

Chapter 2

Chapter 2

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2.0 Introduction

Kinship is conventionally understood as relationships between persons based on either blood or marriage. If the relationship between two people is established through blood then they are in a *consanguineal* relationship. If, on the other hand, the relationship is established through marriage, it is an *affinal* relationship. Thus, for example, a brother and his sister are in a consanguineal relationship, while a wife and her father-in-law are in an affinal relationship. Here, both kinds of relation are finally rooted in biology so that Kinship is traditionally defined as *socially acknowledged biological relations*.

However, in modern times, this view of kinship has been challenged. As Levi-Strauss (1963) argued “Kinship...only exists in human consciousness.” Thus, kinship now does not mean simply blood relations. It means social relations as well in traditional societies. For example, in the tribal society of the Yaps (the inhabitants of Yap, an island in the Caroline Islands of the western Pacific Ocean) the relationship between father and child is, as is reported in the studies on the society, not like the relationship in many societies: anyone in the Yap society can be considered a child of an older man providing they respect his authority and care for him.

Stone (2010) also maintains that kinship involves much more than relations through descent and marriage. It is also an ideology of human relationship; it involves cultural ideas about how human are created and the nature and meaning of their biological and moral connection with others. For example, in Malaysia, a group of people believe that a baby begins his or her journey through his/her father's brain, where it had existed in liquid form. The belief is that the liquid form of the baby is transferred to the mother's womb through sexual intercourse (Carol Laderman, 1983 & 1991; in Stone, 2010). Thus, it is the father who created the child, not the mother. This capability of reproduction puts him in a higher status in the society.

This chapter study the Khurkhul kinship terms for kinship based on blood and marriage relation; and also kinship based on social relation.

Kinship terms obviously form a sub-language that classifies the kinship universe. In other words, kinship terms are linguistic expressions of classifications of kinsmen. The term ‘kin’, which means relatives, was first adopted by Andrew Lang and F. G. Frazer. Henry Lewis Morgan was the first anthropologist to see that as a method of classification of kins,

study of kinship terms in a language leads to the understanding of the kinship system of that society.

2.1 Kinship based on Blood and Marriage

The Khurkhul society is very strict about kinship terms. Thus, by strictly maintaining the kinship terms they try to maintain the right kind of social relations in the society and avoid possible chaos. Thus goes the popular Khurkhul saying: *mingkou kairadi thaksi-khasi kai* meaning, “If you don’t maintain the kinship terms, then you break the rules of social behaviour.”

Thus, Khurkhul has two basic kinship terms, *mari* and *mingkou*. While *mari* refers to the bidirectional relation in kinship (e.g. the brother-sister relation; the husband-wife relation), *mingkou* refers to the unidirectional relation involved in a *mari* (e.g. the relation brother, or the relation sister). Thus, for instance, *ichin inao* is a *mari* in Khurkhul. The group of people involved in this relation is shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: The Ichin inao mari

Ego and Z	Ego is female
Ego and B	Ego is male
Ego, Z and B	all the siblings
Ego and HBW	Ego is female
Ego and WZH	Ego is male

Coming to *mingkou*, it refers to, as noted above, the unidirectional relation involved in a *mari*. Thus, for example, Ego and B in table 1 above is a *mingkou*.

Now, if we consider Ego’s relation with his/her elder brothers, then for this particular *mingkou* Khurkhul has the term *iyamba* (elder brother). On the other hand, the term *inao* is the *mingkou* which refers to Ego’s relation with his/her younger brothers.

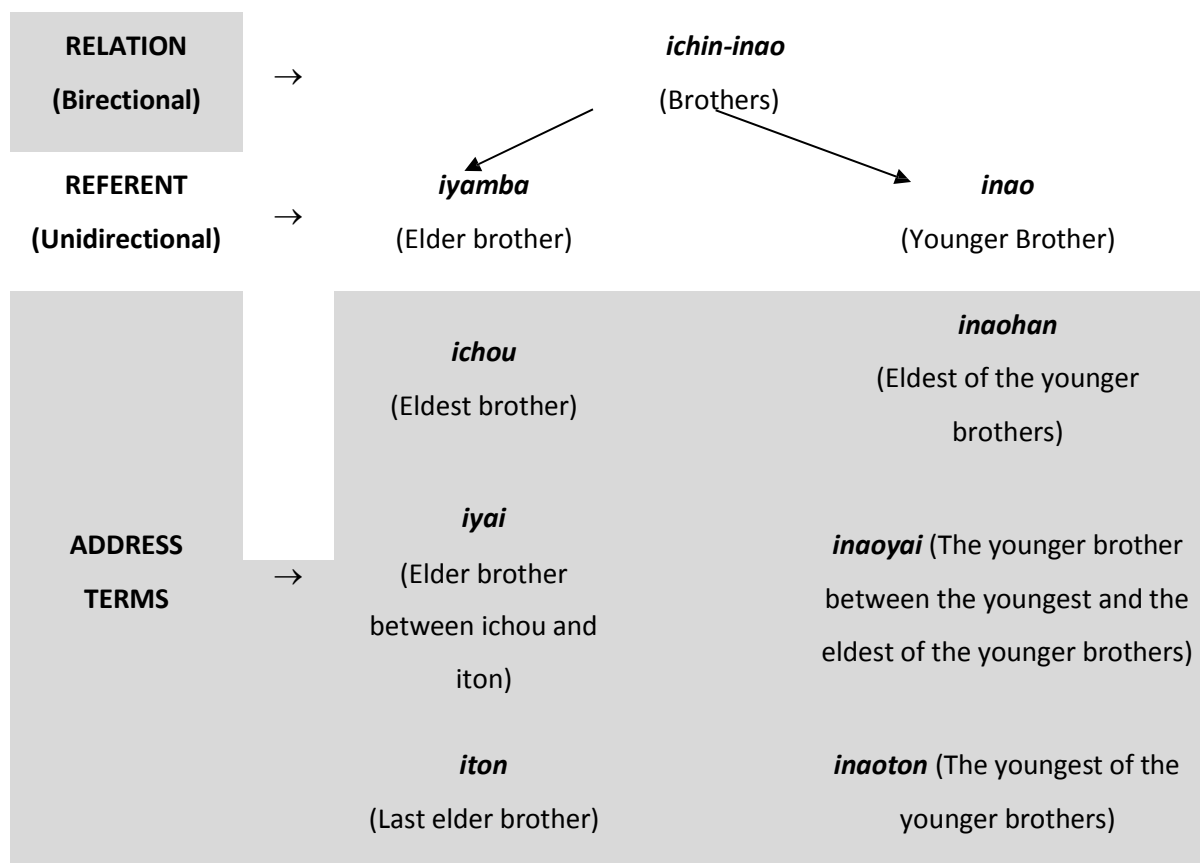
Now, for the term *iyamba*, Khurkhul has three address terms, viz., *ichou* (eldest elder brother); *iton* (the youngest elder brother); and *iyai* (the elder brother between *ichou* and *iton*).

In the same way, for the term, *inao* it has another three address terms, viz. *inaohan* (eldest

of the younger brother); *inaton* (the youngest of the younger brother); and *inaoyai* (the younger brother between *inaohan* and *inaton*).

In Fig 1 below is provided a schematized representation of these relations and their linguistic expressions.

Fig 1: The Relation, Referents and Address Terms



The need of this division of *mingkou* into these address terms is that they need to differentiate the birth positions.

The three levels of address terms in Khurkhul based on age show that birth position is very important in the Khurkhul society. Thus, when a speaker uses an address term to an addressee, it has a specific meaning. For example, *ichou* (the eldest elder brother) or *iton* (the youngest elder brother) do not just mean what the English kinship term brother means; they mean birth positions and the responsibility and respect associated with them. As noted, the English kinship term brother does not distinguish younger from elder brothers, or among these brothers. English adopts an adjective to talk about specific birth positions as in elder brother or younger brother.

In other words, English does not have single terms for these. Khurkhul, on the other hand, marks the birth position or age directly, i.e. with single terms. A category established by a single term, i.e. the meaning it carries, is more readily available in the mind.

The mid birth position, unlike the first and the last birth position, is not a respectable position in the Khurkhul society. It is the first born who helps the parents in looking after the ones born after him; it is, on the other hand, the last born who looks after the parents when they are old. The middle born does not have to take either of these responsibilities.

Thus, the Khurkhuls often talk about three stones one upon another to metaphorically explain their perception of the three birth positions. Among them, the stone on the ground carries the load of both the one at the middle and at the top (i.e. the last one). On the other hand, it is the last stone that gives the stone at the middle position a secure position. This is schematized in Image 1 below.

Image 1: The metaphor of three stones for birth positions



The importance associated with different birth positions can also be seen from the way the Khurkhuls express these positions.

Table 2: Expressions of birth positions

PERSONAL NAMES	BIRTH POSITION
<i>Samu</i>	<i>ahan</i> (First)
<i>Chaoba</i>	<i>Yaima</i> (Middle-1)

<i>Leikon</i>	<i>Yaima</i> (Middle-2)
<i>Tomba</i>	<i>atomba</i> (Last)

In Table 2 above, Samu and Tomba are *ahan* meaning ‘the first born’; and *atomba* meaning the ‘last born. But Chaoba and Leikon are, respectively, *ahan gee makha* and *atomba gee mathak* (see Table 3 below). Thus, the middle born is identified only through the first born, i.e. the eldest; or the last born, i.e. the youngest.

Table 3: Expression for the middle born

PERSONAL NAME	BIRTH POSITION
<i>Chaoba</i>	<i>ahan gee makha</i> (below first birth position)
<i>Leikon</i>	<i>atomba gee mathak</i> (above last birth position)

2.1.1 Khurkhul Kinship terms

In this section, we discuss the Khurkhul kinship terms, both consanguineal and affinal.

2.1.1.1 Consanguineal relations and kinship terms

In this section, we identify and discuss the kinship terms for consanguineal relations in Khurkhul. The primary consanguineal relation in the Khurkhul kinship system is Ego and F. This is termed in Khurkhul *ipa icha mari*. In Table 4 below we present the kinship terms centering this and other consanguineal *mari*-s.

Table 4: Ego and his/her father’s family

WHO WITH EGO	RELATION (<i>mari</i>)	REFERENT (<i>mingkou</i>)	ADDRESS TERMS
Ego and F	<i>ipa icha</i> (father-child)	<i>ipa</i> (Father)	<i>pachi</i> (Father)
Ego and M	<i>ima icha</i> (Mother-Child)	<i>ima</i> (Mother)	<i>ima</i> (Mother)
Ego and FF	<i>isu ipu</i> (Grandfather-Grandchild)	<i>ipu</i> (Grandfather)	<i>ipu</i> (Grandfather)
Ego and FM	<i>isu ipen</i> (Grandmother-Grandchild)	<i>ipen</i> (Grandmother)	<i>ipen</i> (Grandmother)
Ego and FEB	<i>ipa icha</i> (Father-Child)	<i>ipanthou</i> (Uncle)	<i>ipanthou</i> (Uncle)
Ego and FYB	<i>ipa icha</i> (Father-Child)	<i>iton</i> (Uncle)	<i>iton</i> (Uncle)

Female Ego and FZ	<i>ini imou</i> (Aunt-Niece)	<i>ine</i> (Aunty)	<i>ine</i> (Aunty)
Male Ego and FZ	<i>ini iya</i> (Aunt-Nephew)	<i>ine</i> (Aunty)	<i>ine</i> (Aunty)

As can be seen from Table 4 above, Ego is in *ipa icha* (father-child) *mari* both with F and FB. Also, Khurkhuls differentiates the relationship between the Male Ego and FZ and Female Ego and FZ. Hence the two kinship terms, *ini iya* (aunt-nephew) and *ini imou* (aunt-niece). However, the address term for these two *mingkou*-s is the same, i.e. *ine*.

It is also clear from the Table 4 above that some *mingkou* kinship terms are also used as address terms. This applies to, for example, *ima* (mother), *ipu* (grandfather), *ine* (aunty); and *ipen* (grandmother).

Table 5: Ego and his/her mother's family

WHO WITH EGO	RELATION (<i>mari</i>)	REFERENT (<i>mingkou</i>)	ADDRESS TERMS
Ego and M	<i>ima icha</i> (Mother-Child)	<i>ima</i> (Mother)	<i>Ima</i> (Mother)
Ego and MF	<i>isu ipu</i> (Grandfather-Grandchild)	<i>ipu</i> (Grandfather)	<i>Ipu</i> (Grandfather)
Ego and MM	<i>isu ipen</i> (Grandmother-Grandchild)	<i>ipen</i> (Grandmother)	<i>ipen</i> (Grandmother)
Ego and MB (male ego)	<i>iku iya</i> (Father in-law-son-in-law)	<i>iku</i> (Uncle)	<i>mammə</i> (Uncle)
Ego and MB (female ego)	<i>iku imou</i> (Father-in-law-daughter in law)	<i>iku</i> (Father-in-law)	<i>mammə</i> (Uncle)
Ego and MYZ	<i>ima icha</i> (Mother-Child)	<i>ima</i> (Mother)	<i>imanthou</i> (Aunty)
Ego and MEZ	<i>ima icha</i> (Mother-Child)	<i>ima</i> (Mother)	<i>inomcha</i> (Aunty)

As can be seen from Table 5 above, Ego is in *ima icha* (mother-child) *mari* both with M and MZ.

In Table 6 below is presented the kinship terms for the Male Ego and his generation of elder kins.

Table 6: Male Ego_ Ego's generation of elder kins

WHO WITH EGO	RELATION	REFERENT	ADDRESS TERMS
Ego and EB	<i>ichin inao</i> (Brothers)	<i>iyamba</i> (Elder brother)	<i>ichou</i> (Eldest brother)
			<i>iyai</i> (Elder brother between <i>ichou</i> and <i>iton</i>)
			<i>iton</i> (Last elder brother)
			<i>itoncha</i> (Elder brother next to the last elder brother)
Ego and EZ	<i>ichin ipouwa</i> (Brother-sister)	<i>iche</i> (Elder sister)	<i>ichehan</i> (Eldest sister)
			<i>icheyai</i> (Elder sister between <i>icheyai</i> and <i>icheton</i>)
			<i>icheton</i> (Last elder sister)
			<i>ichemcha</i> (Elder sister next to the last elder sister)

Table 7: Male Ego_ Ego's generation of younger kins

WHO WITH EGO	RELATION	REFERENT	ADDRESS TERMS
Ego and YB	<i>ichin inao</i> (Brothers)	<i>inao</i> (Younger brother)	<i>inaohan</i> (Eldest younger brother)
			<i>inaoyai</i> (Younger brother between <i>inaohan</i> and <i>inaoton</i>)
			<i>inaoton</i> (Last younger brother)
			<i>inaocha</i> (Younger brother next to the last younger brother)
Ego and YZ	<i>icin ipouwa</i> (Brother-Sisiter)	<i>inao</i> (Younger sister)	<i>inaohan</i> (Eldest younger sister)
			<i>inaoyai</i> (Younger sister between <i>inaohan</i> and <i>inaoton</i>)
			<i>inaoton</i> (Last younger sister)
			<i>inaocha</i> (Younger sister next to the last younger sister)

Table 8: Female Ego_Ego's generation of elder kins

WHO AND WHO	RELATION	REFERENT	ADDRESS TERMS
Ego and EB	<i>ichin ipouwa</i> (Brother-Sister)	<i>ipung</i> (Elder Brother)	<i>ichou</i> (Eldest elder brother)
			<i>iyai</i> (Elder brother between <i>ichou</i> and <i>iton</i>)
			<i>iton</i> (Last elder brother)
			<i>itoncha</i> (Elder brother next to the last elder brother)
Ego and EZ	<i>ichin inao</i> (Sisters)	<i>iche</i> (Elder sister)	<i>ichehan</i> (Eldest elder sister)
			<i>icheyai</i> (Elder sister between <i>icheyai</i> and <i>icheton</i>)
			<i>icheton</i> (Last elder sister)
			<i>ichemcha</i> (Elder brother next to the last elder brother)

Table 9: Female Ego_Ego's generation of younger kins

WHO WITH EGO	RELATION	REFERENT (Unidirectional)	ADDRESS TERM (Unidirectional)
Ego and YB	<i>ichin ipouwa</i> (Brother-Sister)	<i>inao</i> (Younger brother)	<i>inaohan</i> (Eldest younger brother)
			<i>inaoyai</i> (Younger brother between <i>inaohan</i> and <i>inaoton</i>)
			<i>inaoton</i> (Last younger brother)
			<i>inaocha</i> (Younger brother next to the last younger sister)
Ego and YZ	<i>ichin inao</i> (Sisters)	<i>inao</i> (Younger sister)	<i>inaohan</i> (Eldest younger sister)
			<i>inaoyai</i> (Younger sister between <i>inaohan</i> and <i>inaoton</i>)
			<i>inaoton</i> (Last younger sister)
			<i>inaocha</i> (Younger brother next to the last younger sister)

It can be noted here that *inao* is the address term for both the younger brother and the younger sister. However, male and female siblings are differentiated if they are elders. Hence the two different address terms, *ipung* (elder brother) and *iche* (elder sister).

2.1.1.2 Khurkhul kinship terms and the family size

Khurkhul kinship address terms discussed above give us a clear idea about the size of the nuclear family in the Khurkhul society. We have the following address terms to be used within such a family (see Tables 6, 7, 8 and 9 above).

Four elder brothers of Ego

- (i) *ichou* (the eldest elder brother)
- (ii) *iyai* (the elder brother between *ichou* and *iyai*)
- (iii) *iton* (the last elder brother)
- (iv) *itoncha* (the elder brother who is next to the last elder brother)

Four elder sisters of Ego

- (i) *ichehan* (the eldest elder sister)
- (ii) *icheyai* (the elder sister between *ichehan* and *icheton*)
- (iii) *icheton* (the last elder sister)
- (iv) *ichemcha* (the elder sister who is next to the last elder sister)

Four younger sisters of Ego

- (i) *inaohan* (the eldest younger sister)
- (ii) *inaoyai* (the younger sister who is between *inaohan* and *inaoyai*)
- (iii) *inaoton* (the last younger sister)
- (iv) *inaocha* (the younger sister next to the last younger sister)

Four younger brothers of Ego

- (i) *inaohan* (the eldest younger brother)
- (ii) *inaoyai* (the younger brother between *inaohan* and *inaoton*)
- (iii) *inaoton* (the last younger brother)
- (iv) *inaocha* (the younger brother next to the last younger brother)

Thus, the maximum number of siblings of a Khurkhul nucleus family stands at $4+4+4+4+Ego = 17$.

However, this maximum size, as is reported, is hardly realized. Thus, one of our informants gave us the following reasons for this.

It is considered ominous if five male children are born in family without any female child in between. As the Khurkhul belief goes, this brings misfortune and pain to the family by causing sudden death or physical deformity to the children, or untimely death of the parents. Thus, if five male children have come to the family without a girl child in between, parents must remarry without the knowledge of the children. The remarriage between the parents is secretly arranged at the wife's house.

In the opposite direction, if seven female children are born without any male child in between, they are considered to be *heloi taret* (seven outcaste goddesses in the Khurkhul Mythology). The Khurkhul believes the group of *heloi taret* comes to the family only to bring great disaster to it.

One of the informants shared with me her own misfortunes from coming to her family five sons without a female child in between. Her husband died immediately after the fifth son was born; a few months later she lost two of her elder young sons. Another informant told me that immediately after coming of the seventh female child to the family she lost her eldest daughter. In an attempt to escape from the imminent danger the husband gave away one of the daughters to his brother, but that did not help. Yet another informant told me that she was so scared when she had discovered that she was pregnant again after her fourth son she secretly aborted the baby.

Because of these beliefs, the Khurkhuls control the family size and a family with as many as sixteen kinship terms is hardly a reality in the (traditional) Khurkhul society.

Also, according to these beliefs, misfortunes usually come to the first and the last child. This, in turn, perhaps shows the importance given by the Khurkhul society on the first and the last birth positions (see Table 2 above).

2.1.2 Affinal Relation

Marriage marks the beginning of affinal relation in a society. The Khurkhul term *luhongba* means ‘marriage’. According to Louriyam (2004), burying *lu* (a piece of the forehead from a dead body) is one of the rituals related to death in the Khurkhul society. According to this ritual, a piece of forehead of the deceased is buried at the back of the *Ichum Lairembi Temple*. Each *sagie* has its own place to bury the *lu*. Therefore, though the term *luhongba* denotes the function of the social norm or rule that allows a male and female to involve into sexual relation, its meaning is rooted in the social practice of burying *lu* after death. As a matter of fact, while *lu* of *luhongba* means a part of the forehead, the other morpheme *hongba* means ‘changing’. The ritual of burying *lu* is, in fact, a ritual of change: one who has died has only changed his world. Marriage also implies a new world, a change from the earlier world. Thus, *luhongba* mostly means woman entering into new *sagie*, i.e. the *sagie* of his husband.

2.1.2.1 Affinal relations and kinship terms

In this section, we identify the kinship terms in the Khurkhul language for affinal relations. Affinal kinship terms in Khurkhul denote affinal relationship to be realized or already realized.

Thus, we have identified the following affinal kinship terms: *ningol*; *piba*; and *mou*. These terms categorize people who have the potentially affinal or have already established such a relation.

- (i) ***Ningol***: They are those potential brides who have to establish an affinal relation with *Pibas* (consanguineal men) who are out of their group.
- (ii) ***Piba***: They are those potential grooms who have to establish an affinal relation with brides from outside of their group.
- (iii) ***Mou***: They are those females who have already established an affinal relation by marrying *Pibas* outside their group, i.e. *sagie*.

Since the Khurkhul society practices a patriarchy system, female offsprings have two social identities. Thus, they belong to the family of orientation meaning the family where she was born in, and the family of procreation meaning the family which she became part of through marriage. Thus, for example, A, who was born in the Phuritshabam *sagei* is a *ningol* of that *sagei*; when she gets married into the Louriyam *sagei*, she becomes of a *mou* of the Louriyam *sagei*. Here, the Phuritshabam *sagei* is her family of orientation; Louriyam *sagei* is her family of procreation. Her identity of the family of procreation is marked by the term *ongbi* as is exemplified below.

Identity of orientation: Phuritshabam A

Identity of procreation: Louriyam *ongbi* A

In the case of the male offspring, he remains with his father's group, i.e. the family of orientation, till his death. Thus, his social identity remains unchanged.

(iv) *Pakhang*: *Pakhang* marks a period of life of a man which spans between the age he becomes sexually active and the point of time when he gets married to a woman. But a man can remain a *pakhang* throughout his life if he remains a bachelor till death. Thus, the kinship terms *Piba* and *Pakang* (see (ii) above) do not mean the same.

(v) *Leisabi*: *Leishbai* is the female counterpart of *Pakhang* (see (iv) above). Thus, *leishabi* and *ningol* (see (i) above) do not mean the same.

The presence of the affinal terms like *ningol*, *mou*, *piba*, *phakhang*, and *leisabi* imply that the affinal relation i.e. marriage, is very important in the Khurkhul society. Thus, the popular Khurkhul proverb cited below well reflects the Khurkhul view about marriage:

<i>maring-nə</i>	<i>sabə</i>	<i>səŋbai-di</i>	<i>nammə</i>	<i>haŋ-de</i>
maring-by	make	basket-TOP	single	empty-NEG

‘The basket made by the Marings is never single.’

The Maring tribe of Manipur is known for making bamboo baskets and they always carry them in pairs. The pair of baskets carried by Maring is metaphorically compared with the

inseparable nature of a man and a woman in human life. The popular proverb implies that no man or woman should remain single just like the Maring baskets, which are always in pair.

The importance of affinal relation in the Khurkhul society is also evident in *suksaba*, a ritual performed when an unmarried man or an unmarried woman dies (this ritual is also performed when one meets an unnatural death, e.g. in an accident or by committing suicide). Thus, *suksaba* is performed in order to stop the soul from coming back to the *sagei*, because the person who has died unmarried did not propagate for the *sagei*.

Image 2: Performance of *suksaba*



2.1.2.1.1 Rules of Affinal Relation

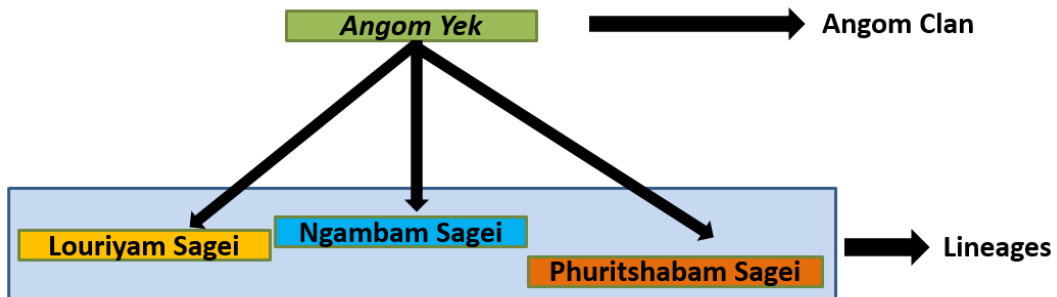
The Khurkhul society follows some rules in order to establish an affinal relation. One has to follow these rules strictly. Some of these rules are exogamy, endogamy, and sororate, which are discussed below in brief.

2.1.2.1.1.1 Exogamy

Exogamy is a marriage system in which one should marry only outside its group. The following are some of the exogamy system practiced in the Khurkhul society

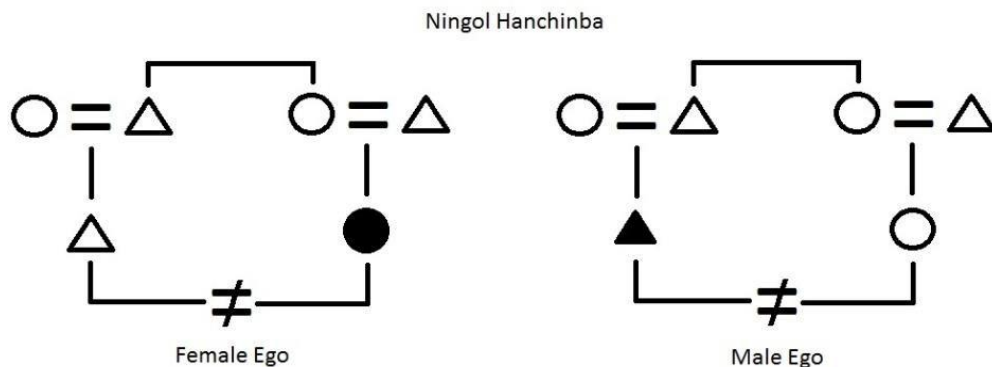
- (i) **Yek exogamy:** The *sageis* of Khurkhul, for example; *Louriyam*, *Ngangbam*, *Phuritsham* *sageis* belong to the same yek i.e. *Angom yek*. Therefore, the three *sageis* are considered to be the siblings of one *Yek*, and they cannot get married with each other even though they belong to different *sageis*.

Fig 2: Yek exogamy



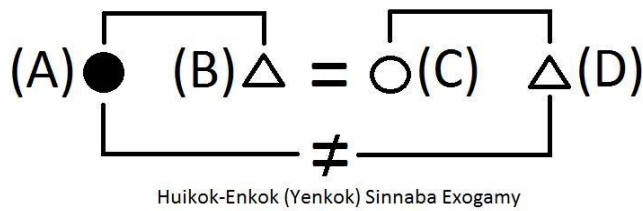
- (ii) **Sagei exogamy:** Members of a *sagei* are even more closely related to each other than a *Yek*. Having marital relation between two people belonging to one *sagei* is considered to be incest. For example, a woman from the *Louriyam sagei* cannot marry a man who is also from the *Louriyam sagei*.
- (iii) **Ningol hanchinba exogamy:** A woman cannot get married with a man who belongs to the *sagei* of her mother's family of orientation. For example, if a woman A of the *Louriyam sagei* gets married with a man B of the *Phuritshabam sagei* and gives birth to a daughter Phuritshabam C, C cannot marry any man from the *Louriyam sagei*.

Fig 3: Ningol Hanchinba exogamy



- (iv) **Huikok-enkok sinnaba exogamy:** A woman cannot marry a man who belongs to the same *sagei* as her sister-in-law i.e. her elder brother's wife. If, for example, Louriyam A is a sister of Louriyam B, and Louriyam B is married to Phuritsabam C, then Louriyam A cannot marry with any man who belongs to the Phuritsabam *sagei*. This is called *huikok enkok sinnaba* exogamy.

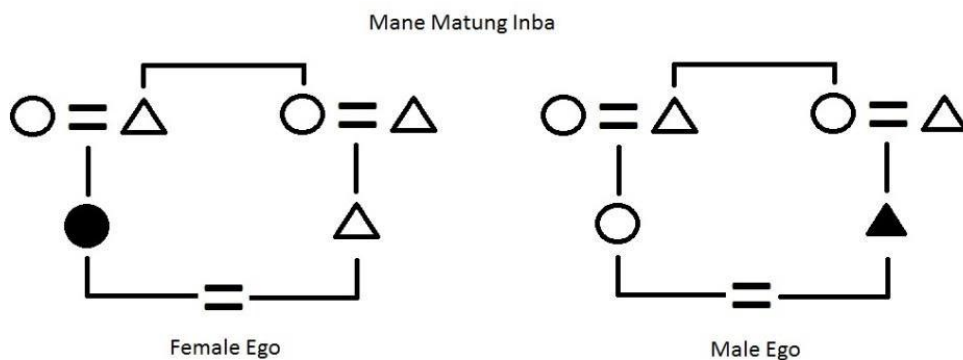
Fig 4: Huikok-enkok sinnaba exogamy



2.1.2.1.1.2 Endogamy

Endogamy is the practice of marrying within one's social group. For example, a Tamil Hindus woman can marry her cross cousin i.e. (her maternal uncle's son). Usually endogamy is not practiced in the Khurkhul society, however, the closest possible affinal relation that can occur in the Khurkhul society is *manne matung inba* (Lit. *following one's aunt/aunty*), where a female ego is allowed to establish sexual relation with her father's sister's son; and the male ego is allowed to establish sexual relation with his mother's brother's daughter. This is schematized in Fig 6 below.

Fig 5: Mane matung inba



To quote Fox (2003, 45) here: “My father’s brother’s children are members, but not my father’s sister’s, for they are related to me through a female and are members of their father’s group.”

Mane matung inba is considered a good match by the Khurkhuls. However, as the two families involved in this are too close, they do not usually practice it. But, the affinal relation can take place if the male is outside of FZ’s immediate family. Thus, the female ego can marry any man from her father’s sister’s husband’s *sagei*. In the same way, the male ego can marry any woman who is from his mother’s *sagie*.

2.1.2.1.1.3 Sororate

In Sororate a man can marry his wife’s sister. But this is usually avoided. This is because wife’s sister is already in *ima icha* relation with the children left behind by the departed mother, i.e. her sister. Besides the Khurkhuls have a strong negative attitude towards a step mother. Folk tales, oral stories, and myths are often heavy with cruelties of such mothers, which discourage people to marry again. One of their popular folk tales goes like this:

Once upon a time, there was a man named Keirakpa. He had a son and a daughter. His wife died, so he married again. He went to a far off place to earn some money, leaving his children in the care of his second wife. But the children were ill-treated by her. She would torture, especially Hayainu, the young daughter. She was made to work and starve for days. As she could not bear the cruelty anymore, she requested the flock of Langmeidongs (hornbill) that would often fly over their house to drop their feathers so that she could join them. Days passed collecting the feathers. And one day, when she had enough of them, the young child stitched all the feathers to her body. She then flew away with the birds never to return. When her father was back, he learned to his great regret what had happened to his daughter when he was away. He lived the remaining of life regretting for bringing his children a step mother.

Therefore, marrying the younger sister of the deceased wife is considered a better solution than marrying an outsider. However, men rarely go for a second marriage in the Khurkhul

society. It is not considered a good choice of life, keeping in view the interest of one's children.

2.1.2.1.2 Affinal Relation in Khurkhul

The primary affinal relation in Khurkhul is *itei inao mari* (husband-wife relation). Thus, the basic meaning of this relation is sexual relation. The following tables show the kinship relation and address terms involved in Ego's connection with his/her wife's/husband's family.

Table 10: Ego_Male_ (His wife's generation)

WHO WITH EGO	RELATION	REFERENT	ADDRESS TERM
Ego and W	<i>itei inao</i> (Husband-wife)	<i>inao</i> (Wife)	(teknonymy)
Ego and WF	<i>iku iya</i> (Father-in-law – son-in-law)	<i>iku</i> (Father- in- law)	<i>ikupok</i> (Father-in-law)
Ego and WM	<i>ini iya</i> (Mother- in- law - son -in- law)	<i>ine</i> (Mother-in -law)	<i>inempok</i> (Mother- in- law)
Ego and WEB	<i>isen ibai</i> (Brother-in- laws)	<i>ibai</i> (Elder brother- in -law)	<i>ibai</i> (Elder brother-in-law)
Ego and WYB	<i>isen ibai</i> (Brother- in- laws)	<i>isen</i> (Younger brother- in law)	<i>isen</i> (Younger brother-in-law)
Ego and WEZ	<i>itei inao</i> (Brother-in-law-sister –in-law)	<i>iteima</i> (Elder sister- in -law)	<i>iteima</i> (Elder sister-in-law)
Ego and WYZ	<i>itei inao</i> (Brother in law-sister -in-law)	<i>inao</i> (Younger sister-in-law)	<i>inao</i> (Younger sister-in-law)

It can be seen from Table 9 above that Ego and W; Ego and WEZ; and Ego and WYZ come under *itei inao* relation. However, the sexual relation is permitted only between Ego and W *itei inao* relation.

- (i) **Ego and W:** In this relation, *itei* is Ego; *inao* is his wife. This is the only acknowledged relation where sexual relation is allowed. Ego addresses her wife either by teknonymy or directly as *namhai* (see teknonymy in chapter 6). He might also use her personal name in addressing her, which is, however, rather rare.
- (ii) **Ego and WEZ:** Here, *itei* is WEZ; *inao* is Ego. In the Khurkhul culture, as noted, the wife should be younger to her husband so that *itei inao* (husband-wife) relation cannot be established here.
- (iii) **Ego and WYZ:** Here, *itei* is Ego and *inao* is Ego's WYZ. The establishment of an affinal relation is not prohibited, but nor wanted either. But it may happen in cases like an untimely death of one's wife (see *sororate marriage* above).

Table 11: Ego_Female_(With her husband's generation)

WHO WITH EGO	RELATION (Bidirectional)	REFERENT (Unidirectional)	ADDRESS TERM (Unidirectional)
Ego and H	<i>itei inao</i> (Husband-wife)	<i>itei</i> (Husband)	(teknonymy)
Ego and HF	<i>iku imou</i> (Father-in-law -daughter – in-law)	<i>iku</i> (Father-in-law)	<i>ikupok</i> (Father-in-law)
Ego and HM	<i>ini imou</i> (Mother-in-law-daughter – in-law)	<i>ine</i> (Mother-in-law)	<i>inempok</i> (Mother-in-law)
Ego and HEB	<i>itei inao</i> (Brother-in-law –sister-in -law)	<i>itei</i> (Elder brother-in-law)	<i>itei</i> (Elder brother-in-law)
Ego and HYB	<i>itei inao</i> (Brother-in-law-sister in law)	<i>inao</i> (Younger brother-in-law)	<i>inao</i> (Younger brother-in-law)
Ego and HEZ	<i>machan mani</i> (Sister-in-laws)	<i>inamma</i> (Elder sister-in-law)	<i>inamma</i> (Elder sister-in -law)
Ego and HYZ	<i>machan mani</i> (Sister-in-laws)	<i>ichan</i> (Younger sister-in-law)	<i>ichan</i> (Younger sister- -in-law)

All these relations i.e., Ego and H, Ego and HEB, Ego and HYB come under *itei inao* relation. However, sexual relation is allowed only between Ego and H.

- (i) ***Ego and HYB:*** Ego addresses HYB as *inao*. In the Khurkhul kinship system, as noted, the wife has to be younger to her husband. So marriage is not possible between these two.
- (ii) ***Ego and HEB:*** Ego addresses HEB as *itei*. As she is younger to HEB, theoretically, she can have sexual relation with him. In order to prevent this the Khurkhul society has developed particular taboos. Thus, it is tabooed to have an eye contact with each other, i.e. between Ego and HEB. If circumstances demand them to have a conversation, it must be done from a distance, by not looking at each other while talking. If they happen to pass each other one must stand aside or make a detour (generally it is Ego that does this).
- (iii) ***Ego and H:*** It is the only *itei inao* relation that allows sexual relation (i.e. husband-wife relation). Ego addresses him either by teknonymy or as *namhai* (addressing indirectly).

2.2 Kinship based on Social Relation

Man is a social animal. A society is made of several individuals. The small personal relations between the individuals hold the big society together. Therefore these relations are of primary importance to any human society and it needs to be maintained and respected as long as we need to live in a healthy society. Thus, anthropologists today agree that among many people and in many different cultures ‘kin’ is rather made, not born.

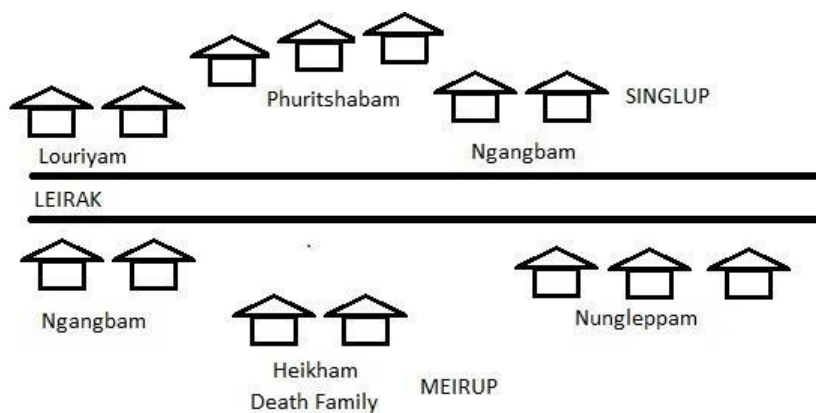
For instance, among Malays on the island of Langkawi, people do not form kinship position by birth, rather kinship emerges over time through acts of receiving and giving food and through sharing of hearth space (Carsten, 1995, in Stone, 2010). These actions can create ‘kinship’ between people who are not considered kinship by biological relation.

Likewise, the Khurkhuls also form kinship based on grounds other than blood and marriage. This is discussed below.

- (i) ***Sanchenlenkanglup (Cattle Owners’ Group):*** It is a kinship system formed by the cattle owners. They will look after their cattle in an open field. *Khongchaipham* is one of the open fields where their cattle graze. If someone is willing to look after the cattle beyond the days allocated to him, the rest of

- the group will give him some crops (paddy) as compensation at the end of the harvest. They help one another at the time of need (death, marriage and so on).
- (ii) *Lou (Paddy field)*: sharing the location of paddy field led to form kinship in Khurkhul. Some of the paddy field locations are *Pennalou, Nakralou, Kanglou, Itheirou, Lairou, Tharoipokpi, Apalou, Pamlou, Shaballou, Khanglapokpi, Haorou, Nunglou, Lairangkan, Shandou*, etc. The owners, who share such paddy field locations gather for development, discuss problems and also lend emotional, physical, and financial help at the time of need (like marriage, death and so on).
 - (iii) *Leikai (locality)*: Sharing of residential area leads to the formation of kinship in Khurkhul. Earlier, Khurkhuls had two *leikais* (localities) - *Awang Leikai* (Northern Locality) and *Makha Leikai* (Southern Locality). The two localities are divided by the National Highway 2. It was further divided into three *leikai* (localities) with the addition of *Sebok Leikai* (Locality of devotees or servants). Now, with the rise of the population, the three *leikai* are sub-divided into many more *leikais*. Khurkhul treats *leikai* as a part of their families. Therefore, everyone in a *leikai* is voluntarily involved in each other's lives (death, marriage, celebrations, etc.).
 - (iv) *Singlup meirup (group of fire)*: This kinship system functions mainly in the event of death. The people in the group will be divided into two groups. The *leirak* (lane) is one of the mechanisms to form the groups. The groups can be formed by families residing in one lane, for example.

Fig 6: *Leirak* (lane) is used as mechanism to form *singlup* and *meirup*



- ***Singlup* (firewood group):** This group will manage the necessary amount of firewood that would be used in the cremation of the dead, who belonged to the locality. This group is not obliged to render physical help to the family of the deceased.
- ***Meirup* (fire group):** This group, on the other hand, is obliged to render physical help to the family of the deceased. Primarily, they will make the *kai* (the carrier made of bamboo that will be used to carry the dead body to the place where the cremation will be done) and the *ku* (coffin). The family of deceased will always be in *meirup*.

Image 3: The deceased is being carried on *kai*



2.2.1 Extension of kinship address terms

The use of kinship address term is extended in Khurkhul. For example, when a person meets a stranger, he/she addresses the stranger by any address term that is suitable in terms of the age and sex of the stranger in relation to himself/herself. For example, if he/she finds the stranger to be of his/her father's father's age, *ipu* (grandfather) would be used to address the stranger. Thus, kinship address terms enable them to maintain social relation tight.

2.3 Some observations

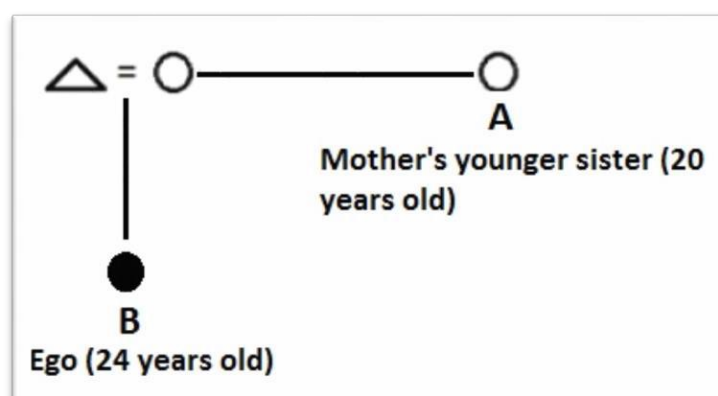
As one would expect, change in society would reflect in language in some or other way. On the other hand, change is the basic law of the universe. The traditional Khurkhul society has also undergone changes, especially in the recent times when the entire world is changing in an extraordinarily rapid pace and also in a bewildering way.

A change is thus observable in the use of the address terms, especially with the new generation Khurkhuls. The address terms *inempok* (mother-in-law) and *ikupok* (father-in-law) are now not usually used; they are substituted, respectively, with *ima* (mother) and *paba* or *baba* (father). This is to say that the new generation Khurkhuls put mother-in-laws and mother into the same category, perhaps because in the changing scenario a mother-in-law no longer enjoys her original position.

Likewise, the generation of Khurkhul wives use *dada* or *tamo* ‘big brother’ to address their husbands, in place of the teknonymy forms. The older generation, however, seems to find it hard to accept. Thus, one of the informants opined: “Address terms tells what kind of relation you are in with whom. When you address your husband as *dada* or *tamo* (elder brother), you are establishing a sexual relation with your brother [i.e. ‘you and your husband are in a sexual relation; so when you make your husband a “brother” by calling him so, then you mean that you have a sexual relation with your brother.].

In choosing address terms, the new generation goes by age rather than the hierarchical position of the addressee.

Fig 7: Younger Ego using personal names to address her mother’s sister



As is shown in Fig 9 above, Ego A is older than Ego B. Thus, A uses the address term

inomcha (aunty) for B. However, it was observed that the new Khurkhul generation tends to use proper names here for each other, something the old generation sharply reacts to.

Earlier, teknonymy was limited to husbands and wives in the Khurkhul society. The present generation of husbands and wives have almost stopped using teknonymy.

Apart from this, the current generation uses some borrowed address terms such as *bhabi* (sister-in-law), *papa* (father), *mummy*, *aunty*, all borrowed either from Hindi or English and the Standard variety (Meiteilon).