Muna kinship terminology

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ABSTRACT

This paper describes Muna kinship terms. The Muna kinship system is basically of the Eskimo type. In ego's own generation terms distinguish between siblings and cousins, and in the first ascending and descending generations terms distinguish between father, mother, uncle and aunt, and between child and nephew/niece. In most kinship terms sex is not distinguished.

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1   General remarks

Muna kinship terminology is basically of the Eskimo system. In ego's own generation it distinguishes between siblings and cousins and in the first ascending and descending generations it distinguishes between father, mother, uncle and aunt, and between child and nephew/niece.

In most kinship terms sex is not distinguished. They can however be modified by the terms *moghane* (man/male) or *robhine* (woman/female): *anaku* 'my child', *anaku robhine* 'my daughter'. Only in the first ascending generation is sex distinguished; there are separate terms for 'father' and 'mother' and for 'uncle' and 'aunt'.

Relative age only plays a role in ego's own generation within the nuclear family: there are separate terms for 'older sibling' (*isa*) and 'younger sibling' (*ai*).

Although most Munanese live together in a (slightly extended) nuclear family, there is no separate term for nuclear family. The wider family (including aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews and grandparents) is called *bhasitie ompulu-ruafuluno* (*bhasitie* means 'family', *ompulu* means 'ten', and *ruafulu* means 'twenty'). The term *bhasitie* is also used in the broad sense of 'relative': *anoa nopesuamo bhasitieku* 'she is one of my relatives' (usually some sort of cousin).

2   Ego's own generation

In this generation there is no sex-distinction, but ego's own siblings are distinguished according to relative age. All older siblings are called *isa*, all younger siblings *ai*. The word *isa* is probably related to the word *ise* 'one'. When one of ego's parents has children from a second marriage, they too are distinguished by relative age: *isa wee* (older step-sibling) and *ai wee* (younger step-sibling). There is, however, also a more general term for sibling, which does not distinguish relative seniority: *kakuta*, possibly related to the stative verb *kuta* 'broken, snapped, severed'. A less commonly used term for sibling is *kabhera* (from *bhera* 'broken'). However, a sex-distinction is made in the sibling terms *finirobhine* 'sister' (for male ego only) and *finimoghane* 'brother' (female ego only). These terms are not widely used.

Ego's spouse is called *mieno lambu* (literally 'person of the house') when ego is a male and *salambu* ('one house') when ego is a female. In referring to his or her spouse ego can

also use the expressions *inano anahi* ('the mother of the children') or *amano anahi* ('the father of the children'), or more specifically mention the name of their oldest child: *inano Ali*. Persons of nobility refer to their spouse by *isamiu* ('husband') or *aimiu* ('wife'). In these terms one can recognise the sibling-terms *isa* and *ai*, combined with the suffix *-miu*, which is either a borrowing from the second person plural possessive suffix *-miu* in Wolio (spoken on the neighbouring island of Buton), or a relic from an earlier stage of the Muna language.

Spouses of siblings and siblings of ego's spouse are all called *tamba*. (According to some people this is from the Indonesian word *tambah* 'add', i.e. an additional family member.) For the relationship between ego and the spouse of ego's spouse's sibling a separate term exists: *kamodu*. Both *tamba* and *kamodu* are reciprocal terms which are often used with the 'unitary' prefix *si-*: *insaidi tasikamodu* 'we (excl) are related because our spouses are siblings'.

All children of uncles and aunts are called *pisa*, whereas their spouses are called *tamba*. Second cousins are called *ndua*, third cousins *ntolu*. Longer variants of these terms are *ntopisa*, *topendua* and *topentolu*. In these terms the words for one (*ise*), two (*dua*) and three (*tolu*) can be recognised. There are no special terms for farther removed cousins, although most people are aware of their relationship to fourth and fifth etc. cousins.

Cousins of ego's spouse are called *tamba ntopisa* 'first cousin', *tamba ntodua* 'second cousin' and *tamba ntotolu* 'third cousins'. In practise however all of them are usually just called *tamba*.

There is a special word to denote the relationship between ego and her or his spouse and the parents of their daughter- or son-in-law: *samponi*.

When a Muna husband has two or more wives at the same time they are each other's *kambali*. Polyandry does not occur on Muna.

3   First ascending generation

For the first ascending generation there are four consanguineal kinship terms: *ina* 'mother', *ama* 'father', *fokoinau* 'aunt', *fokoamau* 'uncle'. These terms cannot be used interchangeably: one does not call one's uncle *ama* or one's aunt *ina*. The terms *fokoinau* and *fokoamau* are however clearly related to the terms *ina* and *ama*. There is a (unproductive) verbal prefix *foko-* meaning 'to call or to shout X': *no-foko-ina* 'to call s.o. mother'; *no-foko-adede* 'to shout *adede* ('ouch')'. The nominal circumfix *foko-/-u* is probably connected with this prefix *foko-*, so that it means 'the one who is called X': *fokoamauku* 'the one I call father', 'my uncle', *fokoinauno* 'the one he calls mother', 'his aunt'.

Persons of nobility refer to their parents as *paapa* ('mother') and *idha* ('father') and to their uncles and aunts as *fokoidhau* and *fokopaapau*.

A more general term for parent is *kamokula* (literally 'old person'), plural *kamokulahi*: *kamokulahiku* 'my parents'.

Ego's spouse's parents are called by a separate term: *ina mantu* or *ina ghampo* 'mother-in-law' and *ama mantu* or *ama ghampo* 'father-in-law'. The term *mantu* is seen by some as a borrowing from Indonesian *menantu* (although it is confined to 'son-' or 'daughter-in-law'). Instead of the simple term *ghampo*, the complex *kafoghampoha* is also used: *ama kafoghampohaku* 'my father-in-law.' *Ghampo* is also a verb meaning 'become in-law of, marry'.

Ego's spouse's aunts and uncles can be called *fokoinau ghampo* and *fokoamau ghampo*, but usually they are called just *fokoinau* or *fokoamau*.

Stepparents are called *ina wee* and *ama wee* respectively. Their parents and their children all have this term *wee* too.

4   First descending generation

All of ego's children are called *ana*. There is no distinction in sex, but the term *ana* can be modified by *moghane* (*ana moghane* 'son') or by *robhine* (*ana robhine* 'daughter') if that distinction needs to be made. Also, the oldest and the youngest child can be named separately: *titiisaku* 'my oldest child', *o kahepu* 'the youngest child' (if no more children are to follow, otherwise the smallest child is called *kaghawi* 'the one who is held on the lap').

The children of ego's siblings are all called *fokoanau*. This term clearly is the reciprocal of the terms for 'aunt' and 'uncle', which also employ this circumfix *foko-/-u*: *fokoanauku* 'the one I call my child', 'my nephew/niece'. This term *fokoanau* can be extended collaterally to include children of ego's cousins, although theoretically *ntopisa* etc. should be added for clarification: *fokoanauku ntopisa* 'the child of my first cousin'.

Children of ego's spouse's siblings are called *fokoanau ghampo* or just *fokoanau*.

Spouses of ego's children are called *ana mantu* or *ana ghampo*. For their siblings no special terms exist (but note that there is a special term for the parents of ego's children's spouses: *samponi*).

5   Higher ascending and descending generations

The terms for the second through the sixth generation (ascending and descending) are reciprocal: *awa* is used for both 'grandparent' and 'grandchild', *awa ghawi* is used for the third generation (ascending and descending), *awa ntuu* for the fourth, *awa lina* for the fifth, and *awa nsubhe* for the sixth. According to others *awa nsubhe* denotes the fifth generation, and *awa lina* a descendant for which the exact number of generations is unknown.

Siblings of grandparents and grandchildren of ego's siblings are both called *fokoawau*, their spouses are called *fokoawau ghampo*. Siblings of great-grandparents are *fokoawau ghawi* etc.

The grandparents of ego's spouse are called *awa ghampo*, whereas the parents of ego's step-parent are called *awa wee*.

6   Differences between southern and northern Muna

The southern Muna system is roughly identical to northern Muna, with the following exceptions:

dawo 'sibling-in-law'	(northern Muna *tamba*)
ponia 'parent-in-law'	(northern Muna *ghampo*)
awua 'grandparent; grandchild'	(northern Muna *awa*)
fokoama'ao 'uncle'	(northern Muna *fokoamau*)
fokoina'ao 'aunt'	(northern Muna *fokoinau*)
fokoana'ao 'nephew, niece'	(norther Muna *fokoanau*)