet the sexual demands of all her husbands. (She is likely to have shortened periods of post-partum sexual taboo as well.) She is single-handedly responsible for the domestic chores and labor of a much larger household than she would be faced with had she been married to only one man (to say nothing of a man with other wives to help her). From her own family's point of view, a sense of unfairness arises from the fact that though she marries several grooms, only one groom's worth of bridewealth is received for her!

It can be seen from this that, contra popular foreign conception, polyandry is not linked to higher status or power for women. Polyandry and polygyny are not simple mirror images of each other: a polygynous man gains prestige and status from having multiple wives, but a polyandrous woman gains no such advantage, and in fact suffers from the perception that her spouse(s) is poor and, perhaps, of a failing bloodline.

Non-fraternal polyandry (where a woman's husbands are not related, or at least related only distantly) is more common in the far north of the empire, where descent is matrilineal and the male parentage of a child practically irrelevant. In some regards, a non-fraternal polyandrous union in the north is the equivalent of a polygynous marriage in the south. However, this part of Tsolyanu demands separate investigation and description.

SECOND MARRIAGES & WIDOWHOOD

Tsolyanu, like many societies, has specific, overt preferences for marriages subsequent to the death of one spouse. These arise because of the desire to maintain the existing bond between the husband's and wife's families. Accordingly, there is usually strong pressure for a widower to marry one of his wife's younger sisters, and for a widow to marry one of her husband's brothers. Such a marriage will keep the link between the families and maintain the existing household structure intact.

Generally widowhood in Tsolyanu sees the wife remaining with the family she married into and continuing to raise and look after the children born into it. In some cases, particularly if the couple was childless, she will return to her natal family household or to live with other close relatives of her own lineage.

Unlike most aspects of marriage and kinship, the status of widows (and widowers) is directly influenced by varying religious traditions, more so than by region or social status. Most of the followers of the Tlokiriqaluyal have a neutral and largely pragmatic approach, with the preference for observing levirate or sororate when possible and useful.

Among members of sects focused on Sarku and Durritlamish, the transition to widow(er)hood is not particularly significant at all: though one's spouse is dead, he or she is still socially a person and very much "of this world". The chief difference is merely that he or she moves out of the house and into the family's accommodations in the necropolis (where, of course, the spouse will join him or her in due time). While a foreign (and distasteful) custom to the Chakas, in some regions the dead are kept within the local descent groups and compounds of the living (for example, around Penom), and in such places even this distinction may be effaced. Unlike for those of other faiths, death does not sever a marriage union. In this sense, then, it is really meaningless to speak of "widows" and "widowers" for Sarku-worshippers – their spouses are still right there, for all eternity.

Conversely, there is a strong expectation among most worshippers of Hnalla, Dra, Karakan, and Chegarra that widows not remarry but remain chaste and solitary for the remainder of their life – "faithful" to their husbands. No such expectation exists for widowers, though; in fact, they are strongly encouraged to remarry if at all possible. This same high valuation of "chaste widowhood" is also widely found, but expressed to a weaker degree, among many families devoted to Thumis, Ketengku, and Belkhanu. The traditional doctrines of Avanthe, on the other hand, encourage remarriage of both men

and women. Among the Tlomitlanyal, only Qon seems to exert no particular direction over his followers on this matter.

VARIATIONS

Ghost Marriage

A woman may also be wed to a dead man. In the marriage ceremonies, and often in the nuptial bed, the role of the deceased is acted out by a stand-in, a man who is generally a relative of the deceased – e.g., a younger brother. Any children born of the union are attributed to the dead man, and are recognized as his descendants rather than the living stand-in's. A ghost can thus become the culturally and legally recognized father of a newborn child. This "ghost marriage" is distinct from the levirate or other arrangements to deal with widows in that one of the parties to a new marriage is already deceased.

Lineages or sublineages that are narrowly constricted may have their only male members die off without leaving heirs. Marrying one of their ghosts to a new wife, who can then produce children that are his, can save a family from extinction. In particular cases where it is important for intra-lineage or intra-clan politics to maintain the line of descent through the eldest born (as opposed to eldest survivor) such an arrangement has unique advantages. "Ghost marriage" also allows the bride's family to establish a higher-status link with another family than they would otherwise be able to – and receive the bridewealth that the older and more important man would have paid.

Aridani Marriage

Marriage of an aridani woman is significantly different and adds new complications to what has been described so far. As they are legally and, for most purposes, ritually recognized as men, aridani women can marry women, and are normally expected to do so. However, many instead enter into durable and lasting relationships with men, which Tsolyani law has managed to accommodate as well.

The "natural" form of marriage for an aridani is no different than that of any other man of their family: a marriage to a girl of the appropriate age and lineage, ideally a cross-cousin in most cases, requiring bridewealth payment, and so forth. Such marriages routinely produce legitimate children, too: the aridani is recognized as the father of any children that "his" wife gives birth to. (These are provided by an unrecognized male lover, who has no standing with regard to the "other man's wife" or children. While technically adultery on his part and faithlessness on the wife's, it is culturally demanded that all parties turn a blind eye to this and "pretend it doesn't happen".)

Because of this capability, aridani women are extremely valuable to families who face a shortage of males in a given generation and thus risk failing to meet their obligations in the ongoing network of marriage obligations and renewals of kinship bonds within their community. By the same token, though, they also create an additional burden of

providing another bridewealth payment. Accordingly, aridani status is more often than not pushed upon or withheld from a young girl by her elders, based upon their marriage needs and capabilities at the time.

It should be stressed that none of these marriages are considered "homosexual" in Tsolyani terms; and in fact, there is no assumption that the couple actually be sexually active with each other. (Publicly and ritually, of course, it is "known" that they must do if children are born to the wife – as the aridani husband is certainly their father!) More details on the institution of aridani in Tsolyanu, however, will need to await later treatment.

More rarely, two aridani will marry. Because this is considered, technically, a marriage of two men – and thus definitely is "homosexual", and unnecessarily peculiar to Tsolyani tastes – normally the junior spouse will give up aridani status and return to life as a "good clan-girl", becoming the wife to the remaining aridani husband.

Taking a different approach, however, aridani unions with (biological) men are treated as a special and aberrant form of concubinage by Tsolyani legal tradition, as modified by contractual addenda as the situation demands. Bridewealth payments to the aridani (or family thereof) are almost always absent, while the aridani's family normally provides a certain "financial incentive" to the groom's family. (Because of the prejudice against aridani marrying males, the "male groom" is usually of lower status than the "female groom", and is at least by connotation "feminized" to some degree in the eyes of the world.)

Children that an aridani personally bears are normally members of her own family, lineage, and clan. As might be expected, the identity of their mother is usually reassigned to the aridani's female wife, if one exists, while the aridani birth-mother is then always considered their father. If, for whatever reason, a male marriage partner of an aridani wishes their children to belong to his own lineage and clan, a legally binding contract is drawn up in which the male partner's kinsmen promise to adopt any children born to the aridani partner during the term of the union. Given the irregularity of such arrangements and the often unconventional attitudes of the "husbands" involved, their clans often need to be nudged or forced to acknowledge membership of the children either way, and in many cases the children are practically left to decide as young adults which lineage and family they wish to belong to.

Homosexual Marriages

As mentioned earlier, the highest-status family or lineage in a given community is faced with certain problems in marrying their daughters, as a) any available groom would be of lower status and b) a bride is "always" of lower status than the groom.

When a "stand-in father" is not available or not feasible and the daughter cannot be disposed of otherwise, these upper-class families often marry their daughters off to other girls in similar predicaments. Unlike aridani marriages, both these women remain "good clan-girls" and totally subject to male clan authority. Neither of the spouses is

recognized as “the husband”, but both are “wives”. Because such an arrangement is not felt to be a “real marriage”, i.e., from which (legitimate) children can result, there is less potential for status establishment and social climbing, but nevertheless it still allows the families to establish genuine kinship bonds with each other. Bridewealth is paid by both families, thus almost canceling the cost out (there may be a slight residual difference in bridewealth quantities due to differences in status between the two families). There is no expectation that the two wives are actually lovers, and while they are normally discouraged from having children, they probably enjoy more sexual freedom than most adult Tsolyani women. They may live in either family’s clanhouse, and sometimes move back and forth repeatedly over the course of time.

This “lesbian marriage” can be considered the opposite of the mechanism for “gay marriage” among men, which results largely from a shortage of brides as they are “sucked up” by polygamous marriages to higher-status men. While otherwise very similar to what has just been described, i.e., permitting creation of kinship bonds between families in the absence of “biologically correct” matches or adequate economic resources, the marriage of two men is almost entirely limited to the lower and middle strata of a given community, not the higher strata. It is among these lower-status families that a “bride shortage” develops, as more wealthy and powerful men are able to pay multiple brideprices than men closer to them in status. Also unlike “lesbian marriages”, which are usually childless, the male equivalents never produce children – not even by adoption, as adoption in Tsolyanu essentially consists of the construction and legal endorsement of a fiction of biological birth, which to the Tsolyani is obviously implausible in the case of “two husbands”. Marrying one’s son to another man is thus a drastic step for a family: it effectively guarantees his contribution to the perpetuation of the lineage is cut off.

(Obviously, this has a certain attraction for scheming elders who wish to assure their own favorite’s primacy within the younger generation. Several well-known stories and plays have been written about wicked mothers marrying off the lineage’s rightful heir to some strange and foreign boy in some distant city to ensure that her own son will father the future inheritor of the lineage’s titles and estate... usually to be thwarted by the wronged son’s unexpectedly noble and valiant husband and family.)

CONCUBINAGE

Tsolyani law and culture makes a clear distinction between marriage (monogamous, polygynous, or polyandrous, live or “ghost”, aridani, gay, lesbian, or any other type) and concubinage. While both are legally binding contracts, each with set norms and standards of behavior, they are different in many key aspects.

From the point of view of descent, marriage and concubinage differ in how the children of the union are assigned to lineages. In a marriage, children belong to their father’s family, lineage, and clan. Children of the same man’s concubine, on the other hand, belong to the lineage of their mother. Such children will have no formal right of

inheritance from their father outside those stipulated in the formal agreement (written or oral) by which their mother became a concubine. In general, the amount of financial support and maintenance a concubine's household or household segment receives is significantly less than if she was married. This is in large part due to the recognition that the "bastard" children resulting from such a union are properly the responsibility of the concubine's lineage and clan, not the father's. Status, position, titles, property, or honors are very rarely passed on to a concubine's son from the father. If a man finds himself without other heirs, he may well formally adopt a son by a concubine into his own lineage – in which case, the "motherhood" of the son is literally re-assigned from the concubine to the man's wife – his senior wife, if he has several that are all childless.

In terms of status, marriages are fairly strictly circumscribed by the latitude of status differential that is acceptable between the parties, as well as by strong expectations about the preferred kinship link of the spouse (e.g., cross-cousins). While the latter factor is lessened in additional marriages after the first wife has been taken, the basic issue of relative status between the families remains. Concubines, on the other hand, are normally of a considerably different status than their "husbands" – that is, they are normally of considerably lower status. From the point of view of the concubine's family, this allows creation of a kinship bond (albeit of inferior grade) with a much higher family than they could otherwise anticipate.

Bridewealth is not given in obtaining a concubine, but concubines are certainly "bought". While it is difficult to establish equivalencies of value for the goods or cash given, it seems that concubines are nearly as expensive to establish a relationship with as wives are – despite the fact that concubines are normally from considerably humbler origins than one's wife would come from.

The form of the payment is always fundamentally different, creating a sharp distinction in the minds of the Tsolyani. Goods and valuables that are used in bridewealth exchanges are <u>never</u> acceptable forms of wealth for purchasing a concubine. Of course, the forms that bridewealth take vary from area to area, and what is good enough for a wife in Paya Gupa may be fit only for buying a concubine in Sokatis. Because of the highly conventionalized and euphemistic terms used by the Tsolyani to discuss such matters, confusions can and often do result, leading to grievous offenses and lawsuits or sometimes even feuds. The scope for <u>intentional</u> insult is also great. [See the play, <u>Six Gourds Bought Auntie Six Severed Heads</u>]

A concubine normally resides with her "husband", in his family's clanhouse. While her children may, as they reach maturity, return to live with her own relatives, often they stay living beside their father's "real" children despite being of a different lineage themselves. This is in fact one of the major ways that new lineages or lineage segments are brought into clanhouses: the children of a concubine, while of much lower status than others in the clan compound, can be favored matches for regular marriages in their own generation because they are a good mix of "distant enough" but "safely familiar" and "one of us".

One might well ask, what is the difference, then, between a concubine and a "pleasure slave"? The answer is, entirely in the legal status of the transaction. A concubine remains a member of her own clan, lineage, and family, which retain the right to sever the relationship by "buying out" the contract (though she may well not have such a right as an individual). In addition, the term of the relationship may be specified as a set period – for example, ten years.

A slave purchase, on the other hand, is a transaction between the purchaser and a seller who is, almost without exception, a middleman with no kin ties whatsoever to the person being sold. A slave is, legally and ritually speaking, clanless, and more often than not severed from his or her lineage identity as well. Any children of a slave share that subhuman status. Adoption of a slave-born child as one's own is almost unheard of; if it happens, it is certainly so well covered up and disguised that few will ever know about it. Slavery is a permanent condition, unless manumitted by the owner. Even if a slave's kinsmen rescue him or her, it is truly a "buying back" – under Tsolyani law, it is not a buy-out or a ransom, but a new sale, after which the "new owners", i.e. the slave's kinsmen, happen to choose to free the slave and adopt her or him back into the lineage and clan – after extensive and expensive rituals of purification and cleansing!

The four major points by which wives, concubines, and "pleasure slaves" are distinct can be summarized this way:

Marriage	Concubines	Slave Lovers
small status differential	large status differential	radical status differential
children are father's family's	children are mother's family's	children are chattel of father
specialized forms of bridewealth goods	"cash" or "marketplace token" type goods	cash/barter purchase price
"junior partner" to husband	client or employee of "husband"	property of owner

BIRTH LIMITATION & SPACING

The powerful drive of Tsolyani lineages and lineage segments to produce enough children to perpetuate the line of descent in future generations is counterbalanced by several factors – not least of which is the economic cost that having too many children burdens a family with, particularly male children with their eventual need for bridewealth payments. Accordingly, the Tsolyani try to control the size of their families by limiting and spacing births out. The use of pharmaceutical contracpetives, primarily the lisutl root in most of Tsolyanu, is already well known. Other mechanisms are less overt but no less effective.

Marriage is typically at an age well beyond the minimum reproductive age, especially for boys. Abortion, usually pharmaceutically-induced, is also fairly common though not

regarded very favorably. Polyandrous marriages, too, limit the rate of population growth.

Infanticide is surprisingly widespread, though it is practiced more with the goal of achieving the desired older daughter – younger son sequence of birth order than with the aim of reducing the size of the next generation per se. Compared to better-known human societies, Tsolyanu is unusual in that infanticide is perhaps predominantly male infanticide, with "excess" male babies being exposed, abandoned, sacrificed, or otherwise disposed of. This is undoubtedly due to the high cost of providing for male children in later life – the bridewealth, and possible unwanted fragmentation of the family estate. Because of the higher rate of male death among adults (particularly through warfare), the overall male to female ratio among postadolescents is further skewed.

The post-partum sexual taboo, though, is especially important in slowing the rate of births and spacing them out within a given marital unit. These prohibitions on sexual relations for long periods of time following the birth of a child are perhaps frequently only paid lip service, and there is a fair amount of flexibility in determining the duration (depending on the region, social class, number and sex of previous children, number of co-wives, and the sex of the newborn). Generally, however, it is considered morally improper and spiritually contaminating to have sex with one's wife within a year of her giving birth (as well as endangering the health and well-being of the mother and her child), and such avoidances may be in place for up to four or even five years. This practice perhaps encourages polygamy and concubinage as well, as husbands are left without other legitimate sexual outlets during their wives' periods of culturally enforced abstinence.