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CTD: 04CS - CULTURAL-SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS, SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND SOCIAL DYNAMICS
SUB-DOMAIN: 1. FAMILY MARRIAGE AND KINSHIP

PANEL TITLE:

KINSHIP SYSTEM AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AMONG THE TRIBES

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ABSTRACT

Kinship is system of social organization based on real or putative family ties. The study of kinship systems can be traced back to mid-19th-century interests in comparative legal institutions and philology, and the study of the history of language. In the late 19th century, however, the cross-cultural comparison of kinship institutions became integral to ethnographic explorations. Anthropology and Kinship studies shared a symbiotic relationship. While American anthropology diversified and focused largely on cultural studies, backbone of British Anthropology remained kinship studies. The functioning of the so-called stateless, nonindustrial, or traditional societies was largely defined in terms of kinship relations. Undeniably, Kinship is a universal human phenomenon that takes variable cultural forms. It has been explored and analysed by many scholars, however, in ways quite removed from any popular understanding of what “being kin” might mean. In the epistemology of anthropological discipline, it is defined as the web of social relationships that form an important part of the lives of all humans in all societies, although its exact meanings even within this discipline are often debated. Anthropologist Robin Fox states that “the study of kinship is the study of what man does with these basic facts of life – mating, gestation, parenthood, socialization, siblingship etc.” Human society is unique, he argues, in that we are “working with the same raw material as exists in the animal world but can conceptualize and categorize it to serve social ends.” These social ends include the socialization of children and the formation of basic economic, political, and religious groups. It refers both to the patterns of social relationships themselves, or it can refer to the study of the patterns of social relationships in one or more human cultures.

Different tribes follow different systems of kinship and serves a multitude of functions. We invite panellists to further the understanding of different forms of kinship systems in small-scale communities generally identified as tribes.

Keywords: - Tribe, kinship, family ties, variability in kinship

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