MARANAO KINSHIP SYSTEM*

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Kinship is important in understanding Maranao social organization. Kindred relationships are traced bilaterally and descents are traced generationally. Some terms may not have their equivalent in English but they can be made understandable. Teknonymic pattern is widespread in refering to names of fathers and mothers. The Ego is the point of reference whether the tracing direction is descending, ascending or extended which also includes the affines.

The Ego's father is called *Ama*. Other terms may be used to call a father. He can also be directly or indirectly called *papa, kakamama* or *bati*. Ego's father's brothers (paternal uncles) and mother's brothers (maternal uncles) are his *pakiamahan* and he can call them bapa. Ego's mother is called *ina*. She can also be directly or indirectly called *babu* and *kakababay*. Only when a situation demands that the given name of a father is required would their real names be given.

In some cases, we hear a Maranao call his real mother *babu* or his real father bapa. This would mean that the person calling them in such a way is very close to the family of his father's brother or his mother's sister. Conversely, for the same reason, Ego can also call his aunt *ina* and his uncle *asaama*. This is called *lumping* or broadening relationships to include uncles and aunties and all male and female relatives as *ama, ina, kakamama* or *kakababay*.

Maranaos address all older women as *ba'i* or *babu* as a sign

of respect. Grandparents or very old persons are called *apo*. Female grandparents are called *ba i,* but they can also be called *apo.*

Wata is the term given to children generally. Parents call their children by the first name or by their *lano* (nickname) when the child's name is long in pronunciation. Very often, however, parents call their male children *orak* (male reproductive organ) and their female children as *oli* (female reproductive organ). These terms are terms of endearment and love for children knowing that these were the reproductive organs that created them. Even unrelated persons can call any boy or girl *orak* or *oli* as the case may be, especially if the person addressing them do not know their real names. The term *orak* (or *oli*) can also be used in calling a grown male (or female) by an elderly person who has some attachment to him (or her). It is a safety valve which a stranger can use to call a younger person without being insulting.

Respect for older offsprings and siblings is very prominent among the Maranao. Elderly siblings whether male or female is called *kaka* and younger brothers or sisters are called *ariya* or *ari*. This is similar to the Ilocano term *ading* to refer to younger brothers and sisters and *manong manang* to older brothers/sisters.

The children of Ego's father's brother and his mother's sister are his *tenged minsan* (first cousins). *Tenged* is a referential term given to a male or female cousin. There is no difference between parallel or cross except when tracing relationship in the *salsila* (genealogy).

For the purpose of clarity, parallel cousins are the children of Ego's father's brother or Ego's mother's sister. Cross-cousins are the children of Ego's father's sister or Ego's mother's brother. In the former, the sexes of Ego's father and uncle are the same or parallel and the same is true with the sexes of Ego's mother and aunt. In the latter, there is a cross in sexes from Ego's father to Ego's aunt or Ego's mother to Ego's uncle.

In the Maranao concept of cousins even fourth cousins are considered as first cousin or as close as first cousins and are still entitled to similar treatment and support as first cousins, whether they be from the agnatic line or from the uterine line. This con-

cern for support to any cousin whether distant or close relative is always expected to pay off in times of crisis.

Cognate and ramage

Theoretically, one's kindred includes every person to whom one can trace a genealogical bond. It includes all of one's cognates or agnates, i.e., everyone who can be traced as descendant of a specified common ancestor, whether male or female. In point of fact, however, a kindred as a functioning unit never organizes such a heterogeneous crowd. Because cognate relationships ramify in all directions and multiply geometrically, their boundaries are too inclusive. They become so thin at the edges that the definition of relationship is lost in the mist of uncertainty and vagueness. These groups according to Goodenough and Murdock are referred to as *ramages*. Thus, one's ramage consists of that segment of all his kindred who have an interest in him as a kinsman. The members of a ramage respond to the obligation of kinsmen to be concerned about one another and to rally at important events or crises, such as, birth, puberty, marriage, feasts, the occasion of honorific conferring of titles, occasions of lawsuit, illness and death.

There are no terms appropriate for husband and wife except a collective term *kharoma'i*. *Karoma* is referred to either husband or wife. Early in marriage, a husband would call his wife *"oli,* "but the wife would never call her husband *"orak.* " She calls him by hi real name or his *lano.* At present, husbands and wives are gradually calling each other "honey" or "darling" but this does not imply that they favor this over calling each other with their first names. Those who call each other "honey" or "darling" are those who have been exposed to the media or those who are formally educated.

Friends call each other *gari* or *ari* when they meet in the streets or when they are conversing. But when they refer to each other in situations where one is not present, they mention their names. *Kowata* is also another term used to refer to friends especially when these friends were childhood pals. One will observe that

there are no English equivalents to *gari* or *kowata*. *Gari* is used among boys, while *kowata* is used among girls.

The wife of a man becomes *miyakamong* (child-in-law) not only to his parents but to all his relatives along the parents' generation. The parents and all his parents' relatives are her *panogangan* (parents-in-law). This relationship is also used vice-versa. Thus, *panogangan* is a referential term generally meaning parents-in-law that refers to both female and male. In the same manner that *miyakamong* can be referred to mean children-in-law whether male or female. The wife is the *ipag* to his brothers, sisters and cousins. However, they call her *kaka* or by her nickname. Her husband's nephews and nieces who are younger than herself call her *baan* in the same manner that she calls her husband's mother's sisters and other female cousins *babu*. Both husband and wife are expected to give due respect to their parents and in-laws since they are supposed to be members of one family. In this situation, the husband becomes a "son" to his wife's family in the same manner that the wife is a "daughter" in his own family, thus, all the rights and benefits accorded to sons and daughters are to be theirs after their marriage. In terms of inheritance, however, if the husband would die, she would not receive the share of the husband within the family but whatever is her husband's share would be given to her to administer for the sake of the children and not for her or her family.

Brothers' wives or sisters' husbands are *idas* to one another. The parents of the husband and those of the wife are *mbala'ya* to one another. The situation is still an in-law situation and as such if one is within the in-law ties one is expected to be cordial and civil to everybody and also to be expected to render support to one another in crises and other occasions where their help is needed. In a way this is an expansion of the kinship relationships.

The wife's brothers are called her husband's *bati* and her sisters are called his *ipag*. The husband is also *ipag* to his wife's sisters. The husband's brothers and sisters are also *ipag* to the wife. In this case, the term *ipag* is both vocative and referential titles to both male and female while *bati* is used among males only. An important facet worthy of mentioning is that these

terms, *miyakamong, ipag, bati* and *idas,* are sometimes overused to refer even to persons who are not really related as such. Instead, they call each other using such terms loosely in a "joking" relationship. This can be interpreted to mean that, unconsciously, they would like to continue the relation if there are still other daughters and sons or nephews and nieces to be married within their families. It may also mean that if they call each other such names, they have cordial and civil relationships. Such "joking" relationships can be truly functional in this instance as they tend to harmonize and unify groups whose relationships otherwise are casual.

Vocative and Referential Kinship Terms

English equivalent	Vocative	Referential
Father	ama, bapa, kakamama	ama
Mother	ina bhabu, kakabhabay	ina
Uncle	bapa	pakiyamahan
Aunt	babu	pakina'an
Husband		karoma
Wife		karoma
Brother	kaka (elder)	pagari
	ariya (younger)	laki (if addresser is female)
Sister	kaka (elder)	pagari
	ariya (younger)	
Cousin	kaka (elder)	tenged
	ariya (younger)	
Son		wata
Daughter		wata
Father-in-law	bapa	panogangan
Mother-in-law	babu	panogangan
Son-in-law		miyakamong
Brother-in-law	bati (among male)	bati
Daughter-in-law	ipag (among female)	ipag
		miyakamong

Co-brother-in-law	idas	idas
Co-sister-in-law	idas	idas
Sister-in-law	kaka	ipag

Dynamics of Maranao Kinship

A. *Reciprocity in Aid and Services, as seen in the concept of* katatabanga. The *katatabanga* principle is observed in many diverse forms in occasions, such as death, marriage, investiture and resolution of conflicts. Although non-relatives such as friends are sometimes engulfed in this complex network, the reciprocity works more intensely among circles of close relatives. One can see the system as a means of reinforcing and strengthening the sense of belongingness and solidarity in a kinship group. Seen from its manifested form, when one dies in a community, all relatives of the deceased are expected to give help in form of material or services. If one does not assist in the occasion, then one cannot expect to be helped in his own time of need. It is an anathema to ask for help from relatives if one has not rendered his share in the past.

Obligations and responsibilities within the reciprocal system are channelled through the *opakat* (organization). This is a formal organization with well-defined and written codes. It regulates the ways and procedures by which activities are followed. In it are the list of nuclear families within the system. This is kept in the care of a member of the council of elders. In many cases, the *opakat* designates one or a few individuals in collecting the members of a nuclear families' share in times of crisis. The amount of *tabang* (aid) is prescribed in the code. In the past this code was verbal but since the group is expected to grow, they have now put the main paints down in writing.

B. *Security.* The family and the kinship network is the primary source of personal security. In his personal interrelations,

a member expects to be aided, abetted and protected by all the other members. As a complement of its united protection of individual members, the kinship group is also frequently collectively liable for the illegal acts of its own members against members of other groups. Thus, if a man commits murder, vengeance may commonly be exacted on a member of the kinship group, for even though this member is innocent in fact, his person is merged with the persons of all his kinsmen.

C. *Further manifestation of* the *reciprocity system.* For a clearer grasp of the complex reciprocity network, two precepts are vital: the *taritib* (order, arrangement) and the *igma* (laws). The taritib prescribes in order and in sequence the activities and events in a given situation. As a case in point, if one member of the community dies it is the role of the taritib to see to it that the *agong* (brass gong) and the *tabo* (wooden drum that usually hangs from a ceiling in a mosque) are sounded along with the firing of the guns and the display of white flags to announce to the entire *inged* (community) that the person who died belonged to the *mapiya a tao* (nobility) class. The white cloth is a symbol for mourning among the Maranao. In addition, the taritib also forbids the people of the *inged* to perform any kind of festivity and other activities during this period of sorrow. This taboo is called *lalawan.*

Furthermore, the relatives of the deceased should inform the three other *pangampongs* about the tragic event. In return, the three *pangampongs* would give their *tabang* in terms of materials or services (e.g., money or animals to be slaughtered or simply services to the bereaved family). The taritib also defines that every pangampong should give one carabao to the family as a kind of aid. If and when the *patapangampong* are all gathered during the wake and if there is trouble caused to disturb the gathering, the taritib also defines that the pangampong_ where the troublemaker belongs, will have to pay for the expenses incurred for that particular day. Moreover, all the distant relatives of the deceased who came during the death wake will be given *sadka* (charity) in terms of money or other articles such as clothes, porcelain and the like. The madrasah-educated Maranao who knows different prayers and can recite verses from the Koran and who happens to be

around but is apart of the *Pat a Pangampong* can participate in the *karawatib* (prayer for the departed done twice a day) for the successive seven days following the date of the death. This is the pattern of worship or *atoran* that is supposed to be followed. When a person dies and is not a member of the nobility there are no prescribed *taritib* to follow. It is up to the master to dictate what pattern of activities is to be followed or none at all.

The *taritib* also has its hand in marriage matters. After the consensus of the bride price has been agreed upon and the date of the ceremony is set, the parents and the relatives of the prospective bride will invite the *Pat a Pangampong o Ranao* to come and attend the wedding. The festivities will last from three to seven days. While the festivities and the like are played. These games are not defined in the taritib. However, the *kasipa sa manggis,* where the male would hit and drop any object suspended from the manggis, is specified. After these festivities, the traditional leaders and the people present would be given their respective *adat* (customary share in the bridegroom's gift to the bride). After the distribution of these gifts, the wedding ceremony which is the culmination of the activities, is performed.

Still another occasion where the taritib defines some rules is in investiture. As it is in the marriage ceremony, the traditional leaders in the *Pat a Pangampong* are invited. The people gathered deliver their speeches and are served. Then a *kandori* (presents in terms of food alone or food and money) is given to the different *inged* that are represented in the gathering. The fifteen *panoroganans* (supreme sultans of the fifteen superordinate sultanates of the whole *Pat a Pangampongan Ko Ranao*), representatives of the twenty-eight ingeds that control the taritib provisions, and the four inged boundaries of the *Pat a Pangampongan o Ranao,* would confirm and crown the parties concerned.

Igma is another set of social precept that prescribes in a relatively different way some sequence of activities in the various social occasions mentioned above. The Maranao call this order *kokoman* or rules, regulations, principles that are obligations. In case of death, the following must be followed to the letter:

a. One or more *tuans* (religious persons) have to say some prayers for the departed;

b. The corpse is bathed;

c. The corpse is clad in white cloth;

d. A second prayer is done in the mosque;

e. The interment; and

f. Group prayer for the next seven days.

After the prayers, the close relatives of the dead person give *sadka* to all who have participated in the group prayers. The person who leads in the prayers usually receives more than the others.

In marriage, the bridegroom or usually the parents must clarify the amount of the bride price. This bride price is normally in forms of cash and material objects such as animals, a piece of land and other valuable items. The amount of cash and the number of material items to be given to the bride will depend on the social status of the parents of the would-be couple as well as on the results of the negotiations of the bride and groom's parents.

The *igma* also clarifies the different *adat* which is going to be received by the close relatives out of the bride price. It also sets the date of the wedding ceremony. If after everything has been fixed but the would-be groom changes his mind about marrying the girl, the *igma* defines a fine for him. In this case the wealth that he has given to the girl will not be returned to him. On the contrary, if the prospective bride changes her mind about the marriage for some reasons or other, then the gifts that were given to the girl's parents will be returned in full, including all those that have been given during the time of courtship.

In the case of investitures, the *igma* defines that only persons of nobility are entitled to inherit the title of sultan or datu. During the actual ceremony, the honorees give their respective *kandori* to the people. These are all contained in the *igma*. There are other important elements of this precept which are not told an outsider. These occasions thus show how complex and expensive the ceremonies can be. An observer realizes why a great deal of reciprocity is needed in relationships in this culture. From another context, we also see how this practice can be one way of

renewing ties with relatives and strengthening the bonds of the covenant with one another, all of which lead also to improving the health of the clan's *maratabat* (self esteem or honor).

There are still other elements of Maranao kinship which need to be dealt with, but due to their complexities they can only be presented here in passing. One of these is known as *kanggiginaway* (friendship, brotherhood or alliance). A Maranao often can trace his relationship with another somewhat distant "relation." This is a natural talent somewhat called for in the culture. This is also explained by a need in the culture to broaden one relationship and increase one's alliance for security and support. The whole process of reciprocity is an ongoing process promoting the growth of these alliances.

Kasesela'i, better known as privilege-giving, is a precept usually practiced among sultans and datus and takes place when a person would like to make a decision without the prior permission of the other elders. It is his prerogative as one of the elders to be able to say what he wishes to say in behalf of a group, although his statements are subject to question by other members. However, his opinions *cannot* be considered *not* representing the other voices.

Another principle that may be included is the precept of the *kandadato'y.* This author's understanding of this precept, however, may be limited. He believes that its functions are similar to those of the other two.

SOME MARRIAGE TABOOS AMONG MARANAOS

Figure 1. *Magari sa susu a* (Brothers and sisters of same breasts)

Ama   Ina   unrelated female

Ego
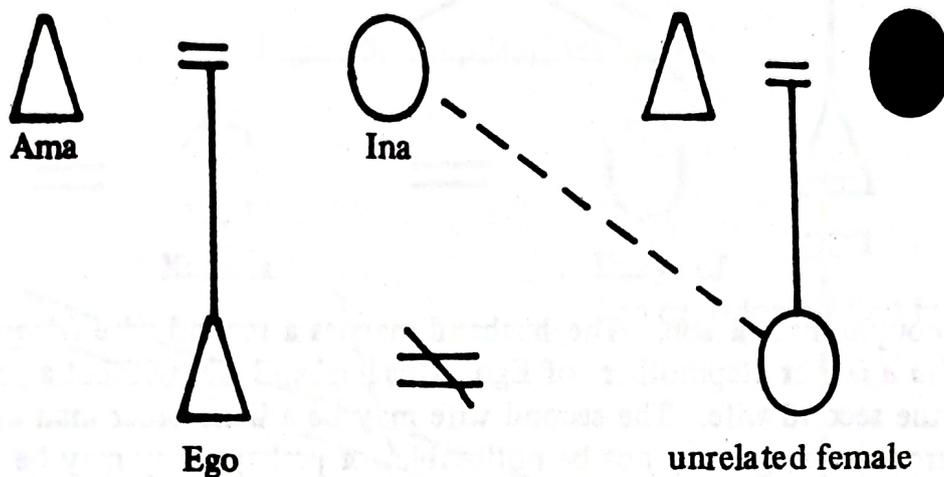
The husband and wife have a son (marked Ego). A female infant not related to Ego has been breastfed by Ego's mother due to the absence of that infant's mother. When these children grow up they can not marry each other because they were fed from the same breasts.

Figure 2. Sororal polygyny

Ego   Wife (Karoma)   Ipag
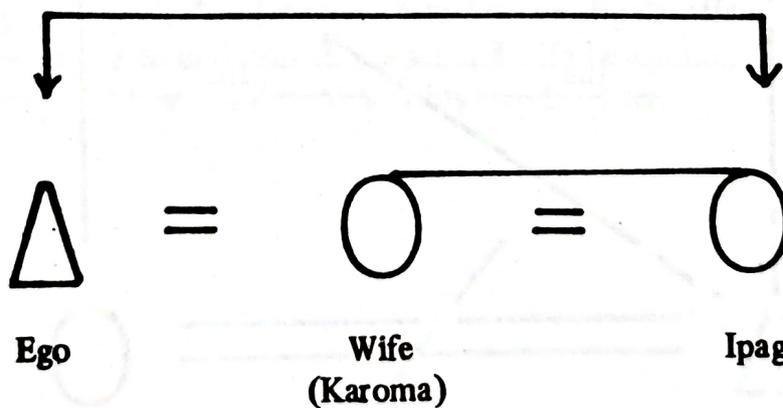
The sister of Ego's wife can become the wife of Ego only after the death of his first wife but never while the wife is still living.

Figure 3. Step-mother taboo

Ama
(deceased)

Ina

Duaya (stepmother) or
ikadua a ina sometimes
called *babu*

EGO
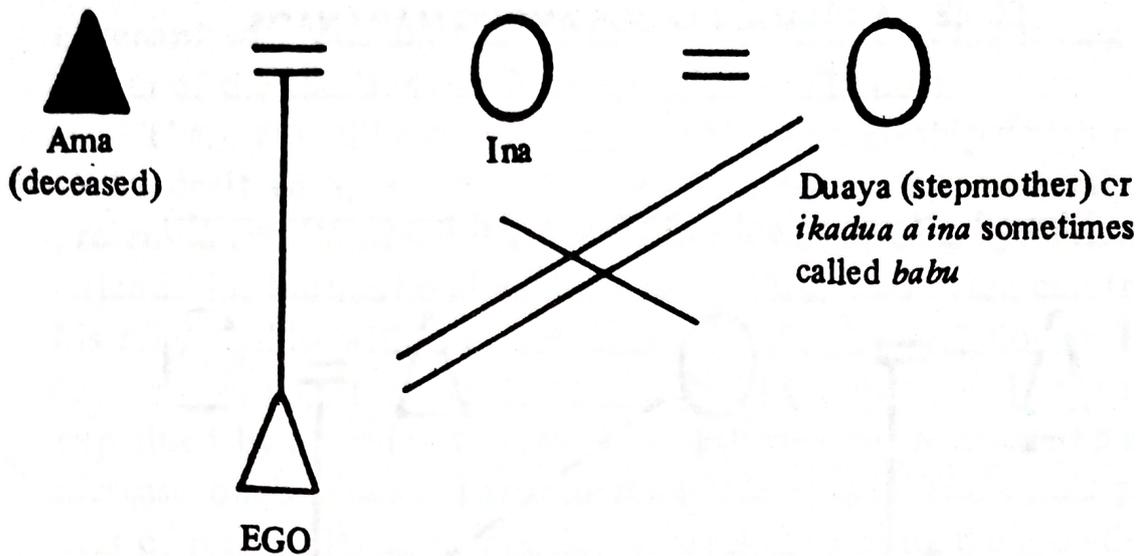
A married couple has a son. The husband marries a second wife (*duaya*) or the *ikadua a ina* or stepmother of Ego. This husband dies without a progeny from the second wife. The second wife may be a little older than Ego where differences in age may not be noticeable or perhaps they may be of the same age where they could otherwise get married. However, even if they like to marry they are not allowed at all because of the simple fact that she is his stepmother.
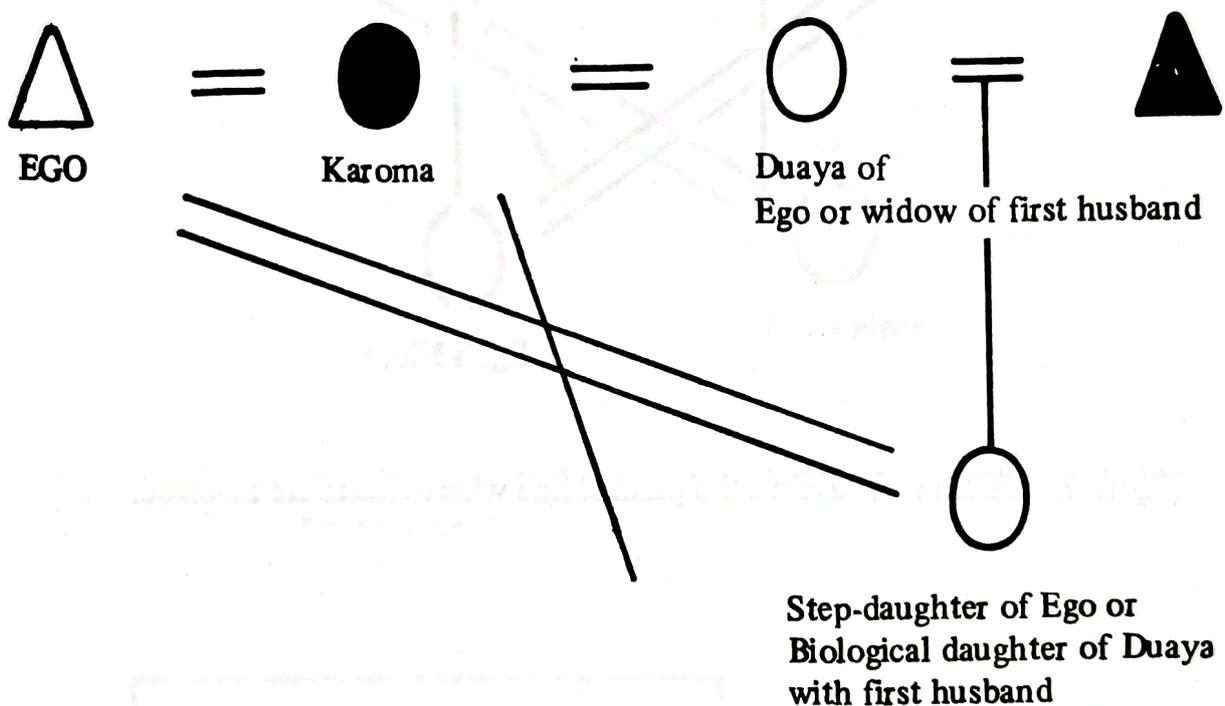
Figure 4. Substitute mother taboo

Family A

Family B

Ama

Ina

Ina

Ama

EGO

distant cousin
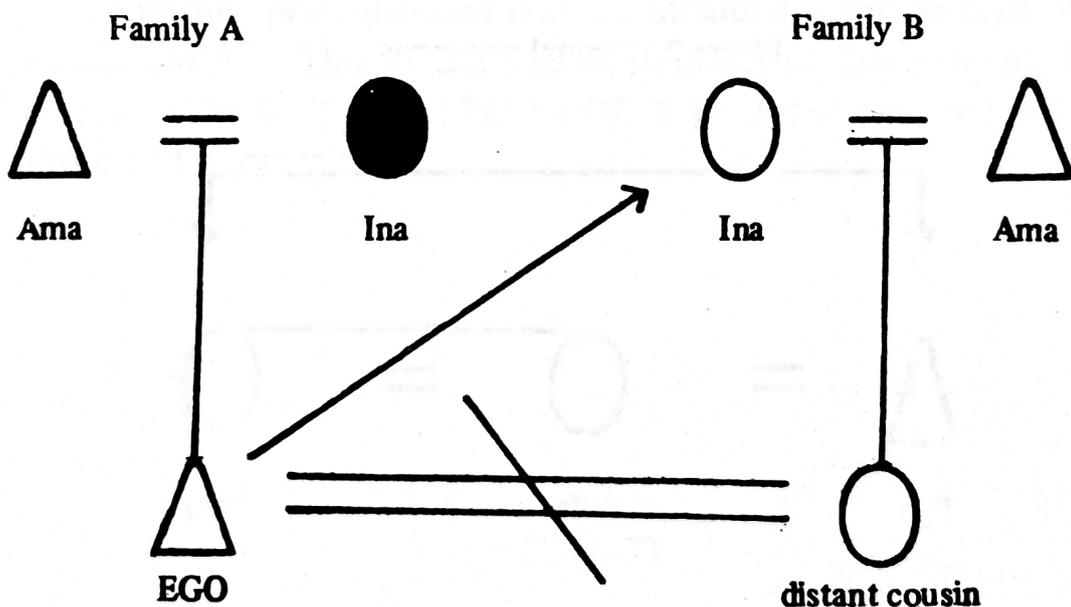
Family A and Family B are neighbors and are distantly related. Family A has a son while Family B has a daughter. During Ego's infancy his mother dies so

that no one can breastfed·him. His father makes arrangement with his neighbor and also a distant relative from Family B and asks the woman to breastfeed the boy. When the two children from both families grow up and the boy decides that he wants to marry the girl(which under ordinary and normal situations is allowed), he cannot be allowed to do so because they were breastfed by the same mother. (This is similar to Figure 1.)

Figure 5. Stepdaughter taboo

EGO

Karoma

Duaya of
Ego or widow of first husband

Step-daughter of Ego or
Biological daughter of Duaya
with first husband

Ego's wife dies without bearing him children. He marries a woman, a widow, who has a daughter who is old enough to become Ego's wife. If He (Ego) decides to marry her in addition to his second wife he cannot do so because he will be marrying his wife's daughter or his stepdaughter.

Figure 6. Other cases of Haram marriages on the parallel line where brothers are involved.
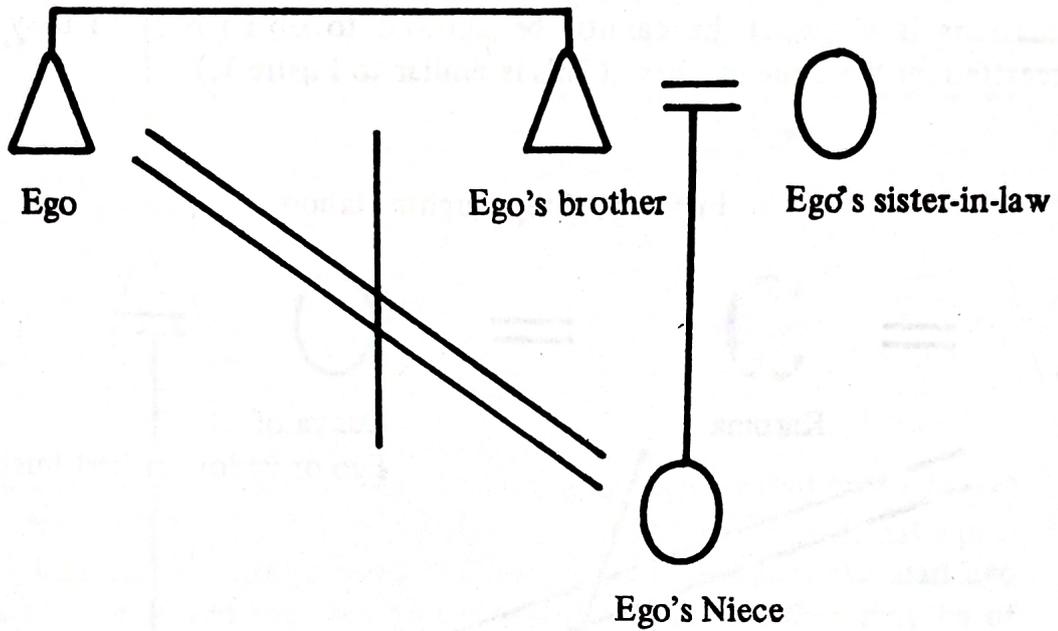

Ego   Ego's brother   Ego's sister-in-law

Ego's Niece

Figure 7. Haram marriage on the parallel line where sisters are involved.

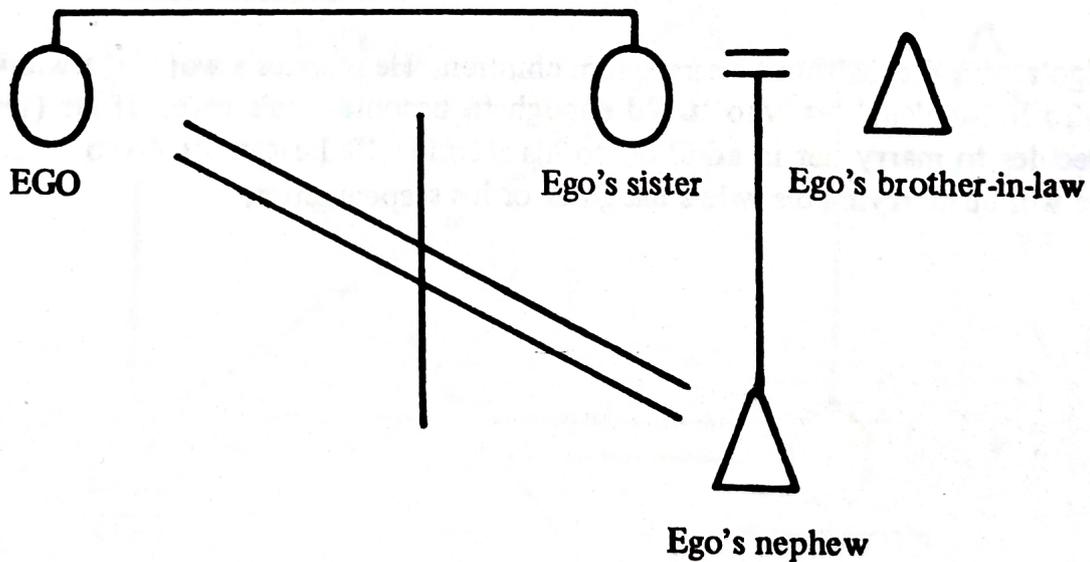EGO   Ego's sister   Ego's brother-in-law

Ego's nephew

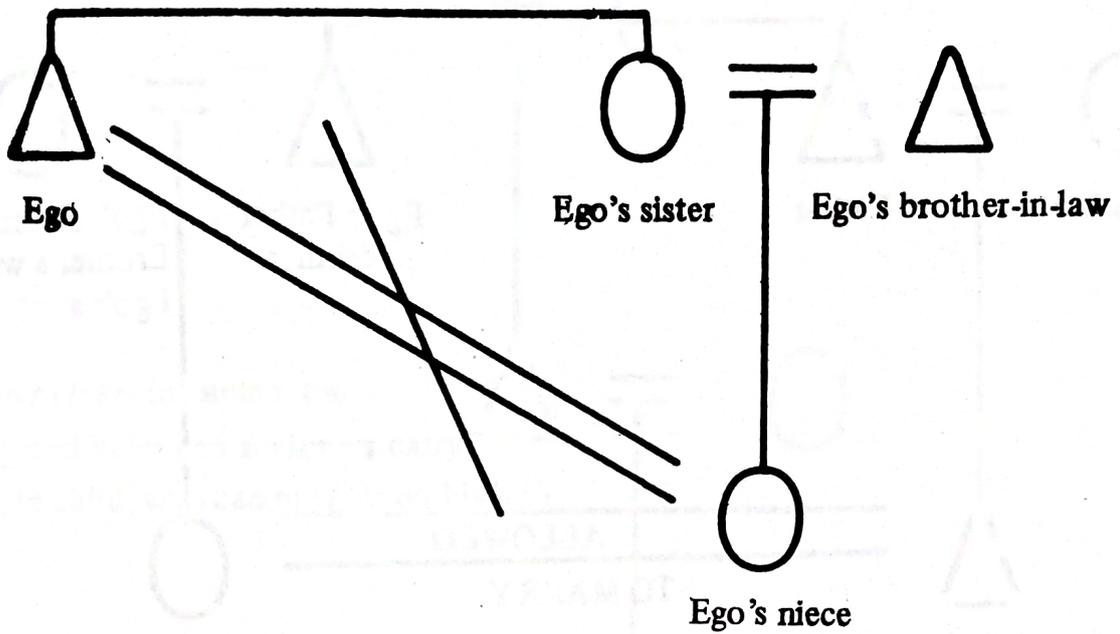Figure 8. Haram marriage on the cross line wherein the brother and sister are involved.

Figure 9. Haram marriage on the cross line wherein the sister and the
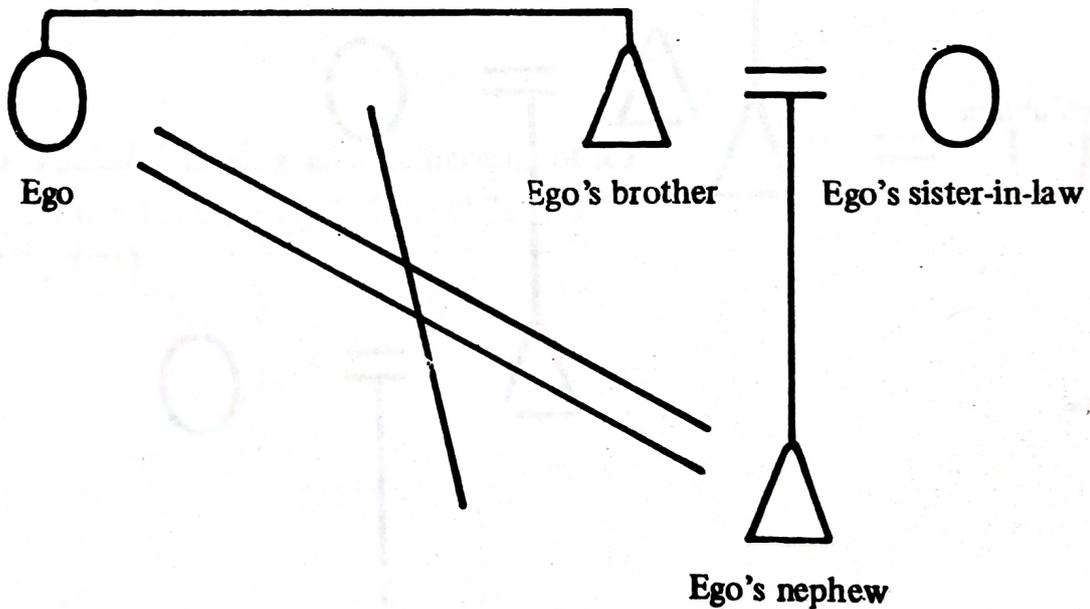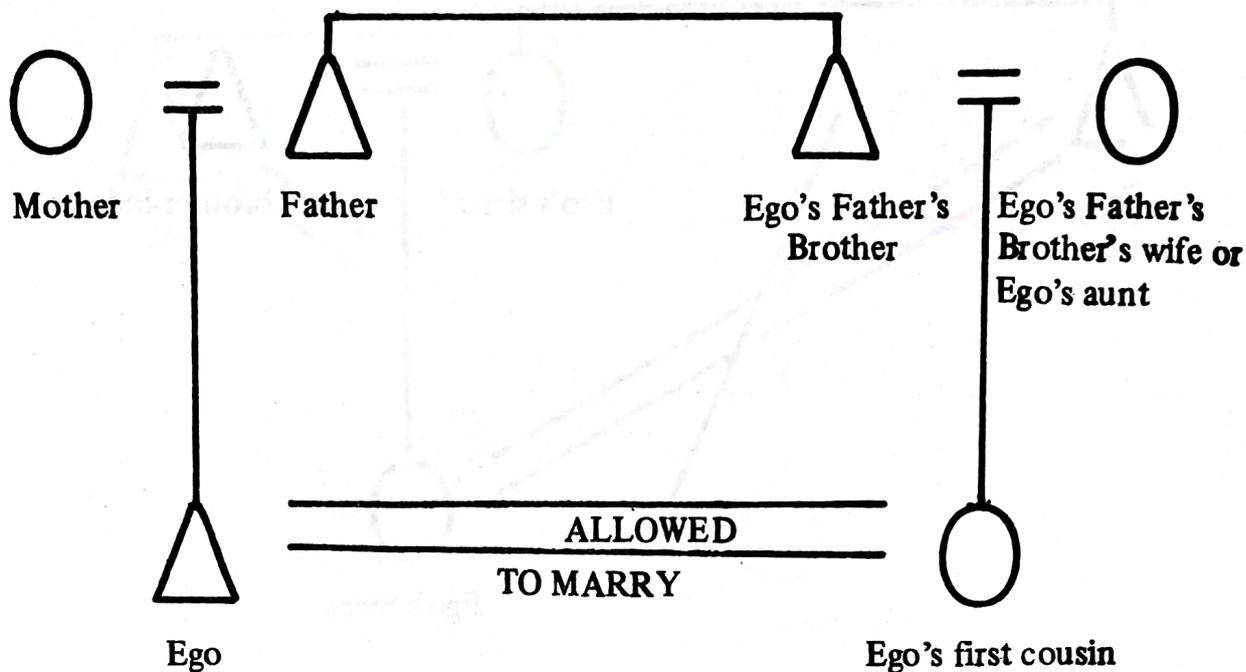b   brother are involved.

Figure 10. A case of an acceptable marriage among first cousin (parallel)

Mother   Father   Ego's Father's   Ego's Father's
                                          Brother   Brother's wife or
                                                                Ego's aunt

ALLOWED
TO MARRY

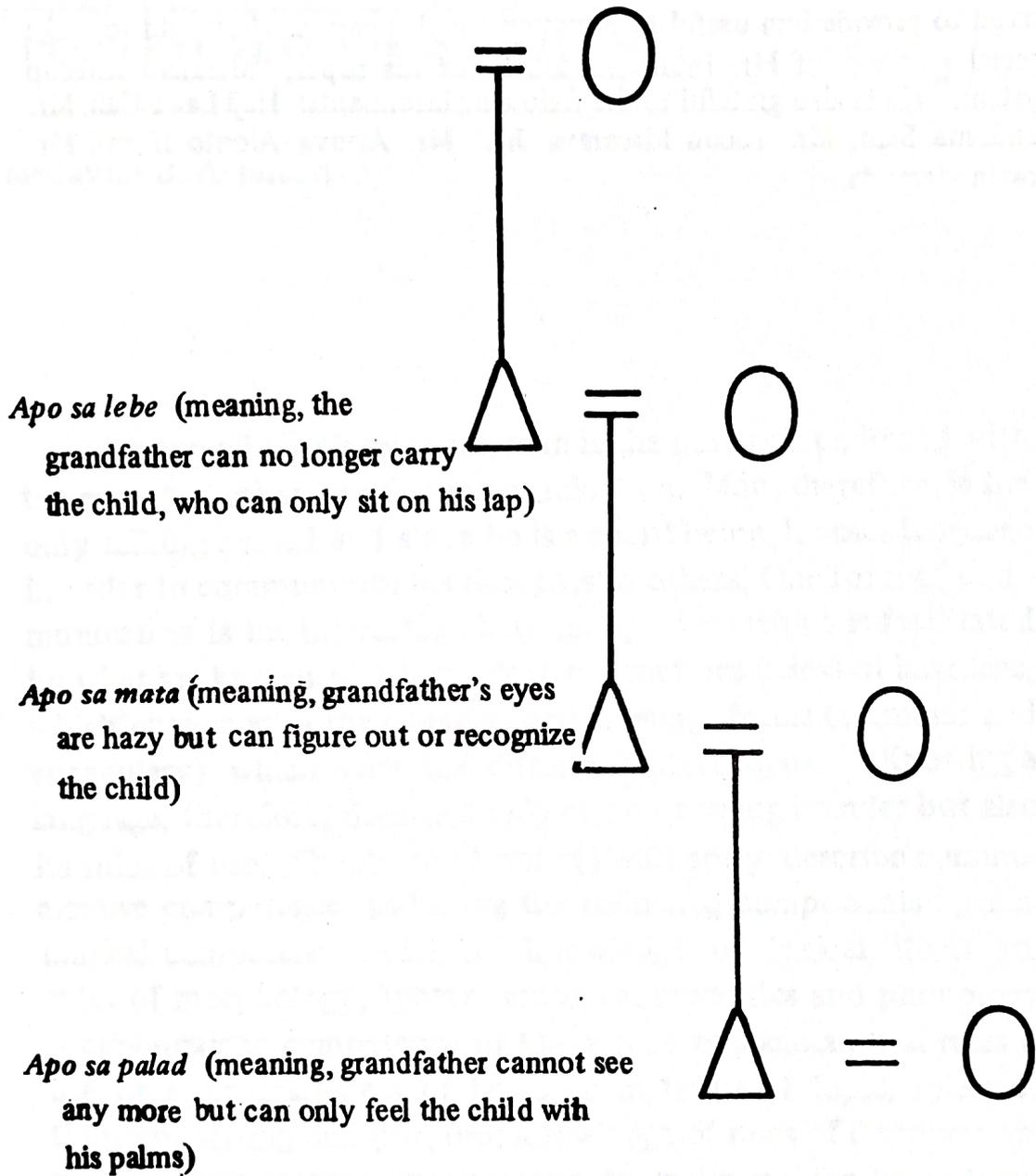Ego   Ego's first cousin

Note: Kitab of Arabic Law allows first-cousin or parallel-cousin marriages
      but not cross-cousin marriages.

Figure 11. Grand-descending generation

Ama a datu

Wata.

Apo sa siko (meaning, the grandfather
      still has enough strength to carry the
      child in his arms)

Apo sa lebe (meaning, the
    grandfather can no longer carry
    the child, who can only sit on his lap)

Apo sa mata (meaning, grandfather's eyes
    are hazy but can figure out or recognize
    the child)

Apo sa palad (meaning, grandfather cannot see
    any more but can only feel the child wih
    his palms)
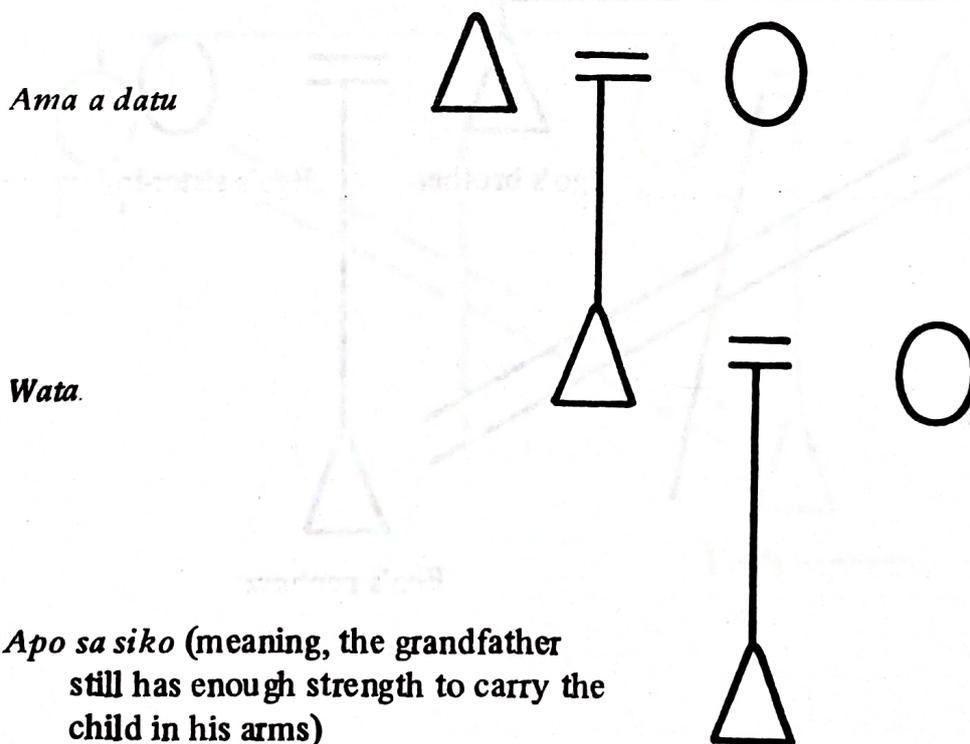
Note : The same terms can be used in the ascending generation when tracing
    grandfathers.

Footnote

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