

## **Reciprocity in Samal Marriage**

Kemp Pallesen

The principle of reciprocity is universal in human society and an important value of Philippine cultures. The following description of the marriage negotiations of the Sama Dilaut<sup>1</sup> of Sulu in the southwestern Philippines is an illustration of one reciprocal function and its stabilizing effect on a contract which is potentially unstable. Sama Dilaut marriage<sup>2</sup> involves a series of negotiations among various parties in specified relationship to the bride and bridegroom, with a transfer of bride-wealth gifts at certain stages. Such gift exchanges are social reciprocation rather than merely economic transactions; they impose a stabilizing influence on the marriage contract by invoking economic and social penalties for default on any of the parties involved. The completion of all the culturally required duties for one particular marriage does not terminate the responsibility of the participants; instead, it imposes on them reciprocal obligations to be discharged on a later occasion. Failure by any of the negotiating parties to discharge his obligations is an offense, not only against another party to the contract, but also against the society of which they are members, since it threatens the stability of the community.

### *The Setting*

Sama Dilaut are one of the so-called "sea nomad" groups of Southeast Asia, strand people who now live in settled villages. They consider themselves culturally and linguistically distinct from the other Samal groups of the southwestern Philippines and rarely intermarry with such groups. The data in this description are limited to the kinship group of which the informants were members. Other groups of the Sama Dilaut have modifications of the marriage procedures described, and it seems apparent that a settled village such

as Siganggang is composed of previously distinct kinship groups whose norms have not yet become standardized. For example, the kinship group studied (see Appendix B) does not approve of first-cousin marriage, and an analysis of marriage choices for this group, in both this generation marrying now and the previous one, shows that the preferred partner initially is a person of an unrelated or distantly related kinship group. This first marriage establishes affinal links, and a series of marriages follows between the two groups thus linked until increasing consanguinity compels marriage choice outside both of the groups. Informants of the kinship group studied here present such advantages of this custom as the increase of kinsmen in other groups, the maintaining of a distinction between the father's kindred (*usba*<sup>3</sup>) and the mother's (*wali*) for prospective partners, and — because divorce usually does not cause friction — between consanguine kin.

Other kinship groups in Siganggang have a marked preference for first-cousin marriage, although there appears to be an attempt to rationalize this preference by rejecting partners outside first- or second-cousin limits on the grounds of physical or moral unsuitability rather than on the basis of distance of relationship.

Since, however, young people are permitted a considerable degree of liberty in the choice of marriage partner, either of the preferences described above may be set aside. Increased social intercourse through schooling and through the clustering of Sama Dilaut around trading centers such as Siasi appears to be bringing about an increase of marriage between partners who do not conform to the preference of the elders. In all cases, the choice of a marriage partner must be outside the following proscribed relationships which are considered incestuous, *sumbang*<sup>4</sup>, such as full siblings, half-siblings, parent's full or half siblings, offspring of brothers or of half-brothers of the same father. This is on the grounds that the offspring of brothers are *da-boheq*, "of one semen." Marriage between offspring of sisters or offspring of brother and sister is permitted in some kinship groups of the Sama Dilaut, since these are *saddi boheq*, "of different semen."

The cycle of negotiations in Samal marriage is set in motion in one of two ways, the more common being for a young couple to admit a mutual liking, with the young man agreeing to ask his elders to initiate a formal request for the girl's hand. In the other, the young man's elders begin the proceedings themselves when they are decided on a suitable girl.

A girl is ready for marriage when she has had her first menstruation. Her readiness is marked by filing her upper front teeth flat, up to and including the incisors, to facilitate the fitting of gold caps. To enhance the girl's charms and her chances, the parents buy her colorful blouses and sarongs. She is encouraged to use jewelry which is normally reserved for festive occasions. A young man usually reaches 16 before marriage, by which time he has been circumcised to mark his entry into the adult world. He is already contributing to the family finances as an adult member, but, unlike a man with dependents, he uses part of his earnings to buy clothing and articles of personal adornment. Parents are reckoned to behave commendably who neglect younger children to ensure that a marriageable son wears fine clothes and a wrist watch. This period of a man's life is looked on as his last carefree time.

The situation described below is typical of a girl and youth of the Sama Dilaut who fall in love and elect to follow the cultural norm for getting married, rather than any of the options<sup>5</sup> which involve modifications of the following steps.

*Asking for the Hand (Pagtilaw, The Asking)*

The Sama Dilaut distinguish two main groups of kin. Usba<sup>6</sup> are father's bilateral kin. Wali (or *waris*) are mother's bilateral kin. In all marriage negotiations, the usba ranks over the wali, but ranking wali kin and older brothers of the prospective bride or bridegroom may assume usba roles in the absence of usba kin who can effectively handle the negotiations.

In formal negotiations, the parents of the young couple do not participate and, in most cases, do not even appear in public. The elders of the youth, up to four men from both usba and wali kin, take the initiative by visiting the corresponding elders of the girl. With them they take a betel-nut box (*mamaqan*) complete with the ingredients for the betel-nut chew, consisting of the areca nut (*pola*), pepper vine leaf (*buyuq*), lime (*bangkit*), compressed leaf tobacco (*tabakuq*), resin (*tagambil*). The betel-nut box plays a symbolic part in the dialog between the two family groups as the vehicle for their questions and replies. When the youth's elders produce the betel-nut box with the statement that their purpose is an important one, the girl's elders are prepared for a marriage proposal, and after chewing, the business begins.

Unless the girl already has a favored suitor, in which case negotiations are quickly terminated, no final answer is given during

this first meeting since the girl must be asked as to her wishes. The delay gives the girl's elders an opportunity to discuss the proposal with a wider circle of kin, and in particular, to consult the girl's eldest brother who at this stage ranks equally with the high usba kin. The proposal may be rejected on the basis of impediments to the union or of some remembered slights or ancestral displeasure at previous marriages between the two family groups. However, the most cogent factor in arriving at a decision is the reaction of the girl, since she is, in Samal words, "the one to bear the children."

If the answer is negative, the betel-nut box with most of its contents intact will be returned to the young man's elders with the words, "the girl is not willing." A negative answer is always given in this form even if the girl has already indicated privately her willingness to marry the boy; this supports the official attitude that marriageable Sama Dilaut girls do not discuss such matters with potential suitors. Such a refusal normally terminates the proceedings, though an ardent young man may persuade his elders to risk the embarrassment of a second refusal.

A favorable answer is indicated to the youth's elders by the return of the empty betel nut box with the words, "the girl is willing, you can proceed."

*Setting the Bride-Wealth* (Pagtilaw Halga, "Asking the Value")

On receiving the empty betel nut box, the second visit is made to the girl's elders; this time the party is slightly larger, up to six elders from the youth's usba and wali. This visit is for the purpose of negotiating the amount of the bride-wealth, until agreement is reached, referred to as "asking the price" (*banghad*). Bargaining then takes place, and the young man's elders explain the need for concessions such as a postponement of part of the transaction or a delay of any public ceremony until absent kin return from fishing. This meeting serves to feel out the attitudes of each side, rather than to make binding decisions. It ends when the youth's party quotes the final amount they can afford and leaves the betel-nut box to convey the message, as before.

Left alone, the girl's elders discuss the matter and decide the amount and form of the bridewealth. Traditionally, the bride-wealth is paid in goods of various kinds for the most part, with cash and jewelry making up the balance. A typical list of items is as follows:

- 2 large sacks of rice
- 1 small sack of rice
- 100 fried cakes of rice-flour and sugar (*panyam*)
- 100 sea-urchins cooked with rice inside (*okoq-okoq*)
- 50 woven coconut leaf containers of cooked rice (*tamu*)
- 3 large bundles of cured leaf tobacco (*bungkal*)
- 4 cartons of cigarets
- 3 cases of fishing line, complete with hooks
- 1 bolt of white cloth

Such specification is known as *sokat*. At the other extreme, a lump-sum transaction (*pakhiaw*) takes place. This may even include jewelry to supplement the cash. The typical bridewealth in the case of a couple marrying for the first time would be around ₱400 (roughly, US \$65).

*The Final Bridewealth Decision*

(Mamaq Ahea, "*The Important Betel-nut Chewing*")

A small party of two or three of the girl's usba now return a full betel-nut box to the youth's elders and state the final bride-wealth which will be acceptable to them. They also specify the form which the transaction is to take, whether *pakhiaw* or part *sokat* and the balance in cash and valuables. This final offer is termed *mamaq ahea*, "the important betel nut chewing," as the final decision is now immediately pending.

No further bargaining is permitted, so the final offer from the bride's elders will not differ greatly from that of the youth's elders unless the former wish to intimate that they do not look on the proposal with favor. The young man's elders may accept the offer immediately if it has no surprises for them or may request a few hours to discuss it. As soon as an agreement is reached between the two groups of elders, a day is set for the espousal ceremony. The agreed bridewealth is called *ungsud*, "marriage wealth."

*The Engagement* (Magtunang, "*Promised*")

From the moment of agreement as to the amount of bridewealth to be transferred, the young man and young woman enter into a *tunang*, "promised relationship," very similar to the Western engagement contract inasmuch as it permits termination of the agreement with little financial loss and the minimum disruption of amicable relations between the two family groups involved. It differs from the Western engagement in that in this case, only a few

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days separate the tunang status and the beginning of the wedding ceremonies.

Once the tunang status is established, the young man is encouraged to exercise his duty of *tungguq-tunang*, "guarding the promised one," which requires him to sleep at least occasionally in the girl's home with her male relatives, a duty usually considered more of an ordeal rather than a privilege. He cements the rather tentative nature of his relationship with the girl by a series of gifts (the *labu ahogot*, "secure anchor") which are said to tie the couple together. Traditionally, the gifts consist, in succession, of a mirror, a comb, a blouse, and a sarong. The youth also cultivates his prospective relations with in-laws by making gifts to them of fish he has caught, by showing his willingness to carry water for the household, and by fishing in company with his future spouse's brothers and fellow sons-in-law (*bilas*, or wife's sisters' husbands.)

#### *The Announcement (Pan'ssagan)*

Up until the moment the youth's elders accept the final bride-wealth offer, the negotiations have been more or less private and nobody, apart from the negotiating elders, has been officially informed of the match. Once agreement is reached, the wider circle of kin and neighbors are informed of the match and of the date of the espousal. The rest of the young man's kin are now able to contribute to the ungsud, although by this time all the kin who are actually obliged to contribute have been involved in the discussions.

For the girl's kin, this signals the occasion for sokat, the specifying by senior elders of the amount and manner of their share of the bride-wealth. This sokat should be distinguished from the fixed amount specified for the girl's immediate family. When the bride-wealth is paid in goods, this sokat will merely specify which particular item an elder wishes to get. More and more frequently nowadays, the ungsud is paid largely in cash, and the girl's kin request that their share be used to purchase certain items, such as cooking utensils, clothing, fishing gear, food, pottery, or tools. Such sokat specifications usually amount to goods worth about ₱20 (roughly, US \$3.30) per individual. The equivalent in cash will be paid in default of the actual goods being made available. The amount depends on the rank of the kin, with order of privilege following the order of rank listed under Appendix B. Exceptions may be made for people low in rank who have distinguished themselves by generous help on previous occasions. Alternatively, ranking kin

may be excluded because of a family quarrel or failure to contribute to an earlier marriage of a male kinsman. The oldest brother has considerable authority in deciding who should be granted their *sokat* requests.

During the announcement period, the elders of the two parties may meet informally to discuss details. One matter is the amount which will be added to the true *ungsud* for "show" (*paganda*). Both parties stand to gain stature by the deceit: the bride's family because the girl has proved to be valuable, and the groom's family, because they want the very best for their kinsmen. The show money is actually handed over in public and returned later in private. Other matters are the details and the amount of money to be spent for two modifications of the bride-wealth. These are the espousal gift, (*turul-bukutan*, literally "following behind") described under the section, "Espousal" (below), and the miniature wedding-house complex (*matigay*) described under the section on the wedding (below).

#### *Espousal (Pagpah'nda)*

This is the first public event of the series. The prospective bride is taken to the house of one of her *usba*; the place is referred to as the "bride's house" until the celebrations are over. This is the girl's first public appearance as a prospective bride. Dancing and the playing of the brass-gong ensemble (*kulintangan*) take place at both the bride's house and the bridegroom's house, or alternatively, entertainment may be provided by professional singers to the accompaniment of the bamboo marimba (*gabbang*).

The party arrives from the bridegroom's house in a flurry of firecrackers and to the accompaniment of the gongs. Young women from the young man's family dance on the deck of the outrigger canoe (*pelang*) which conveys them. The young man himself is usually conspicuous by his absence. The elders bring with them the marriage gift (*ungsud*), and the espousal gift (*turul-bukutan*), which is purchased with money deducted from the bride-wealth. It consists of five winnowing baskets filled with sugar cane, bananas, bread, cookies and coconut-leaf packages of cooked rice which are borne on the heads of male elders of the young man. Female elders bring the betel nut.

The priest (*imam*) or a senior elder from the girl's kin opens the discussion by asking, "What business it is that brings so many people together?" A spokesman for the youth's kin replies that, "it is an

affair of no small importance, nothing less in fact than an espousal." The girl is pointed out, to her embarrassment and everyone else's great interest.

After stylized bargaining begins with a question from the girl's elders as to whether the groom's kin are prepared to pay what is asked, agreement is reached as to the amount previously agreed on for public information. The youth's elders agree to "transfer" immediately all but the amount that will be withheld for the wedding-day gifts. Then, as the formal atmosphere relaxes, a good deal of joking accompanies the search by five or six of the youth's elders for enough valuables to make up the amount. After the valuables are counted, the girl's elders ask when the wedding is to be. The answer, which usually schedules the wedding to not more than a few days hence, terminates this meeting.

#### *In Waiting (Tagad-Kawin)*

The period between the espousal and the wedding ceremony is known as *tagad kawin*, "waiting for the wedding." On the evening of the espousal day, the young man is taken to sleep in the bride's home until the morning of the wedding, a formalization of the *tungguq-tunang* duty, to serve and protect "the promised one." Once the *ungsud* has been paid, the future groom and bride are considered to be bound by contract although they sleep on opposite ends of the house, the girl on the up-current side with her parents,<sup>7</sup> and the young man on the down-current side with the younger male members of the family.

Two nights before the day of the wedding ceremony, festivities begin at both the boy and girl's houses, on porches extended temporarily for the purpose. These festivities are the highlight of Samal community life and provide an opportunity for unmarried young people to wear their finery and to look over the marriage possibilities. Two pairs of dancers at a time, all of the same sex, are accompanied by the brass-gong ensemble (*kulintagan*). This consists of eight small graduated gongs set in a frame, the skin drum (*tambul*), a single large gong (*agung*), and a pair of large gongs hung facing each other (*bua*). Male and female pairs of dancers alternate as performers when chosen by the master of ceremonies who signals his choice by touching people with the end of his scarf. Both single and married people take part in the dancing throughout the evening, cigarets and betel nut are supplied by the hosts.

*The Wedding Day (Llaw-kawin)*

Before daybreak, on the day of the wedding, the kulintangan ensemble begins playing and stops only when the ceremony is over. The bridegroom returns to his own home to dress, leaving the bride to be adorned for the occasion.

The bride (*d'nda pangantin*) has her hair shaved back from the brow. An artificial hairline and extended eyebrows are painted in with charcoal paste, and lipstick and patterned dots of rice paste over the face complete her make-up. She wears a traditional sarong or wide-legged pantaloons (*sawwal*), a blouse of black cloth, waist cloth (*sapu-tangan*), a silken shawl over one or both shoulders, and bracelets and ear pendants for jewelry. On her head, she wears a crown made of pasteboard (*panumping*), and costume jewelry. With her two wedding attendants (*pandala*), the bride waits in a partitioned and curtained section of her house, sometimes for several hours, until the ceremony has been completed. During the whole time, she is expected to maintain a face devoid of expression.

The traditional dress for the bridegroom (*Ulla pangantin*) is rarely seen today. It consists of the sawwal and a tailored tight-sleeved shirt of black cloth ornamented with gold and silver buttons and sown with gold coin; a sapu-tangan around the waist completes the outfit. The current fashion is a blend of tradition and modern innovations. Nowadays the groom usually wears shoes, western style trousers, white shirt and sunglasses. A sapu-tangan around the waist and an ornamented fez are the only concession to tradition.

As the bridegroom goes to the bride's house, he is accompanied by a single pandala, who carries a kris or barong, native swords of workmanship, wrapped in a white cloth. One informant volunteers the information that the carrying of the knife dates from the days when a bride was seized against her family's wishes and hence the bridegroom's person was in danger.

Whether or not the bridegroom lives in the same village as the bride, he arrives by sea. Two outrigger canoes lashed together provide his transportation. Between the two lashed canoes, a platform is built for the kulintangan ensemble and for the young women to dance on as the party travels from the bridegroom house to the bride house. Between the two masts, large decorated banners (*sambulayang*) are strung with pennants (*bandilaq*) flying from the

mastheads. As the bridegroom sets out from his house and as he arrives at the bride's, each step is marked by the explosion of firecrackers and rockets. Relatives in their canoes form an escort flotilla for the double canoe.

When the party reaches the edge of the reef opposite the bride's house, a canoe pushes out from the bride's house to meet the groom's party and to tie a rope to his canoe. If the tide does not allow the canoe to come right to the porch, members of his party carry him and his attendant shoulder-high to the house. He is accompanied by two or three *maligay* and a sack of rice. The *maligay*, wedding house, is a miniature house built of light wood framing, about three feet high, and floored with sugarcane; it is further decorated by sugarcane tops and colored flags. The walls and roof of the *maligay* may be covered with fried rice cakes (*panyam*), or with roasted fish or squid, depending on the specifications made in the final bridewealth offer. The cost of the *maligay* and the rice are deducted from the *ungsud* handed over at the espousal ceremony.

#### *The Marriage Ceremony (Pagkawin)*

As the party reaches the porch of the bride's house, her elders on the porch call through the wall to her attendants, repeating three times the phrase, "tell the girl it is time for the wedding." Since he is not yet permitted to see the bride, the bridegroom is led inside the house to a partition on the landward end. Elders from the groom's family announce to the bride's elders and the visitors who by that time have crowded in, that they have come to have the families joined in marriage. They then request the bride's elders that someone perform the ceremony. The elders of the bride respond by asking the other party to designate their officiating minister, usually an imam acceptable to both sides. "Are you completely willing to be married?" the imam asks the bridegroom. When the bridegroom, seated in front of the imam, answers "yes," the question is asked twice more. Incense is then burned in a coconut shell censer (*tugtugan*) while the imam recites a cleansing ritual, *taubat kupul*,<sup>8</sup> a religious ritual in Arabic and Tausug.<sup>9</sup> Throughout the *taubat kupul*, the imam places his right palm against the bridegroom's, their right thumbs touching, and a small white scarf covering their hands.

Following the completion of the taubat kupul, the imam takes one end of the white scarf covering their hands and gives the other to the bridegroom, leading him into the partitioned area where the bride waits (*likusan*). The elders and visitors follow, if they can find standing room. As the imam and bridegroom pass into the bride's partitioned area, the bridegroom's elders hand the bride groom ceremonial betel-nut chew (*apug*) which he wraps in his end of the scarf.

The imam and bridegroom stand beside the seated bride while the bridegroom passes the betel-nut chew three times around her head. At the third pass, he touches her forehead between the brows with the betel nut, then drops it into her lap. With some urging from others and a show of reluctance on his part, the bridegroom sits beside the bride, slightly away from her. Married relatives of the bride, either brothers-in-law or uncles, then lift the couple bodily and in four movements turn them around, going through a complete circle. At each pause, they tell the couple: "Get water, get firewood." Then the bride and the groom exchange their waist cloths. This completes the ceremony itself.

They then leave the house with groom leading his bride by the white scarf until they reach the double canoe which brought the groom, this time to take the couple back to the bridegroom's house. There they will sleep together for two nights. Fire-crackers are again exploded in quantity until the couple with their attendants are on their way. Wedding guests who are related to the families and their guests stay to share the wedding meal.

On the third day after the wedding the *tiningkuang*, the "bride return" ceremony, takes place. This is the ritualized return of the newly married couple to the house of the bride's parents; it is the final event in which the married couple formally appear as bride and bridegroom. The playing of the kulintangan ensemble marks the event, but the festivities are not extensive and there is usually no dancing. For about five days, the young couple stays with the bride's family, and then returns to the groom's family. Residence continues to be shared between both groups of in-laws until such time as a growing family makes it impossible for either of the houses to accommodate them. The couple spends one to two months in each house before moving. Under the joint-residence pattern the children of the marriage grow up equally acquainted with both their usba and wali kinship lines.

*Distribution of the Bridewealth*  
(Pagpalahil, "Bringing Out")

On the day following the wedding the bride's elders gather to collect their sokat requests. Failure to distribute the promised amounts may involve supernatural penalties. One case is quoted in Siganggang of a boy with a twisted mouth whose deformity is attributed to the failure of his mother's usba to transfer the share of the bride-wealth to some of her wali kin.

The bride's parents do not specify any share of the marriage wealth, since a part, the *mahal maka basingan* (gloss uncertain), is guaranteed to them as recompense for raising the girl. Traditionally it is paid in goods consisting of one bowl, one plate, two or three sarongs and a length of white cloth. Currently it is reckoned as being worth ₱42.50 (US \$7).

Two transfers are required from the bride's parents to complete the transfer of wealth associated with the wedding complex. The *talmal* is a legal fee of ₱5 (US \$0.80) paid through the groom's *botang mattoqa* to the *panglima*. The *botang mattoqa* is a natural nonhereditary leader whose position recognized by civil authorities; the *panglima* is currently a representative of the mayor who handles minor civil and judiciary matters in the village, although he is appointed by the sultan. He may be Samal or Tusug. This legal fee is usually divided, with the *panglima* keeping ₱3 and returning ₱2 to the elder who brought it to him.

The *batu-kawin*, literally "the wedding stone," is a token recompense of ₱1 to the officiating imam. In the case of the legal fee there are legal penalties for not paying it; in the case of the *batukawin* supernatural penalties are likely to fall on the delinquent payer.

With the discharge of these two payments and the fulfilling of the request of the bride's *usba-waris* (bilateral kindred) the wedding itself is completed. The wedding of their daughter will probably have cost the family at least ₱100 in excess of what they have received as their share. They have provided the girl with a minimum dowry of a set of clothes, a suitcase and some jewelry. They have supplied food for the guests who have stayed with them during the festivities, as well as cigarets and betel-nut for the entertainment of guests during the dancing. The only beneficiaries at this time are the girl's *usba-waris*.

Since two further events arising from marriage may affect the families in the future, it is important to describe them.

*Birth of the First Child*  
(Pagpareoq, "The Bringing Down to Birth")

When the bride nears the time for the delivery of her first child each of the kin who received part of the marriage price is expected to contribute one *hos tadjung*, a general purpose sarong worth about ₱6 (roughly US \$1). This gift is considered essential to the uncomplicated birth of the child, and the sarong also forms part of the payment to the midwife. A difficult birth is attributed to the failure of one or more of the bride's kin to fulfill their obligations.

At this time the elders on both sides are obliged to combine their resources to make a gift of a clay water jar to the young couple. This gift (*kasambagan*, response) is required as an indication of respect to the ancestral spirits, and failure in giving it is also supposed to incur supernaturally caused disaster or trials.

*Divorce* (Pagtiman)

Divorce among Samal couples is frequent, especially in the case of first marriages where there was some coercion from either party. Among the reasons for divorce are refusal to give conjugal rights, adultery by either party, laziness, or merely dislike. Despite the high frequency of divorce, however, a good deal of effort is made to prevent the untimely dissolution of a marriage, since a reciprocal responsibility rests on the girl's *usba-waris* to meet the costs involved in a divorce and to return part of the marriage-price. Both paternal and maternal kin of the youth also have a stake in the permanency of the union, since they would be called again in the future to contribute to the bride-wealth for the youth and since the amount they would get back in a divorce settlement would be small.

There are four conciliating bodies: the bride's parents and *usba*, the designated elder (*botang mattoqa*) from either side, the *panglima*, and the mayor's court. First, the bride's family and later, if needed, the *botang mottoqa* attempt to give advice to the young people, pointing out the shame that will be brought on the families by an untimely separation. The *botang mattoqa* has his prestige as an arbitrator at stake also, and tries hard to prevent the matter being taken further.

If these two groups cannot bring any improvement in the situation the matter moves out of the kin groups and is brought to the

panglima, the third conciliating party. If he orders a divorce, this official has the authority to impose financial penalties and to fix the amount of restitution. Consequently there is a good deal of energy expended in getting witnesses to attest to the virtue or fault of one or the other of the parties involved. At the first hearing the panglima usually binds the young couple over to make another try at living together, making the necessary concessions or adjustments to each other and threatens them with possible loss of the dispute if the case comes to him again. Failure to arrive at a settlement almost invariably results in divorce.

When a couple has been married for a few months only, a decision against the bride will involve the return of at least half the ungsud. A marriage of longer duration will involve progressively less of the bride-price. Either party may contest the ruling of the panglima and take the case to the fourth body, the mayor's court. This is the last resort since the mayor is most likely to support his representative and penalize the appealing party. The official who grants the divorce issues a writ and gets ₱10 (US \$1.50) as remuneration (*tugmus*) for his labors. In addition to this official amount the grateful successful party may share with the mayor or his representative the amount of the restitution paid or saved.

A case in Siganggang involving a girl who refused to help her husband with normal household duties was brought to the panglima. The girl's family had an important imam as witness and expected the decision to go against the young man's family, so that a divorce would be granted with almost not return of the bridewealth. Instead almost 80 per cent of the cash portion of the ungsud, about ₱150 (US \$25) was ordered to be paid by the bride's family. So great was the shame of the girl's family at losing this case that the whole of the extended family moved to Zamboanga, 120 miles away, selling at a loss the houses in which they had lived. The young man's *usba-waris*, after the panglima had received his fee and contribution, received about ₱5 (US \$0.80) each as their share.

In the case of a couple with children there is no return of any of the bride-price, but a settlement (*iris*) is made in favor of the partner who is deprived of the children. In general, female children go with the mother and male children with the father. The amount of the settlement depends on the nature of the offense which leads to the divorce, but it may range from 25 pesos to 50 pesos (\$4.00 to ₱25 to ₱50 (US \$4 to \$8) for each child.

*Conclusion*

The type of reciprocity described here is not symmetrical since the reciprocal responsibility is not between receiver and the previous giver except in the case of divorce. There is, however, a clearly understood responsibility for contributions from those who have previously benefited from a series of wedding transactions. Significantly, the same group of relatives which stands to gain from the marriage of a girl is responsible to help a young male kinsman with the raising of the items required for the bridewealth. Thus the kin who benefit from the marriage of a niece will help with the marriage of a nephew on another occasion, and should contribute on the birth of the first child of the couple. The fulfilment of these obligations perpetuates the social bonds involved in marriage, and protects the integrity of the social structure of the community.

*Notes*

KEMP PALLESEN is a member of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL, Philippines). He and his family have made Siganggang, Siasi, Sulu, their residence.

1. Material for this paper was collected during residence in the village of Siganggang, Siasi Municipality, Sulu in the Republic of the Philippines, while the writer was engaged in linguistic research under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, 1963-1970. Siganggang is a strand village of about 120 houses with no connecting bridges to the shore. It is the residence of people who distinguish themselves from other Samal group by the name of Sama Dilaut, Ocean Samal, or Sama Toqongan, Real Samal. They do not own to the name popularly given to them of Badjaw.

The Sama Dilaut of Siganggang distinguish themselves from the boat dwelling nomads of the Bonggaw-Sibutu area of the extreme south of the province of Sulu, although linguistically at least they are almost identical. The boat dwelling Samal are known in Siganggang as Sama Palaqu Boat-dwelling Samal, or *Sama Jengeng*, Samal who live on a *jengeng* type canoe. The Sama Dilaut consider themselves to have lived in settled communities for a very long time and do not admit an ethnic memory of a nomadic way of life. Older informants can quote the names of villages in the Siasi area which were settled before their grandfather's time.

2. The Sama Dilaut have and observe strong sanctions against polygynous marriage, despite the fact that this is permitted to a degree by Islamic law, which they accept as valid. The rationale for this difference is an ancestral prohibition which God has endorsed specifically for their culture.

3. See Appendix A for a brief description of the orthography used in this paper.

4. My informant did not know of any case among the Sama Dilaut where marriage had involved a couple within the prescribed *sumbang* limits. though

they quoted instances of casual liaison between such couples, and examples of such marriage in other Samal cultural groups in the Siasi area. The variation in different cultural groups of the permitted degree of consanguinity in Samal marriage may have given rise to the notion that some groups of Samal permit sister marriage, a notion apparently widely held among the Tausug.

5. See Appendix D for a brief sketch of situations which are a modification of the full procedure described in the body of this paper.

6. See Appendix B for a specimen kinship chart showing typical range of usba kin, with order of precedence.

7. The village of Siganggang is built in a bay between high water and the edge of deep water. Each house is built on posts with no bridge to the land, and so that the floor is at least two feet above normal high tides. Due to tidal flow and the configuration of the islands there is a prevailing current.

8. See Appendix C for the Samal transliteration of one form of the *Taubat Kupul* ritual.

9. Tausug is the language spoken by the other major indigenous group of Sulu. Arabic was brought with the Islamic faith by Arab traders and missionaries, and much of the religious vocabulary of both Samal and Tausug is from Arabic. The Arabic used in religious ritual is not understood by the majority of the people.

#### *Appendix A: Key to pronunciation*

In the following chart the phoneme is given first, followed by the significant allophones, and then the orthographic symbols in this paper. Stress in Samal is on the penultimate syllable.

##### *Consonants:*

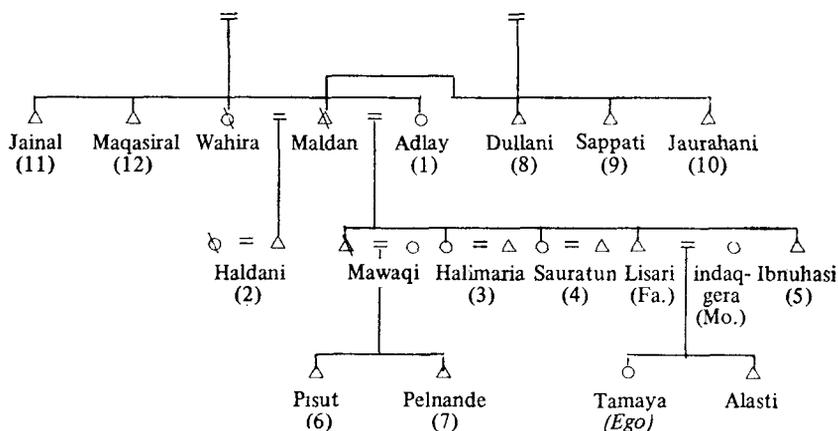
/p/	[p],	[p]	(unreleased)	<i>p</i>
/b/	[b],	[b]	(intervocalic)	<i>b</i>
/t/	[t],	[t]	(unreleased)	<i>t</i>
/d/	[r],	[r]	(intervocalic)	<i>d, r</i>
/k/	[k],	[k]	(unreleased)	<i>k</i>
/g/	[g],	[g]	(intervocalic)	<i>g</i>
/m/	[m]			<i>m</i>
/n/	[n]			<i>n</i>
/n/	[n]			<i>ng</i>
/ɲ/	[ɲ]			<i>ny</i>
/l/	[l],	[!]	(before silence or a consonant)	<i>l or ?</i>
/s/	[s], sh]	[s]	(free fluctuation initial; sh indicates a palatized s)	<i>s</i>
/j/	[dz]			<i>i</i>
/h/	[h]			<i>h</i>
/ʔ/	[ʔ]			<i>ʔ</i>
/w/	[w]			<i>w</i>
/y/	[y]			<i>y</i>

Vowels:

/i/	[i],	/i/	(unstressed)	<i>i</i>
/e/	[e],	[e]	(unstressed)	<i>e</i>
/ə/	[ə]			<i>'</i>
/a/	[a],	[ʌ]	(unstressed)	<i>a</i>
/u/	[u],	[v]	(unstressed)	<i>u</i>
/o/	[o],	[ɔ]	(unstressed)	<i>o</i>

Appendix B: Kinship

The following kinship chart indicates the usba kin of Tamaya. The order of rank indicated for these kin reflects the opinions of Ibnuhasi, one of my informants (brother of Tamaya's father.)



The ideal order is different, for practical reasons, from that actually realized.

- (1) Adlay (Fa Mo) is an old woman and defers to the men of her family.
- (3, 4) Halimaria and Sauratun, (Fa Si) being younger women, do not usually voice an opinion outside their nuclear family.
- (6, 7) Pisut (Fa Br So) is in his mid-teens, and Pelnande is under school age. Their opinion will be respected when they get older.
- (9, 10) Sappati (Fa Fa Br) is not on speaking terms with Haldani (Fa Fa So) while Jauharani tends to side with Sappati. Thus Dullani (Fa Fa Br) is the only effective voice among the three brothers.
- (11) Jainal (Fa Mo Br) lives a hundred miles to the north, near Basilan Island, and rarely travels out of his district.

Thus the practical order is: Haldani (1), Dullani (2), Maqasiral (3) and Ibnuhasi (4). In the event that a person has a few members in his usba who can effectively function in marriage negotiations, an older brother or ranking wali kin may assume the role, though not the title, of usba.

*Appendix C: Taubat Kupul* ("Forgiveness for Presumption")

The text reflects the adaptation of the Arabic to Samal phonology. The English translation of the Tausug portion of the ritual is a free one.

**Arabic:** Astag pirulla hilaqalim  
 Astag pirulla hilaqalim  
 Astag pirulla hilaqalim  
 Alim alim allajji  
 Atubuq ilayhi, halki halka  
 Min minubluqun, min mayak tariqal kupul  
 Walahaula, wala kuasa  
 Billa billa hil aliul agrim  
 Waqiskum ibadaula higanap  
 Waqiskum ibadaula higanap  
 Waqiskum ibadaula higanap  
 Simbitikalla, simbitikalla, simbitikalla  
 Issa Allah, issa Allah, issa Allah

**Tausug:** Ini wakil kakuq pagbabanahun na  
 This is the one authorized for me to be husband to  
 Kaimu Sitti Patima \_\_\_\_\_  
 To you well-born Fatima (girl's name)  
 Taimaun ku ing asawa ku halal na tuqud kakuq  
 I accept my wife free from ceremonial prohibitions  
 Hangkan na ini piagsaksiqan sin hilal, hatib, taritib  
 That is why it is testified to by this priests, this  
 attendant priest, following prescribed steps  
 Magsarang sukul na aku  
 I give appropriate praise now  
 Masampulnaq na aku sim bilal, hatib, taritib  
 The ceremony is complete for me now, by the priest, attendant,  
 priest, following prescribed steps.

*Appendix D: Exception to the Marriage Procedure*

Since children born out of wedlock (*haram biaraq*) are considered to be under a curse from God, every effort is made to regularize unions which began by evading the normative initial steps. In such cases, as well as in the others listed below, the full procedure for marriage may be modified by omitting the public part of the celebrations, but in all cases both kinship groups are involved in negotiations. Apart from this modification and the fact that a leading elder of one of the involved kinship groups may solemnize the union (instead of an imam or panglima) the ritual is the same. Informants said that marriage with an elder presiding was the way it was done in old times, but there appears to be no memory of a ritual which did not include Islamic elements.

The following are brief sketches of exceptions to the procedures described in the body of the paper.

(i) *Amoleq I'lla*, catching the man at home.

A girl may take the initiative and force the beginning of negotiations by going at night to where the man is sleeping, and sharing, if possible, his

sleeping mat. Actual physical relations are not essential to success, as it is immediate, and after a sleepless night for the man's kin the two families begin public litigation the next day. If the girl is resentful that the man has been reluctant to make steps towards marriage after giving an indication of serious interest, she may invent some scandalous details for revenge, and since in such cases the man's protests have little weight, the maximum fine is likely to be imposed. This may be as much as P150 (US \$25). If the girl is infatuated, she will furnish a story just sufficiently serious to thoroughly implicate the man. If she and the man have been caught out in some form of embrace, she will minimize the offense to prevent shame to herself.

Unless there are serious impediments to marriage the man's family tries to capitalize on the situation by negotiating a marriage agreement. In this case the fine is reduced to a minimum amount (about P25 or US \$4), just enough to provide a *tampun maru*, a shield against shame, to prevent loss of face to the girl's kin.

When an agreement is reached to marry, the full marriage procedures follow, unless the situation is as described in (iv) and (v) below.

(ii) *Pagsaggaw*, Abduction

A young man whose advances are scorned or ignored by a girl may force consideration of his suit by abducting the girl with the help of friends. After a period of time beyond a week, the couple takes steps towards the return of the girl. Since feelings of the girl's kin may be antagonistic towards the man, a go-between will usually make the first tentative inquiries to see how sentiments run. Forgiveness is sought from the bride's elders, and then negotiations for compensation and the amount of the marriage-price begin. Two factors make for the success of this method: the fact that the least shameful course is to negotiate and make the best of an accomplished fact, and the widely held idea that abduction is a rather exciting and romantic way of contracting a union.

When an agreement has been reached, the union is usually solemnized without delay and without public entertainment, although the payment of the fine and the bridewealth is often done with considerable flourish to publish the news that the good name of the bride's family has been vindicated.

Informants agreed that this method was more characteristic of Tausug marriage than of Sama Dilaut.

(iii) *Paglahi*, Elopment.

A young couple who wants to marry, but who cannot get the cooperation of elders on either or both sides, may agree to elope. After a week or more of living together in the house of friends or sympathetic relatives they return to ask forgiveness of the elders of their kindreds. A *tampun maru* (see i) fine is imposed on the man's family, but this is minimal unless the girl is capricious and protests that it was a case of abduction, without her consent. Especially in cases where the two have cohabited for a considerable length of time, or where the girl is obviously pregnant, the union is solemnized without delay. In other cases the relatives who gather to share a wedding meal may be entertained by the singing and playing of hired *gabbang* (bamboo marimba) performers.

(iv) *Amoleq ipal*, Marriage to spouse's siblings.

When a man or woman is widowed, they may negotiate marriage with an eligible sibling of the deceased. (This arrangement is not permitted when a couple are separated by divorce.) Since the families are already connected by marriage the value of the goods exchanged is small in most cases, and negotiations brief. Either the full marriage procedure or a modified form may follow, depending on whether the new spouse has been married before. A person who is married without the full celebrations of gong-playing and dancing is considered to have been deprived of a right.

(v) *Hal Paggun*, Simply being united.

When both of the persons involved have been married before, and are now either widowed or divorced, they may agree to live together as man and wife. There is no exchange of valuables, and the marriage is solemnized without much ceremony by a leading elder of one or other kin group. This case is particularly likely when the couple live in the same immediate neighborhood, and have grown children. Since they already had the privilege of being previously married with full ceremony and celebrations, it is considered inappropriate for them to make a show of their marriage proceedings.