newar kinship terms in the light of
kinship typology

Iswaranand Sresthacharyya

According to Schusky, 1965, there are two major
ways of classifying kinship systems, one which classifies
such systems according to the terms used for addressing
one's cousins and one which classifies such systems
according to the terms which one uses for one's parents
and their siblings. The purpose of this study is to
examine the Newar kinship system from these two points
of view.


Six major types of kinship system are commonly
distinguished on the basis of cousin terminology:
1. The Eskimo system, 2. The Hawaiian system, 3. The
Iroquois system, 4. The Crow system, 5. The Omaha
system, and 6. The Sudanese system. Figure 1. summarizes
the defining features of each of these six types. From
Figure 2 it can be observed that all cousins are lumped
with siblings. Thus, the term, dāju, is used not only
for one's elder brother but also for any son of either
of one's parent's siblings who is older than ego; kijā
is used for one's younger brother, but also for any son
of either of one's parent's siblings who is younger than
ego; tātā is used both for one's older sister and for a
daughter of one's parent's siblings who is older than
ego; and kehe applies to one's younger sister as well
as to a daughter of a parent's sibling who is younger
than ego. It may be fairly concluded that the system
of kinship terms found in Newari is a system of the
Hawaiian type.

B. Classification by Terms for Parents and their Siblings.

According to Schusky there are four basic types
within this type of classificatory scheme: 1. The
lineal system, 2. The generational system, 3. The
bifurcate merging system, and 4. The bifurcate col-
lateral system.
Figure 1. Six major types of kinship system commonly distinguished on the basis of cousin terminology.
Newar Kinship Terms 113

With Figure 1 in mind consider now Figure 2, which outlines the relevant portion of the Newar Kinship system.

Figure 2. Chart of Newari Kinship Terms for Cousins and for First Ascending Generation.

Terms for Figure 2:
1. bā, bā, abu, bau
2. mā
3. dāju (older than ego)
4. kīj (younger than ego)
5. tatā (older than ego)
6. keh (younger than ego)
7. taabā (older than father)
8. ciribā (younger than father)
9. (Gb. Srt. kakā)
10. nini (age irrelevant)
11. pāju (age irrelevant)
12. tari-mā, taa-mā
13. camā, ca-mā

(Numbers 7, 8, and 9 are omitted from Figure 2).
Figure 3 summarizes the defining features for each of these types.

![Diagram](image)

Figure 3, Types of Kin Term Systems According to First Ascending Generation.

Schusky notes in addition that the generational system is similar in principle to the Hawaiian system, the Sudanese system is bifurcate collateral, and most Iroquois, Crow, and Omaha systems are bifurcate merging.

From Figures 2 and 3 it can be seen that the Newar system is closely related to the bifurcate merging system. Newari has no single term for Mother's Sister but distinguishes obligatorily between elder and younger Mother's Sister. What differentiates the terms for Mother's Sisters and the term for Mother are the relative age prefixes. The same relationship holds between the term for Father and the terms for Father's Elder and Younger Brothers. By contrast, Father's Sister and Mother's Brother have separate terms, apparently unrelated morphemically to the terms for Father and Mother.
C. A Glossary of Kirtipur-Naagā-Pāngā Newari Kinship Terms

This glossary makes use of the following abbreviations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbr.</th>
<th>Term of address.</th>
<th>Abbr.</th>
<th>Term of address.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ad.</td>
<td>Term of address.</td>
<td>Ni</td>
<td>Niece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Br</td>
<td>Brother</td>
<td>Pa</td>
<td>Parent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>Rf.</td>
<td>Term of reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Da</td>
<td>Daughter</td>
<td>Srt.</td>
<td>Used by Sresthas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El</td>
<td>Elder</td>
<td>Sb</td>
<td>Sibling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fa</td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>Si</td>
<td>Sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gbj.</td>
<td>Used by Gubhājus</td>
<td>So</td>
<td>Son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hu</td>
<td>Husband</td>
<td>Sp</td>
<td>Spouse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jyp.</td>
<td>Used by Jyāpus</td>
<td>var.</td>
<td>variant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ktm.</td>
<td>Kathmandu form</td>
<td>Wi</td>
<td>Wife</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mo</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Yr</td>
<td>Younger</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aji, Ad. Rf. 1. Mother's mother. 2. Father's mother. 3. Only female ancestor of the third desending generation. (Rf. ghat ghae aji, tapāa aji.)

abu, Ad. Rf. (Honorific var. abu-ju) Father.

abu-bājyā, Ad. Rf. (Used both for individuals and collectively) Ancestor. (Syn. bājyā-aju).

āju, Rf. 1. Father's father. 2. Mother's father. (Cf. Ad. bājyā)

kakā, Ad. Rf. (Gbj. Srt.) Father's younger brother.

kakā-bājyā, Ad. Rf. 1. Father's father's younger brother. 2. Mother's father's younger brother.

kakā bāā, Rf. Father's younger brother. (Cf. Ad. bāā).


kalāā, Rf. (Kalāṭa-) (Direct address avoided with circumlocutions such as Rām-yā māṭ, Mother of Ram) Wife. (Syn. nakuṭi, jahan).

kāki, Ad. Rf. (Gbj. Srt.) Father's younger brother's wife.
käki-mäq, Ad, Rf. (mäma-, Gbj. Srt.) Father's younger brother's wife.

käki-mäq, Ad, Rf. (Honorific var. (Rf. only) käki-mäq-ju) Husband's father's younger brother's wife.

käe, Ad. Rf. (käya-) Son.


käe-bhāju, Ad. Rf. (Resp.) Son.


kijä bhāju, Rf. (Resp.) Younger brother. (Cf. Ad. kijä).


kehç bhwata, Rf. (var. of kehç-bhata).

kehç mae-ju, Rf. (Resp.)1 Younger sister. 2. Parent's sibling's daughter (younger than ego). (Cf. Ad. kehç).

kwii, Rf. Descendant of the fifth generation (including SoSoSoSoSo; DaDaDaDaDa; SoDaSoSoSo; DaSoDaDaDa; SoSoDaSoSo; DaDaSoDaDa; SoSoSoSoDa; DaDaDaDaSo; SoSoDaDaDa; DaDaDaSoSo; etc. for all 64 fifth generation). (No.Ad.). (Syn. kwii-macä).
kwii-macā, Rf. Descendant of the fifth generation.
   (No. Ad.). (Syn. kwii).

gหาย gəə əji, Rf. Female ancestor of the third ascending generation (including FaFaMo; FaMoMo; MoFaMo, MoMoMo). (Cf. Ad. aji). (Syn. tapāa aji).

gหาย gəə əju, Rf. Male ancestor of the third ascending generation (including FaFaFa; FaMoFa, MoFaFa; MoMoFa) (Cf. Ad. bājyā). Syn. tapāa āju gəəe gəəe bājyā).

gəə əji bājyā. Same as above.


cəə-məə, Ad. Rf. (ca-mama-, var. of camā) Mother's younger sister.

cəə, Ad. Rf. (Gbj.) Mother's younger sister. (Cf. Jyp. camā; Srt. ciri-məə).


ciri-bwā, Ad. Rf. Father's younger brother.


ciri-məə, Ad. Rf. (mama-) Father's second (or subsequent) wife, Father's co-wife, Step-mother.


cir-məə, Ad. Rf. (var. of ciri-məə).

chae, Ad. Rf. Grand child, descendant of the second descending generation (including SoSo, DaDa, DaSo, DaDa). (Syn. chae-macā).
chae-jilājāq, Rf. (jilājana-) Grand daughter's husband (including DaDaHu, SoDaHu). (Cf. Ad. jicā-bhāju).

chae-bhinā-macā, Rf. Sister's grand child (including SiSoSo; SiSoDa; SiDaSo; SiDaDa). (Syn. chae bhincā). (Cf. Ad. bhincā).

chae-bhinca, Rf. Sister's grand child (including SiSoSo; SiSoDa; SiDaSo; SiDaDa). (Syn. chae bhinā-macā). (Cf. Ad. bhincā).

chae-bhau, Rf. Grandson's wife (including DaSoWi; SoSoWi). (Cf. Ad. bhau-macā).

chae-macā, Rf. Grand child (including SoSo; SoDa; DaSo; DaDa). (Cf. Ad. chae).

chē-jicā, Rf. A man who is provided with board and room by his wife's kin.

chwii, Rf. Great grand child, descendant of the third descending generation (including SoSoSo; SoSoDa; SoDaSo; SoDaDa; DaSoSo; DaSoDa; DaDaSo; DaDaDa). (No. Ad.). (Syn. chwii-macā).

chwii-macā, Rf. Great grand child, descendant of the third descending generation. (No Ad.). (Syn. chwii).

jahān, Rf. Wife. (Address avoided with circumlocutions such as Rām-yā māā, Mother of Ram). (Syn. kalā, nakii).


jicā-pāju, Rf. Father's (elder or younger) sister's husband. (Cf. Ad. pāju).

jicā-bhāju, Ad. Rf. (Resp.) 1. Daughter's husband. 2. (Elder or younger) sister's husband.


jiica, Ad. Rf. (var. of jicā).

taa-kehē, Rf. Collective term for brothers and sisters as well as cousins. (Cf. Srt. phukii).


tatā-ju, Ad. Rf. (Srt.) Elder brother's wife. (Cf. Jyp. bhwata; Gbj. pii-bhata).


tatā-bhwata, Rf. (var. of tatā-bhata).

tapā-aji, Ad. Rf. Female ancestor of the third ascending generation (including FaFaMo; FaMoMo; MoMoMo). (Syn. ghāe ghāe-aji). (Ktm. tapāe-aji).

tapā āju, Rf. Male ancestor of the third ascending generation (including FaFaFa; FaMoFa; MoFaFa; MoMoFa). (Syn. ghāe ghāe-āju). (Cf. Ad. tapā bājyā). (Ktm. tapāe-aju).

tapā bājyā, Ad. Rf. Male ancestor of the third ascending generation (including FaFaFa; FaMoFa; MoFaFa; MoMoFa). (Ktm. tapāe bājyā).

ta-māā, Ad. Rf. (māma-, var. of tari-māā) 1. Mother's elder sister. 2. Father's elder brother's wife.


tari-nini, Ad. Rf. Father's elder sister. (Cf. ciri-nini, FaYrSi).

tari-pāju, Ad. Rf. Mother's elder brother. (Cf. ciri-pāju, MoYrBr).


tari-bwā, Ad. Fr. Father's elder brother. (Cf. ciri-bwā, FaYrBr.)

tari-male-ju, Rf. Mother's elder brother's wife. (Cf. Ad. male-ju).

tari-mal-ju, Rf. (var. of tari-male-ju).


tā, Ad. Elder sister. (Ref. tatā).


tātā, Ad. Rf. (Child talk) Elder sister.

twāe, Rf. Bond friend. (Compounds ambiguously with kin terms: twāe kijā, Bond friend's younger brother, Younger brother's bond friend; twāe kāe, Bond friend's son, Son's bond friend, etc.) (Ad. avoided).

twāe-ju, Rf. (Resp.) Bond friend.

thaa, Rf. (thawa-) Relatives, close kin.

thaa-gu che, Rf. Husband's home.

thaa che, Rf. (A married woman's) father's home.

thaa che khalaa, Rf. (khalaka-) (A married woman's) father's relatives.

thaa thiti, Rf. Relative, Kin.

thyākā macā, Rf. An adopted child.

dadā, Rf. (var. darā) Elder brother: (Cf. Ad. dāju).

dadā-bhwata, Rf. (var. of dadā-bhata, var. dara-bhwata).

darā, Rf. (var. of dadā).

darā-bhata, Rf. (var. of dadā-bhata).

darā-bhwata, Rf. (var. of dadā-bhwata).


dāi dāi, Ad. Rf. (Child talk) Elder brother.


duu-pāsā, Rf. The female chaperone of the bride who accompanies her to the groom's house.

dwalā-ji, Rf. A man who is given food and lodging by his wife's kin.


nakīt, Rf. Wife. (Ad. avoided with circumlocutions such as Rām-yā-māā, The mother of Ram). (Syn. kalāā, jahān).

nālā, Rf. Adopted. (Occurs with a wide range of kin terms; nāla-kāē, Adopted son; nālā-kehe, Adopted younger sister; nālā-kijā, Adopted younger brother; nālā-tatā, Adopted elder sister; nālā-dāju, Adopted elder brother; nālā-macā, Adopted child; nālā-mhyāē, Adopted daughter).

nini, Ad. Rf. Father's (elder or younger) sister.
nini-aji, Rf. Father's father's (elder or younger) sister. (Cf. Ad. aji).

nini-khalaa, Rf. (khalaka-) Father's (elder or younger) sister's husband's kin.

nini-bajee, Rf. Father's father's (elder or younger) sister. (Cf. Ad. bajee).


nini-māā-ju, Rf. Husband's father's (elder or younger) sister. (Ad. avoided).

nini-māā-ju, Ad. Rf. Term of respect used by persons of lower caste for an elderly woman of higher caste.

nini-māju. (Var. of nini-māā-ju).


nhe-su, Rf. Pertaining to husband's former wife. (Occurs with a range of kin terms: nhe-su-kāe, Son by husband's former wife; nhe-su-mhyāe, Daughter by husband's former wife; nhe-su-macā, Child by husband's former wife). (Cf. li-su, pertaining to husband's later wife).

pāu, Ad. Rf. (Child talk) Mother's (elder or younger) brother.

pāju, Ad. Rf. Mother's (elder or younger) brother.

pāju, Ad. Father's (elder or younger) sister's husband. (Rf. nini-pāju).

pāju khalaa, Rf. (khalaka-) Mother's (elder or younger) brother's wife's kin.

pāju-bajee, Rf. 1. Mother's mother. 2. Mother's mother's (elder or younger) brother's wife. 3. Father's mother's (elder or younger) brother's wife. (Cf. Ad. bajee).

pāju-bājyā, Rf. 1. Father's mother's (elder or younger) brother. 2. Mother's mother's (elder or younger) brother. (Cf. Ad. bājyā).
pāe-aji, Rf. Grandmother's brother's wife (includes FaMoElBrWi; FaMoYrBrWi; MoMoElBrWi; and MoMoYrBrWi). (Cf. Ad. aji, pāe-ji).

pāe-ji, Ad. Grandmother's brother's wife (includes FaMoElBrWi; FaMoYrBrWi; MoMoElBrWi; and MoMoYrBrWi). (Cf. Rf. tapāa-aji, pāe-aji). (Syn pāju-bajee).

piili-māeli, Rf. (var. piili, Collective term used only with reference to a set of kin) Husband's (elder and younger) brothers' wives.

phukii, Rf. (phukija-) Lineage, male kin descended from a common ancestor.

phukii-bākā, Rf. Relatives.

phukii-bākae, Rf. 1. Father's (elder and younger) brothers and their sons (collective term). 2. Relatives.

bajee, Ad. Rf. (Srt.) Grandmother (includes FaMo and MoMo).

bajee-māa, Ad. Rf. (Jyp.) but Rf. only (Srt.) Grandmother (includes FaMo and MoMo). (Cf. Ad. (Srt.) bajee).

bābā, Ad. Rf. (Child talk) Father.


bājyā, 1. (Ad. Rf.) Grandfather (includes FaFa and MoFa). 2. (Ad. only) Male ancestor of the third ascending generation. (Cf. Rf. ghāe ghāe bājyā, tapāa bajyā).

bu, Ad. Fr. Father. (Syn. bwā, bāā, abu).

bau, Rf. Father. (Ad. bāā, bwā, abu).

bwā, 1. (Ad. Rf.) Father. 2. (Ad. only) Husband's father.

bwā-ju, Rf. A mother who has eloped with a paramour. (Ad. avoided). (Cf. māā-ju, A father whose wife has eloped with a paramour).
bhāq-macā, Ad. Rf. (var. of bhalimacā).

bhāq-macā, Rf. Bride.

bhāq-macā-mae-ju, Rf. (Resp.) Bride.


bhali-macā, Ad. Rf. (Resp., var. bhāq-macā) Son's wife.

bhāāta, Rf. Husband. (Ad. avoided by used of circumlocutions such as Rām-ya bau, Ram's father).

bhīnā-macā, Rf. Sister's child (includes ElSiSo; YrSiSo; ElSiDa; YrSiDa) (Cf. Ad. bhīncā).

bhīncā, Ad. Rf. Sister's child (includes ElSiSo; YrSiSo; ElSiDa; YrSiDa).

bhīncā jilāja, Rf. (jilājana-) (Elder or younger) sister's daughter's husband. (Cf. Ad. jicā bhāju).

bhīncā bhāju, Rf. (Resp.) Elder sister's son. (Cf. Ad. bhīncā).

bhīncā bhaub, Rf. Father's (elder or younger) sister's son's wife. (Cf. Ad. bhaub-macā).

bhīncā maeju, Rf. (Resp.) Younger sister's daughter. (Cf. Ad. bhīncā).

bhaub, Rf. 1. Son's wife. 2. Younger brother's wife. (Cf. Ad. bhaub-macā)

bhwata, Rf. (var. of bhata).

bhwata, Rf. (Jyp.) Elder brother's wife. (Cf. Srt. tatāa-ju; Gbj. piī-bhata).

bhwii, Rf. Descendent of the sixth descending generation (including SoSoSoSoSoSo; DaDaDaDaDaDa, etc. for all sixty-four kin relations). (No. Ad.)
macā-yā bau, Ad. (Avoidance term) Husband.


māmā, Ad. Rf. (Child talk) Mother

male, Ad. Rf. (Gb.) Mother's brother's wife.

male-ju, Ad. Rf. (var. mal-ju) Mother's (elder or younger) brother's wife. (Ktm. male).

mal-ju, Ad, Rf. (var. of male-ju).

mā, Ad. Rf. (māma-) Mother.

mā-cā, Rf. (Child talk, term of affection) Mother.
   (Cf. Ad. mā).

mā-ju, Rf. A father whose wife has eloped with another man. (Cf. Ad. bā, abu).

mā-bhata, Rf. (Var. mā-bhwata) Husband's mother.
   (Cf. Jyp. sasaa-mā).

māmā, Ad. Rf. (Jyp.) Father's younger brother's wife.
   (Cf. Gb. Srt. kākī, kāki-mā).

māmā, Ad. Rf. (Child talk) Mother.


maiyā, Ad. Rf. (Srt.) 1. Younger sister (Child talk).

mhyāe, Ad. Rf. (mhyāca-) Daughter.

mhyāe-cā, Ad. Rf. Sibling's daughter (including ElBrDa; YrBrDa; ElSiDa; YrSiDa).

mhyāe-chae, Rf. Daughter's child (including DaSo; DaDa). (Cf. Ad. chae).

mhyāe jilājā, Rf. (jilājana-) Daughter's husband.
   (Cf. Ad. jicā-bhāju).

mhyāe mae-ju, Rf. (Resp.) Daughter. (Ad. mhyāe).
lakhā-pau, Rf. Wife's child by a former husband. (Ad. AVOIDED). (Ktm. lakhāpā).


lāhi, Rf. (Collective term) Blood relatives. (Lit. one's flesh and blood).

li-thu, Rf. Husband's second wife, co-wife.


li-su, Rf. Pertaining to one's husband's second wife or co-wife. (Occurs with other kin terms: lisu-kāe, Rf. Hu second WiSo; lisu-mhyāe, Rf. (mhyāca-) Hu second WiDa; lisu-macā, Rf. Hu second WiCh).

wii, Rf. Descendant of the fourth descending generation (including SoSoSoSo; DaDaDa; SoSoSoDa; DaDaDaSo; etc. for all sixteen kin of the fourth generation).

samlcā, Rf. Female chaperone of the same age as the bride who accompanies the bride to the groom's house and stays with her for the first few days after the wedding.

samji, Rf. 1. Daughter's husband's Parent (including DaHuMo and DaHuFa). 2. Son's wife's parent (including SoWiMo and SoWiFa). (Ad. avoided).

samji khalaa, Rf. (khalaka-) 1. Son's wife's family. 2. Daughter's husband's family.

sasaa, Rf. (sasala-) Pertaining to the in-laws, one's affines, the family of one's spouse.

sasaa-aji, Rf. Wife's grandmother (including WiFaMo and WiMoMo) (Cf. Ad. aji).


sasaa-kāki, Rf. (Srt. Gbj.) Wife's father's younger brother's wife. (Cf. Ad. kāki). (Cf. Jyp. sasaa māmā, Rf. (Ad. māmā)).


sasaa-kāe-cā, Rf. X. Spouse's father's younger brother's son. (Includes HuFaYrBrSo and WiFaYrBrSo). (Cf. Ad. kāe-cā).


sasaa khalaa, Rf. (khalaka-) 1. (Gbj. Srt. Jyp.) Wife's father's family. 2. (Jyp. only) Husband's father's family.


sasaa dāju, Rf. Wife's elder brother. (Cf. Ad. dāju).

sasaa pāju, Rf. Spouse's mother's brother (including HuMoYrBr; HuMoElBr; WiMoElBr; and WiMoYrBr). (Cf. Ad. pāju).

sasaa bu, Rf. Wife's father. (Cf. Ad. bwā, bāā, abu).

sasaa bājyā, Rf. Wife's grandfather (includes WiFaFa and WiMoFa). (Cf. Ad. bājyā).

sasaa bau, Rf. 1. Wife's father. 2. (Jyp.) Husband's father. (Cf. Ad. bau).

sasaa male-ju, Rf. (var. sasaa malju) Spouse's mother's brother's wife (including WiMoYrBrWi; WiMoElBrWi; HuMoYrBrWi; and HuMoElBrWi). (Cf. Ad. malju).


sasaa māmā, Rf. Spouse's father's younger brother's wife (including WiFaYrBrWi and HuFaYrBrWi). (Cf. Ad. māmā).

sasaa mayāe-cā, Rf. Spouse's father's younger brother's daughter (including HuFaYrBrDa; and WiFaYrBrDa). (cf. Ad. mhyāe-cā).

syāā-, Rf. A prefix used to indicate a blood relative. (Occurs with a variety of other kin terms: syāā-kijā, Rf. A younger brother consanguinally related: syāā-dāju, Rf. An older brother related by blood; syāā-kehā, Rf. A younger sister related by blood; syāā-tata, Rf. An older sister related by blood; syāā-taa-kehā, Rf. Collective term including brothers and sisters both older and younger. This term also includes all the cousins.

REFERENCES


FOOTNOTES

1. The author wishes to express his gratitude to Austin Hale for writing this paper based upon the author's notes and for typing two drafts of the paper.