and ways to find a wife, each of them having particular terms and processes associated with it. First of all, during initiation, the initiator will promise a man his daughter whom Ego will call *pikarta*. This is, according to discourse, the ideal spouse. *Pikarta* is also ideally the sister of the man's sister's husband. In fact, while the man will have a relationship with *pikarta* and her family which resembles that following actual marriage, including the obligations of sharing and hosting etc., he will only very rarely marry this woman.

He will in fact be promised a second wife, this time by a ↳ potential mother-in-law, just after initiation. This potential wife is called *pampurlpa's* daughter. But, here again, even though he should marry and engage in an exchange and provide that family with his sister, this will happen only very rarely. Another way of finding a wife is the process called *karlkurnu*. The man provides his potential parents-in-law with presents until they agree to give him their daughter. Many marriages are of this type. The last type, very frequent as well, is called *warngirnu* and is elopement. The young couple simply runs away, not waiting for the parents' approval, and returns to the community once they have a child. Ninety-five per cent of couples are constituted through *karlkurnu* or *warngirnu*, i.e. processes that do not involve the formal exchange of people. One may argue that this shows a weak coincidence between discourse and practice—something that is indeed quite frequent in anthropological studies. In the present case, however, the problem is slightly more complex. It must be remembered that *pikarta* and *pampurlpa's* daughter involve obligations and solidarity between people as if the marriage had actually occurred. Thus, there is no need to actually marry these women: the benefits of alliances are already provided simply through the promise. In marrying someone other than the promised and prescribed partners, the man diversifies his network of relatedness, socially and spatially speaking, and hence secures his position in the network of social and economic obligations and exchange.

What do we need to remember from this again brief overview of marriage and alliance? Here are a few guidelines for recording these elements.

1. Marriages are one of the major ways of maintaining relatedness between families and groups of families. They are regulated by social organization and social strategies in addition to personal affinities. They are an institutionalized way of creating enduring relationships and sometimes corporations. How these particular relationships are enacted in a group or society may in some cases be obscure, in some obvious.

2. Marriage needs to be distinguished from sexual relations. While both are usually structured by some incest prohibitions (which need to be described and documented), they do not respond to the same social impetus. Sexual relations are temporary practices that have no influence on social organization. Marriages, particularly alliances of marriage, on the other hand, create and maintain social corporations.

3. Relationships through marriage—affinal relationships—are not limited to actual marriage. All facets of the various procedures of relatedness creation need to be investigated. These facets may be economic, political, spatial, religious, etc. In most cases they involve particular vocabularies and
speech etiquettes. ↳