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Why Marry Her?

Society and symbolic structures

LUC DE HEUSCH

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Preface

The main body of this volume is composed of four of twelve studies published by Gallimard under the title *Pourquoi l'épouser? et autres essais* (1971). 'Possession et chamanisme' and 'La folie des dieux et la raison des hommes' appear here in their original form. The author has thought it opportune to introduce a number of slight alterations to 'Structure et praxis sociales chez les Lele du Kasai' and to follow this text with a new commentary in which he discusses the analysis of the Lele kinship system that Lévi-Strauss undertook in 1973 in *Anthropologie structurale deux*. This appendix will only be intelligible if the reader first reads the first chapter in this volume, 'A defence and illustration of the structures of kinship', which, like the Introduction, has never been published in French. Chapter 4, 'Structure and history', gives a fuller version of a substantial part of the study published in *Pourquoi l'épouser?* under the title 'Signes, réciprocité et marxisme'. In the present volume the author devotes his attention entirely to Kachin society as described by Edmund Leach.

Finally, this volume also includes an article originally published in *Man* (new series, 9, 4, 1974); 'The debt of the maternal uncle', and adds a postscript on the subject of the systems known as the 'Omaha systems'.

The publisher wishes to thank the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for permission to reproduce chapter 3, 'The debt of the maternal uncle', first published in *Man* (new series, 9, 4, 1974).