9.7: Residence Patterns

Figure \(\PageIndex{1}\) - A wooden wagon (Doli) in which a bride is taken to her husband’s home. Although this is a thing of past now, the administration of Chandigarh depicted this in its annual Chandigarh carnival 2005.

After getting married the couple needs to live somewhere. And where the couple ends up varies, depending on their culture. There are four major residence patterns, Neolocal, Patrilocal, Matrilocal, and Avunculocal.

1. **Neolocal Residence** is most common with North American couples. This is where the couple finds their own house, independent from all family members.

2. **Patrilocal Residence** is most commonly used with herding and farming societies. It’s where the married couple lives with the husband’s father’s family. By living with the husband’s family, it lets all the men, (the father, brothers, and sons) continue to work together on the land.

3. **Matrilocal Residence** is most familiar among horticultural groups. It’s where the couple moves to live where the wife grew up; usually found with matrilineal kinship systems.
4. **Avunculocal Residence** is also related in matrilineal societies however in this case the couple moves to live with the husband’s mother’s brother. They live with the most significant man, his uncle, because it’s who they will later inherit everything from.

There are two other forms of residence however they aren’t as common. There’s **Ambilocal residence** where the couple lives with one family for awhile and then moves to live with the other spouse’s family. Eventually they have to decide who to live with permanently. And then there’s **Duolocal residence** where lineage membership is so important to both the husband and wife that even though the couple is married they still live apart from one another and reside with their families.

![Image](https://socialsci.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Anthropology/Cultural_Anthropology/Book%3A_Cultural_Anthropology_(Evans)/09…) - A Hindu Kush woman in the Northeastern part of India in the Himalayan Region.

The division of labor by sex largely determines where a couple resides after marriage. If the male predominates in the division of labor than the couple’s residence tends to be an Avunculocal and Patrilocal residence. However if the females predominates than they tend to live in matrilocal residence. And if neither sex predominates in the division of labor than their residence tends to be more ambilocal or neolocal residence.

In the mountains of the Hindu Kush Himalayan region the domination of society by males is prevalent throughout the region. And because the males are so dominate in this region, the main pattern of living is Patrilocal Residence. Once couples are married the women are forced to live with the husband and the rest of his family, in unfamiliar surroundings. Marriages are generally arranged by the parents, so the women have to learn to live with strangers, without any family support that she once enjoyed at home.