3. KINSHIP STATUSES, AUTHORITY, AND LEADERSHIP

Certain basic principles of primary significance must be recognized in the study of Yapese leadership. First, leadership occurs within the context of kinship groups, particularly the household, the patriclan, and the patrilineage. Second, rank and succession to leadership in these groups are generally defined as functions of generation, sex, and age. Third, leadership statuses are clearly identified in Yapese kinship terminology. Through the analysis of the kinship terms one is able to define more sharply the leadership statuses within the groups and their specific rights and duties.

It should be noted initially that Yap kinship terms are used almost exclusively in reference. All kinsmen without exception are addressed by their personal names. Small children may call their father and mother *papa* and *nina,* respectively, and on occasion they address grandparents by the proper kin term, but ordinarily personal names are used.

Kinship Statuses and Authority in the Household

As stated previously, the household basically comprises a nuclear family. The kinship terms of the nuclear family clearly separate statuses and define interpersonal relationships.

Citamngin is the father and head of the household. He provides the house, land resources, fish, and Yapese valuables for the members of the household. In the celebration of life crises, in disputes between members of his household and others in the patriclan, in questions of land use, in distribution of other resources, and in all matters external to the household, he is the leader and spokesman. Within the household he is the disciplinarian of the children, and he has particular responsibility with

regard to their behavior to others outside the household. He is the director of all household affairs and teacher of important family knowledge, particularly with regard to land and the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of his particular household. In the traditional household, he is also spiritual head, leading the family in prayers to the ancestors, caring for family heirlooms, and observing ritual and taboo to insure happiness for the family. He exercises and teaches the children knowledge of medicine and magic beneficial to the group.

Only one person may fill this status as father and head of the household. However, that person may not necessarily be the biological father of the children. Schneider states that the relationships within the household are socially defined exchange relationships rather than biologically defined categories (1962:5). Thus the *citamngin* of the household may be the biological father, or if he is dead, an older male relative, or if the children are adopted, a biologically unrelated individual. In all cases the status of the position remains the same; its occupant is merely replaced from among a pool of relatives when the position is vacated by death (see Schneider 1953:224–235).

Citinngin is the mother and the second-ranking member of the household. She theoretically owns no land but instead works the land of her husband to provide food for him and for the children. She is in charge of all domestic responsibilities—making gardens, preparing food, cleaning the household, and making necessities such as baskets, grass skirts, and other personal items. She represents the family in all women's affairs, and exercises any rights and obligations entailed in the land of her husband. She also provides a political alliance with her lineage of birth and may call upon it for assistance at any time. She is called the strength of the family, and in fact acts as such, always caring for the children, teaching them, feeding them, working for the good and health of the family, watching out for household affairs when the husband is fishing, traveling, or drunk. She is especially responsible for the education of her daughters in all the customs and taboos of womanhood. As in the case of the father, only one person may occupy this status in the household; however, a pool of relatives may fill this position should it be vacated by death or divorce.

Figirngin is the status of husband, *le'engin* of wife. These again are socially defined exchange relationships. The husband gives to the wife land, names for her children, and title to his land; he provides the house, assistance in heavy work projects, and fish for the family food. The Yapese divide food into two basic categories, *thum'ag* or fish and meats, and *gagan* or vegetable and garden products. The man is responsible for providing the fish and meat diet, the woman for the vegetable-starch diet. A meal without both types of food is considered improper; thus to feed the family the labor of both spouses is required. The wife is responsible for providing the garden products for all the family, so she cultivates the gardens and taro patches. She gathers the food and cooks it in the respective places for

the members of the family. She bears children for the estate, and because their names and land come from the husband, if she leaves, the children remain with him. The husband and wife share affection and love, but the wife is expected to remain faithful, while the husband feels free to have affairs. If they have no children, these affairs likely will lead to divorce. Because the children belong to the husband, and the mother is usually reluctant to leave them, the children become a major factor in the durability of marriages. The wife always may return to her estate of birth and receive land for food from her brothers.

The husband and wife statuses each normally are occupied by only one person, but a man may have more than one wife, and thus two nuclear family households. Usually this second arrangement is the result of the levirate, when the husband takes care of his deceased brother's wife and family. This arrangement is considered quite proper and the first wife cannot complain about it. Schneider notes that the matter of a second wife can be taken up with the first, and if she agrees, then the husband can have two (1953:218). She rarely agrees, however, and then sometimes only to stay with her children, knowing that if she refuses and a divorce follows, she must leave them with her husband.

Fak or *bitirrok* is the status of the children in the household. The boy child is expected to run errands, assist in fishing, and generally help both mother and father. The father in turn cares for the son, providing him with all his necessities and generally meeting most requests. For this generosity the son is expected to render obedience, respect, and when his father is old, care for him as one would a child. All productive efforts of the son, in fishing, making money, and so forth, are to be brought and given to the father who then distributes them as he sees fit. A daughter in like manner is to show deference to her father. However, her assistance is largely rendered to her mother. Sons and daughters are expected to help the father first, then assist the mother when asked.

Both sons and daughters assist the mother in the gardens and in general household tasks. A daughter is worked especially hard from about the age of eight to twelve years, helping in the care of the younger children and learning all the work of the woman in the family. When she reaches puberty, she begins a life of relative ease in terms of household responsibilities. She becomes very concerned about love affairs and spends several irresponsible years until she marries. Because she is *ta'ay* 'very contaminating' due to the onset of menstruation, she cannot assist in work having to do with her father's or mother's food, and so she is freed from these burdens. In the past she would have spent much time in the "menstrual area," learning customs and having affairs with young men. Today she attends high school and begins her courting there.

Children are not only differentiated from their mother and father, but from each other. All children of a household refer to each other as *wolag* 'siblings'. The sibling relationship is very important, for it implies a

number of statuses and explicit interpersonal relations. Generally it calls for mutual care, affection, and cooperation. More specifically, the kinship system designates a series of status responsibilities. *Wolag* are divided in the household according to relative age. The oldest sibling is referred to as *ngani,* the youngest is called *wain,* and all other siblings may refer to younger siblings as *tethin.* The oldest sibling may fill the role of father or mother in the household should the death of the parent require it.

The older children are called upon from adulthood to death to care for and assist their younger siblings. Each in turn is given the respect due his age, and, in some cases, if the father dies, the oldest brother may be referred to as *citamngin* 'father' by the youngest children. As *citamngin* he would care for his youngest siblings as though he were their father, and in fact, in Yapese terms he is their father. The oldest child is the recognized leader of all his siblings from birth until his death; if a girl, she will be recognized as the most important, but she will not be able to speak in men's affairs. Her oldest brother will take charge of the male affairs of the family. Girls are said to be the strength of the family, but their power is intermittent in duration, coming to the fore only in special family functions. Intermediate siblings are ranked according to age and given responsibility accordingly. The youngest child is last in line of responsibility, usually well cared for, and pampered by the older siblings. When they reach adulthood, older siblings have first rights to land and authority, subject to their age rank. Those designated the older siblings assume responsibility for the younger and have moderate authority over them.

Brothers and sisters are not distinguished in the kinship terminology. Boys may be addressed as *tam* by their parents, and girls *tin,* but no terms used by siblings distinguish boys from girls. However, the term *rugod* 'pubescent girl' distinguishes the sister when she begins menstruation and from that point on she must strictly avoid all brothers approaching puberty and older. She must always walk downwind from them so they do not smell her body. She should conduct her love affairs secretly, and her brothers should never see her with another boy. From this point on, personal interaction between brother and sister is limited to very short, businesslike encounters to discuss matters of importance to the family. Brothers may not sit and engage in general conversation with their sister present. If she is near she will sit some distance away where she cannot hear. If her brother is in a dance that is the least suggestive, the sister may not watch, even from a distance, and a similar taboo applies to him. In fact, women should not watch a men's dance except from a distance.

Tutuw and *titaw* are grandfather and grandmother, respectively, and *tungin* is grandchild. These statuses are sometimes found in the household if the grandparents are old and require the daily care of their son or daughter. The relationship between grandparent and grandchild is affectionate and friendly. Children often address the grandparents as

tutuw or *titaw* and they in turn may be called *tungin* or *tam* or *tin* as they wish. This free use of kin terms is a sign of informality between the statuses. In contrast a child would rarely address his father by the term *citamag* 'my father', but would use instead the personal name. To use the kinship term would be overly familiar, not showing the respect due one's father, and therefore extremely impolite. The same is true for the mother. The only exception to this rule occurs when in a very unusual situation, one wishes to show intense respect for and dependence upon one's father. At this time the term *citamag* could be used.

In the household where the grandfather is present, he will in fact be the head or *citamngin*. To the grandchildren he will be *tutuw*, but to their father he will be the *citamngin*. The end result is that of having two nuclear families in the same household, with a linear line of authority. The household has two active *citamngin,* with the oldest or grandfather overseeing all important matters and decisions regarding the household.

If only the grandmother is present, then the son is the head of the household, but the grandmother is his *citinngin* or mother. Both the son and his wife show respect and care for the grandmother, and consult her in all important matters of the family. The son, however, is the acting authority figure in the household. In contrast to his relationship of respect, obedience, and silence with his father, the son's relationship with his mother is one of respect and confidence. Thus he may feel free to discuss problems with his mother, and then act. In the presence of the father, however, he is a child and must be silent unless questioned. The children of the son have the same easy, informal relationship with their grandmother that they have with their grandfather.

A grandfather living in the household is not only its head, but also the teacher of both son and grandchildren of the old stories and the esoteric knowledge of Yap. He also teaches the important matters of the clan estate and any magic and medicine that he may know. When a grandfather and grandmother live with their married children it is usually because they are too feeble to do their own work. They contribute both material objects made by hand and their wisdom to the daily work of the household.

There are two notable Yapese customs associated with this contribution of wisdom to members of the family. If a young boy catches fish and sets apart some of the catch especially for his grandfather or father, the recipient then teaches the boy some part of Yapese custom or wisdom as payment for the fish. This reward is called *towiyeg*. In the second custom, wisdom is given in payment for keeping a fire going for the old grandmother or grandfather who cannot move around. The fire provides them warmth and its youthful maker is rewarded with some parcel of Yapese wisdom, in an exchange called *tamaror*. If at some later date the youth finds occasion to use this information in the resolution of a dispute, he is certified as telling the truth because he has learned it

through *towiyeg* or *tamaror*. According to informants, this claim can always be substantiated by a sibling of the aged person who will have heard from that person of the youth's work. If the youth claims *towiyeg*, but is not backed by the sibling, his word is discredited.

In summary, the Yapese household is characterized by leadership and authority defined in relationships between father and children, mother and children, husband and wife, brothers and sisters, and grandparents and grandchildren on the basis of relative age and sex. The Yapese kin terms identifying these categories of relationship are summarized as follows:

citamngin	'father'
citinngin	'mother'
fak	'child'
figirngin	'husband'
le'engin	'wife'
wolag	'sibling'
ngani	'oldest sibling'
tethin	'younger sibling'
wain	'youngest sibling'
tutuw	'grandfather'
titaw	'grandmother'
tungin	'grandchild'

The roles or responsibilities and privileges that characterize these statuses show reciprocal obligations and respect exchanged between paired statuses. For a more detailed discussion of Yapese kin terms and status relationships within the household see Hunt, Schneider et al. (1949), Schneider (1949, 1953), and Labby (1972).

Kinship and Authority in the Clan Estate

I stated earlier that the basic political unit in Yap is the estate group or the patriclan. The discussion of inheritance of the land of the estate is very important, but by itself is insufficient for a full understanding of leadership in the clan. Quite frequently in social and political situations, members of the community outside the patriclan exercise leadership for its members. For example, in such matters as housebuilding, canoe-building, marriage exchanges, and other life crises, a number of statuses from both the patrilineage and the matrilineal subsib are accorded the leadership roles. These statuses, with their respective rights and duties, are also identified in the kinship terminology.

The Statuses of Wolag *'Sibling'*

Perhaps the most important concept is that of *wolag* 'sibling'. Schneider argues that the kinship terms previously discussed for the nuclear family are exclusively applied between members of the nuclear family and are not extended to kinsmen outside unless or until they enter the family in an "active" kinship role (1953:219–232). In the course of my own research I found this true for the terms for father and mother, and to a lesser degree for child, but the term *wolag* was used freely for even distantly related individuals. Only when the informant discovered that the exact relationship was being sought would the term be qualified.

The Yapese considered it quite proper to be asked, "How many kinds of *wolag* may one have?" The responses are listed below in order of importance:

1. *beyal i wolag*—siblings from the same belly (*yo ngayal*)
2. *wolag ni fak e pin*—siblings from the same subsib
   a. *mafen ko bitir*—Si, SiCh, and SiDaCh (also *wa'ayngin*)
   b. *matam ko genung*—MoBr (also *wa'ayngin*)
3. *wolag ni fak e pum'on*—siblings from the same patrilineage
4. *wolag ni mitegruw*—siblings of one father but different mothers (two wives concurrently or serially)

(The genealogical referents of these categories are illustrated in Table 7.)

Table 7. Categories of *Wolag* 'Sibling' for Male Ego

Generation	Siblings by a Common Patrilineage		Siblings by a Common Male Parent	Siblings by a Common Female Parent	Siblings by a Common Matri-subsib	
	Male	**Female**	**Male/Female**	**Male/Female**	**Male**	**Female**
2nd Ascending	—	—	—	—	*wolag ni fak e pin*	—
1st Ascending	—	—	—	—	*wolag ni fak e pin*	—

	wolag ni	*wolag ni*	*wolag ni*	*beyal*	*wolag ni*	*wolag ni*
Ego's Generation	*fak e pum'on*	*fak e pum'on*	*mategruw*	*i wolag*	*fak e pin*	*fak e pin*
					wolag ni	*wolag ni*
1st Decending	—	—	—	—	*fak e pin*	*fak e pin*
					wolag ni	*wolag ni*
2nd Descending	—	—	—	—	*fak e pin*	*fak e pin*

NOTE:

Wolag ni fak e pum'on 'siblings who are children of male siblings'; *wolag ni mategruw* 'siblings of two wives'; *beyal i wolag* 'siblings of one belly'; *wolag ni fak e pin* 'siblings who are children of female siblings'.

A number of older informants described siblings of the matrilineal descent group as the only "real" *wolag*. This includes *beyal i wolag* 'siblings of one belly' and *wolag ni fak e pin* 'siblings who are children of female siblings'. These persons are called *tab ka girdi,* or 'people from the same tree', and as such are distinguished from sib mates who cannot trace a common relationship, forming a subsib. Patrilineage mates of different mothers are not considered real siblings, but rather *susun wolag* 'like siblings'. In this case, however, the distance of the relationship is very important. Children of the same father, but of different mothers, still consider themselves *wolag, as if* they had the same mother, however they are more likely to fight among themselves because of their different mothers. Although it is not considered ideal, some informants say that children of two brothers by the same father could marry, that it is better if they wait at least one more generation or two, but not absolutely required. Genealogical information shows that this kind of marriage did in fact occur in the past, but has stopped since Christianization. One may not, however, marry a matrilineal sibling.

An adopted child is recognized as adopted by other siblings in the family, but considered a "sibling of one belly." Because he gives up the sib affiliation of his biological mother and assumes the sib of his adoptive mother, he becomes "of one belly" technically, but people rarely fail to point out the adoption in discussing the relationship. An adopted sibling is not then a different kind of *wolag,* but rather a second way of entering the status.

The importance of these different kinds of siblings lies in the series of statuses and interpersonal relationships which they designate. The "siblings of one belly" is obviously the most important relationship, tying the common kinship bond of the mother with the common lineage and

estate bond of the father. This relationship between siblings is marked by strong feelings of mutual responsibility and interdependence, yet tempered with mutual respect. Brothers hesitate to interfere with brothers, and brothers should never interfere in the matters of their sisters. Yet, they are all very interested in the welfare of the others. All economic needs of one or another member of the group is expected to be met readily and as generously as possible. Within the group of siblings a pattern of age, respect, and responsibility applies. The older brother is given the responsibility for the welfare and care of his younger siblings. They in turn show him the respect and obedience that one should show to one's father, yet to a lesser degree. The older sister is also important, looking out for her brothers' interests with regard to their wives and children. She may chase them from the clan-estate if they fail to care for her brothers as good wives and good children should. Brothers also look out for their sisters' welfare and provide things for their sisters' husbands and families when they are in need.

Each household or nuclear family has enough land resources to meet its daily necessities. Thus the relationships of even the closest siblings are not evident in the daily routine of life. Cooperation between brothers for fishing may occur, but it also may occur between neighbors and friends. Cooperation between women for gardening may occur between wives of brothers, but more often will occur between women who are neighbors and friends. Thus in terms of kin relationships the daily routine focuses almost entirely on the household or nuclear family. Special occasions bring into play the full network of kinship relations. In life crises such as marriage, birth, childhood rites, puberty rites, and death, the network of statuses of kinsmen are called upon to provide leaderships and assistance. The same is true for large economic or social ventures such as house-building, canoe-building, *mitmit* (ceremonial exchange) of all kinds, and religious ceremonies. At these times all statuses of siblings have their respective functions and form a leadership and cooperative hierarchy through which the whole society functions. The "siblings of one belly" are active in meeting all of their mutual needs that occur beyond the daily routine of household life. They share a mutual interest and respect, with particular authority placed on the oldest for the care of the younger.

The siblings from the subsib fall into three separate categories. The first and most important are the *mafen ko bitir* or a man's Si, his SiCh, and his SiDaCh. These people are the guardian of his rights to the care and respect of his children. *Mafen*, literally 'feeling of ownership', refers to the fact that, like the father, the *mafen* claim ownership to the land and have the right to take that land away from children who misuse the land and its related rights, or who do not care for their father. The second category is the reverse of the first in which the mother's brother has a special relationship to his sister's child. He is sometimes referred to as *matam ko genung* 'father of the sib' and acts like a father to these children. He

provides them with food, Yapese money, and any other thing they may need. Because they are *wolag* 'siblings' the strong formal relationship of father and child is not present and a friendly atmosphere prevails.

The third category of *wolag* in the subsib includes all male members to whom relationship can be traced and all female members of ego's generation or below if ego is male. Female members of ego's mother's generation are referred to by the term for mother, and ego's child's generation by the term for child if ego is female. These siblings form a mutual group of relatives who assist each other on all important occasions by gathering food, traditional valuables, fish, and other goods necessary for the conduct of affairs. They also come to these occasions to lend moral support and to share in the distribution of goods. This set of *wolag* always may be depended upon to give support and food in visits to their village, and to assist in any manner in which they are able.

Wolag ni fak e pum'on 'siblings who are children of male siblings' may be referred to as siblings in the patrilineage. Schneider (1968) notes correctly that the *tabinaw* is a land-holding unit based upon mutual exchange between father and sons, rather than upon a biological kinship ideology. Schneider argues that not biological descent but rather a spiritual descent from common ancestors and common land was recognized between members of family. The rationale given is that sexual relations are not important in paternity. It is the ancestral ghosts who give children to the wife of a man in the patriclan, and without them, children are impossible. Thus the child is the blood descendant of the mother and the spiritual descendant of the father. A male's ghost goes to the ancestors of the father, while the blood of a female is passed on to her children, and her ghost resides with her husband's ancestors. (This belief has interesting parallels among Australian Aborigines.) For present-day Yapese, however, *wolag ni fak e pum'on* are biological siblings.

For both traditional and present-day Yapese the role of patrilineal siblings is to provide assistance in important matters as do the members of the subsib. But more important, as members of a patrilineage they are potential heirs to patriclan land should all close heirs die. Only after about three or four generations are these ties dropped and the relationships forgotten, unless friendship between two persons creates the desire to maintain the tie. The more distant the tie, the weaker the mutual obligations between the two parties.

Wolag ni mitegruw 'siblings of two wives' is a special category of sibling on which the Yapese place the stigma of dispute and dissent. These siblings are children of the same father but of different mothers to whom the father is married either simultaneously or at different times. The polygynous marriage is usually filled with tension and dissent, which is passed on to the children. The feelings of solidarity and mutual cooperation and respect expected of siblings is nearly impossible. Instead of cooperating, they fight, which is considered reprehensible. To make

matters worse, usually only high-ranking men can afford two wives and thus their children fight over succession to ranking land. This situation is desired by men, but fraught with problems and dissent, making the benefits highly questionable. Probably the greatest benefit to the father is the competition between sons to take good care of him and thus win the best land.

The concept of *wolag* is basic to the understanding of leadership and succession to leadership in the estate. For patriclan and lineage members, it is a culturally defined horizontal set of interpersonal relations, which are distinguished from those of the generation above and the generation below. Leadership among these siblings is defined on the basis of their sex, age, and kinship in relationship to all others. All members of a generation are in subordination to a higher generation until all its members are dead, and on the other end of the scale, superordinate to members of lower generations. This stands in marked contrast to the subsib, in which generation distinctions for males are merged and solidarity and support characterize the relations between members (see Table 7).

The Statuses of Matam *'Public Father'*

The higher generation has three basic categories of statuses: *matam, mafen, matin.* These words combine the noun prefix *ma-* 'a feeling of', and the stems for father, owner, and mother. Thus *matam* is one who "feels like a father," *mafen* one who "feels like an owner" or a trustee, and *matin,* one who "feels like a mother." The significance of these concepts lies in the fact that in the daily life of the household and patriclan they do not interfere with the lives of the members. But in any major event of that estate and clan, they all have important positions and roles. Thus they form an exact parallel with the *wolag,* who in their daily lives tend to go their separate ways, but who, in matters of importance to the estate, come together for cooperative action. These statuses are "occasional" statuses in which they act as father, owner, or mother, respectively. Schneider (1949, 1953, 1957*a*, 1962) in his analysis of Yapese kinship only considers the status of *mafen,* which he calls *m'fen.*

Four recognized statuses center around the concept of *matam* 'public father' (see Table 8). The first and most important is the *matam ko tabinaw* 'estate father', which is a political and ceremonial status providing leadership for the patriclan at all public affairs such as housebuilding, marriage exchange, village meetings, litigations, and so forth. At each of these occasions the holder of the status is expected to make the largest contribution of food, valuables, and other goods that are to be presented. In turn, he is the recipient of goods given to the clan and he distributes them among the members of the group and all others entitled to a share.

The estate father is the key leadership position in the estate.

This status is filled by the oldest man of the patrilineage (see Table 8) with the closest relationship to the members of the patriclan. Age and generation are the primary criteria for selection. A man occupies the status of *matam* if he has no living older brothers and no living brothers of his father. Name and ancestral rights to the estate of the clan are irrelevant.

Table 8. Statuses of *Matam* for Male Ego

	Ego's Father's Matri-subsib	**Ego's Patrilineage**		**Ego's Patriclan**	**Ego's Matri-subsib**	
Generation	**Males and Females**	**Males and Females**	**Eldest Male**	**Eldest Male**	**Eldest Male**	**Males and Females**
1st Ascending	*wolagen e*	*wolagen e*	*matam*	*citamngin*	*matam*	*wolagan e*
	matam ko tabinaw	*matam ko tabinaw*	*ko tabinaw*		*ko genung*	*matam ko genung*
Ego's Generation	*wolagen e*					
	matam ko tabinaw	—	—	—	—	—
1st Descending	*wolagen e*					
	matam ko tabinaw	—	—	—	—	—
2nd Descending	*wolagen e*					
	matam ko tabinaw	—	—	—	—	—

NOTE:
wolagen e matam ko tabinaw 'siblings of the estate father'; *matam ko tabinaw* 'estate father'; *citamngin* 'father'; *matam ko genung* 'subsib father'; *wolagen e matam ko genung* 'siblings of the subsib father.'

The second status is that of *matam ko genung* 'subsib father', who represents the wife of the head of the patriclan and her kinsmen who comprise ego's subsib. Because her children, and therefore members of her subsib, are the next heirs of estate land, they are obligated to contribute to clan functions. The subsib father, oldest male member of the group, presents their contributions to the estate father, and speaks on behalf of his kin.

The third and fourth statuses are identical in function, but different in composition. They are the *wolagen e matam ko tabinaw* 'siblings of the estate father' and *wolagen e matam ko genung* 'siblings of the subsib father'. Individuals occupying these statuses form two groups of supporting siblings from ego's patrilineage and ego's subsib (Table 8) and are present at every major function. Each individual provides support in terms of gifts. Each is asked ahead of time for those goods he is expected to contribute and he brings them as part of his relationship to the *matam*. When the *matam* dies, the closest and oldest sibling in the line of succession will take his place and marshall the siblings for all future estate functions.

For the private affairs of a patriclan, an additional leadership status is recognized, *citamngin* 'father'. This position is filled by the living father of the clan, or by the oldest living clan brother, as distinguished from lineage brother (Table 8). He has authority regarding land use, family disputes, and particularly private family affairs. He may discipline younger clan brothers who are like his children and is expected to provide constant care and assistance for them. The more he acts like a father, the more likely he is to be called *citamngin*. However, if the brothers are older and for the most part independent, he will be in a *matam* or "feeling of father" relationship with them.

It is important to recognize that the *matam* and the *citamngin* statuses are conceptually different. *Citamngin* is broken down linguistically into *ci-tam-ngin*. *Ci-* is a prefix used to designate "smallness," "intensiveness," and "importance." *Tam-* is 'father', and *-ngin*, *-ngig*, *-ngim* are the intimate forms of the possessive. Thus *citamngin* would literally be rendered as "truest intensive father to/of him". *Matam* is an occasionally invoked status, in the sense that it is important for particular, specified occasions and business; *citamngin* is an intensive, frequently invoked status involving the exchange of food and care for respect and obedience. One member of a patriclan may fill both statuses at the same time, but the statuses themselves are different. The closer the relationship of the *matam* to the clan the greater is his authority and power. The more distant his relationship the more power passes into the hands of the oldest residing member of the clan, and the frequency of the *matam*'s involvement decreases.

The Statuses of Mafen *'Trustee'*

The statuses of *mafen* arise from the Yapese conceptions of kinship and inheritance of land. As was pointed out earlier, only people of the *genung* 'matrisib' are truly of one belly or one flesh. Members of the patrilineage and patriclan are related only in terms of their sharing *tabinaw*, the unit of land/sea resources supplying common residence and

nurture for them and their ancestors. Because *tafen* 'ownership' of the estate is not held by individuals, but rather by all the people born onto and nurtured by the land, when the title of the estate passes from fathers to sons, ownership passes from people of one *genung* to people of another. When a man gives estate land to his children, he essentially denies his sisters and their children any further rights of *tafen.* However, because they have shared equally their birth and nurturance from the land, sisters and their children retain rights of *mafen,* literally a 'feeling of ownership', for three generations.

The rights of *mafen* are fundamentally a trusteeship vested in a particular matrilineal subsib four generations deep, founded by a female ancestor who married into that estate and established ownership over it by developing the land and bearing her children for it. Her children occupied the estate as *tafen,* and then passed it to a new generation of children and a new subsib. Because land is passed from father to son each generation, but *mafen* rights endure for three generations, at any given time an estate may have three separate subsibs holding trusteeship of the estate. These rights, and the elder of the subsib, male or female, who exercises them, are designated *mafen ni bi'ec* 'new trustee', *mafen ni bad* 'retired trustee', and *mafen ni le'* 'final trustee',* reflecting their respective distance and weakening claims upon the estate and the subsib currently holding *tafen* rights (see Table 9).

The new trustee takes a very active role in the affairs of the clan estate. He participates in deliberations at all life-cycle functions and at important family gatherings on economic, social, and religious matters. He may also contribute goods on these occasions and receives a designated share of any distribution. His most important trust is to insure that the children of the clan meet their obligations to their father and exercise proper care of the resources of the estate. In this role, he has the right to chase the children off the land should they neglect either their father or the land.

Table 9. Subsibs and the Cycle of *Mafen* 'Trustee' for Male Ego

	FaFaFa Subsib		**FaFa Subsib**		**Fa Subsib**		**Ego's Subsib**	
Generation	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**
2nd Ascending	FaFa's *mafen ni bi'ec*		FaFa holds *tafen*		—	—	—	—
1st Ascending	Fa's *mafen ni bad*		Fa's *mafen ni bi'ec*		Fa holds *tafen*		—	—
Ego's Generation	Ego's *mafen ni le'**		Ego's *mafen ni bad**		Ego's *mafen ni bi'ec**		Ego holds *tafen*	
1st Descending	—	—	Ch's *mafen ni le'*		Ch's *mafen ni bad*		Ch's *mafen nibi'ec*	

2nd Descending	—	—	—	—	ChCh's *mafen ni le'*	ChCh's *mafen ni bad*

* This active status to ego is filled by the oldest male or female in the group when ego assumes authority as head of his clan estate.

NOTE:

See List of Abbreviations for full relationship terms.

Mafen ni bi'ec 'new trustee'; *mafen ni bad* 'retired trustee'; *mafen ni le'* 'final trustee'; *tafen* 'ownership'.

Read from top to bottom the table shows the change of *mafen* statuses within a sib from generation to generation.

Read from left to right the table shows how each subsib holds a distinctive *mafen* status for a given generation of estate owners.

The authority of the new trustee begins at the death of the head of the clan estate. The children of the estate are forbidden use of their deceased father's land for a period of one year. During that year the trustee may request anything on that land. At the end of the year the children gather the produce of the land and in a small ceremony present this to the new trustee so that he will "turn away his face" and "lift the anchor" of his subsib's claims from the land. After this ritual the children may use these lands, but the interest of the trustee does not die. His rights to certain resources and first fruits remain, until the next generation of children inherit the lands and another new trustee takes his primary rights and duties.

When a new generation of children inherit and a new trustee exercises his rights to the land, the previous trustee is retired. Since his subsib has received much in the way of gifts from the clan, he is no longer entitled to first fruits. In the case of a very large ceremony, the retired trustee may be asked to make a contribution, in which case he is given a gift for his presence and assistance. This contribution and gift, however, will be less than that of the new trustee.

When another generation of children inherit the estate, the sib of the retired trustee falls to the status of final trustee. The final trustee is least important of the three and is recognized only on very important occasions by minor gifts from the estate father. He is never consulted regarding estate matters, but is treated as an honorary official of the estate. On certain ceremonial occasions in Rull, *mafen* of very important estates may be recognized for as many as seven generations, and may be given gifts. These *mafen* will be living matrilineal descendants of women who have married into and borne children to the estate.

The "falling" of *mafen* occurs logically in the developmental cycle of the clan unit. As a new generation of males inherits the estate, a new set of women and children take over the land (see Table 9). New trustees are

created as the sisters move away to take up residence and ownership in other estates. Importantly, the trustee relationship is not defined as a relationship between individuals and individuals, but rather between individuals and a land estate. A woman has residual rights to the land, symbolized in her ritual gifts in all major clan functions. These rights to land are passed to her children (new trustee), to her daughter's children (retired trustee), and to her daughter's daughter's children (final trustee), each of whom retain certain rights to the produce of the estate. The rights of the new trustee, however, are the most powerful.

The people of Rull disagreed somewhat on the definition of *mafen ni le‘* 'final trustee'. Most agreed that the final trustee is the third generation of *mafen* as described above. However, several informants said that there is also a final trustee that does not fall. Counting on the fingers of the hand, they described the hierarchical statuses of the family. The little finger is the individual or ego, next above him in authority is *matam* 'estate father', the next finger, longest and highest, is the *mafen ni bi‘ec* 'new trustee', then lower, the *mafen ni bad* 'retired trustee', and finally the thumb and *mafen ni le‘* 'final trustee'. The significance of this analogy is that the final trustee, like the thumb, is short and distant from the other fingers, but very strong; it does not fall. There are indeed cases of a few estates where the *mafen* rights of a particular sib do not fall, and sib members remain in a final trustee relationship in perpetuity.

A number of cases may be cited. Seven estates in Balabat village, built long ago by sib mates from the sib Yotal, consider present members of Yotal their final trustees and say the relationship will continue until all members of Yotal have died. Members of Kanfay sib have the right to take food at any time from a taro patch in the Lan Ru‘way section of Balabat called Ma‘ut ko Kanfay 'taro patch for Kanfay'. Kanfay sib is also trustee of *athing* net fishing in the village of Gal‘, and from each catch, a string of fish is set aside for any member of that sib. The sib Weloblob is trustee of a stone fish trap near Bulwol, Rumung, and members may take the fish at any time. The sib Raclang is trustee of land in the village of Atiliw and holds rights to certain bananas from that land.

It should be noted that this usage of *mafen* is different from that of *tafen* in reference to permanent sib rights. There are certain lands such as Bulwol in Gacpar and Arib in Tamil that are *tafen e genung* 'possessions of the sib'. These are definitely owned by and passed on to sib members. The other cases stated here are land and resources that are *tafen e bitir* 'possessions of children', and passed from fathers to sons. For the latter the sib stands in a 'trustee' relationship, having occasional right to, but not ownership of, the land or resources in question. This phenomenon of sibs holding residual rights to land adds considerable support to the hypothesis that matrilineal sibs were once corporate, land-holding units in Yap.

Schneider argues that the *mafen* relationship "is emphatically

irrelevant to the matri-lineal descent units or matri-lineal clans in the Yap view" (1962:8–13). Obviously our informants do not agree with each other, but then their disagreement may be to some extent the result of differences in the wording of the questions asked of them. Schneider discusses the concept with particular reference to a *man* and his position as owner of an estate and head of a patriclan. My informants described the relationship in terms of a *woman,* who marries into an estate, takes usufruct ownership of the land, and ultimately, through children "from her belly," takes the titles to the estate. Given this latter point of view, Schneider's argument that patrilineal siblings have equal share in the distribution of produce belonging to the *mafen* is academic. Each set of siblings gains its rights through the *mother* who bore them *and provided nurture in produce from the land* to the father of the estate. Further, Schneider errs in interpreting the kin term for sibling as applying primarily to the nuclear family, then to the patriclan, and finally to the matrisib. We have already observed that only siblings through women are considered "real" *wolag* 'siblings'. Schneider, however, correctly states that a member of the same sib as the father may not substitute for a *wolag* (member of the subsib) if all the siblings have died. Distant sib mates are not considered siblings and may not act in the role of one.

The role of the subsib in the trustee relationship is consistent with conceptions of the role of siblings in the patriclan and the solidarity of the subsib. Matrilineal siblings share loyalty and support while patrilineal siblings by different mothers are extremely competitive and their relationships are fraught with conflict. The trustee relationship of a subsib assures an individual of support and protection in this intraclan competition. In the most severe cases of conflict, the trustee may chase the children of the clan from their land.

The Statuses of Matin *'Public Mother'*

The third status in the parent generation is that of *matin* 'public mother'. As with the *matam* 'public father', there are two different *matin* statuses and the respective *wolag* 'siblings' of the *matin* statuses. *Matin* is also an occasional status, referring to the highest-ranking, oldest women in the family group, who have the "feeling of mother" in their relationships with the younger members. One *matin* comes from the patrilineage and may be referred to as *matin ko tabinaw* 'estate mother', while the other comes from the mother's subsib and may be referred to as *matin ko genung* 'subsib mother'. In public functions of the patriclan these two women play a very important and active part. The estate mother, because she is from the patrilineage or the patriclan, ranks highest. The subsib mother, however, is also important and contributes heavily to the success of estate affairs. These women are the leaders in gathering the

food resources for the major life-cycle events. At public meetings they are given recognition and proper payment for their work and rank in the family. They are looked upon with respect and to hold any public affair of the family without them would be considered quite improper. Like that of public father, the positions must be filled, and when an occupant dies, someone else fills the "place."

Succession to these positions differs somewhat from those of public father. The estate mother position is filled by the oldest sister of the estate father. Thus sisters in order of their closeness and age to the father fill this position. Should all the sisters be dead, the wife of the current male leader may fill that position. The sisters of the deceased mother of the patriclan fill the subsib mother role again in order of their rank as siblings. As in the former case, the wife of the subsib father may act as subsib mother should all of his close sisters be dead.

There are also two sets of supporting statuses, the *wolagen e matin ko tabinaw* 'siblings of the estate mother' and *wolagen e matin ko genung* 'siblings of the subsib mother'. These are women who form a pool of potential successors to the status of *matin,* but who also act as a strong supporting cast for all of the important patriclan affairs. The public affairs of an estate demand a large amount of work and food resources. The members of the estate are not able to handle this alone and the sibling relationships in all the generations are used most fully to project the estate's proper image and strength. Thus, while the *matam* and *matin* statuses are prestigious, they are also very important economic positions and without their supporting siblings become quite weak. The *wolag* are then both potential successors and holders of important and supporting active statuses.

As with the public father/father distinction, there is the lower-ranking, but more demanding, status of head of the internal affairs of women in the household and estate, the *citinngin* 'mother'. This position likely will be filled by the mother of the family, or by the father's current wife, or by the father's closest sister. The mother is highly respected by the junior members of the family and is the leader in women's affairs within the clan. She may fill the post of *matin* 'public mother' if no other eligible older woman is available to do so. The *citinngin* status, like that of father, is one upon which daily demands are made; other members of the family are dependent upon her for food, care, and assistance in daily matters. She may help the young wives in the clan develop their gardens and assist in the care of their children. She is looked upon by all as their mother and receives the respect due her position.

One important fact about these leadership statuses is that their formal quality, with regard to ceremonial exchanges in particular, requires that they be filled regardless of whether an eligible member is living or not. This explains why second-and third-generation *mafen* 'trustees' may be called back into service even when they are not in the proper relationship.

When there is no eligible person to occupy these statuses, another person of the proper age and sex, and with some general relationship to the estate, will become *madol'eg e matam, madol'eg e mafen,* or *madol'eg e matin.* These persons are "make-believe" *matam, mafen,* and *matin,* as the case may be, and fulfill the formal requirements of the particular custom in question.

The statuses of the *matam* generation demonstrate one other aspect of Yapese leadership. The highest in rank often have very little to do, but are isolated by their loftiness, treated with utmost respect, and consigned to sitting, hearing what is being said or done, and offering an opinion *if* it is requested. For example, the trustee is considered the highest authority over the estate. In matter of fact, he is quite inactive in terms of work, since the estate father conducts the affairs of the estate. He receives gifts and may give some, but the estate father does the actual speaking and exercising of authority. The power of the trustee lies in his ultimate authority to drive away negligent children.

The "child" generation has no public authority. The responsibilities of children are to assist and to obey their parents. Children have no authority to speak in public and are consulted only in matters that concern them, sometimes after the fact. Their parents may arrange their marriages and may require their divorces, as they may refuse courtships and engagements without regard to the feelings of the couple. Two matters where children are consulted and asked for their approval are in land matters and in the question of the remarriage of their father; these have far-reaching significance for the children and they are given the right to express their disapproval.

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* These terms are from the Rull area. Gagil, Map, and Rumung informants used only two terms, *mafen* and *le'*. However, informants from other districts in Yap also used three terms (see Labby 1972).