

WHAT'S IN A NAME? PERSONAL IDENTITY AND NAMING ON ANUTA

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Abstract

Names and the messages that they communicate have been a subject of general and anthropological interest. Here data are presented from Anuta, a Polynesian island in the eastern Solomons, showing that one's sense of identification with one's name is as intimate as in the West, and that social bonds are frequently established through the naming process, but without the permanence and exclusivity that we associate with names. Suggestions are offered as to why names are such potent vehicles for shaping people's sense of who they are and where they fit into their universe.

Sally: What was his name again?

Chuck: Santa Claus.

Sally: How about his wife? Do you know her name?

Chuck: Well, sometimes you hear people say her name is Mary Christmas.

Sally: Really? That's very interesting. Maybe I'll write to her instead:

"Dear Mary Christmas,

Congratulations on deciding to keep your own name..."

--Charles Schultz--

INTRODUCTION

Names, the relationships that they establish, and the messages they communicate, have been topics of both scholarly and popular concern. For our own society, it has been argued that "...names identify..., are gates to a character's knowable personality, and bound that personality with isolating precision" [Nicolaisen 1980:256]. Furthermore, "...names prevent confusion, provide structured human relationships, determine the possibility of access...." [Ibid.].¹ Assignment of a name not only communicates important information about the person named [Coleman et al. 1980; Nicolaisen 1978, 1980]; it has even been suggested that the name with which an individual grows up has a major impact upon personality development and eventual occupational choice [Gaffney 1971].

That names bear major psychosocial value in non-Western cultures and societies is evident from the work of numerous observers [Goodenough 1965; Geertz 1973; Junghare 1975; Akinnaso 1981]. Lévi-Strauss [1966] has drawn on an extensive ethnographic record to illustrate that names around the world, like totemism, caste, and allied phenomena, are used both to identify a person as a member of a group and differentiate him as a unique individual within that group.

In popular American opinion, names are also associated with the essence of one's being--name and personality are bound into a single unity.² Some of us may sympathize with a woman, planning marriage, who is struggling over whether she should "take her husband's name" or "keep her own." In the former case, the acquired name is taken to represent a change in the woman's identity while the man's remains intact. Conversely, if a woman keeps her maiden name, we feel that she remains herself--"her own person"--in the same way as a woman who has chosen not to wed or a man regardless of his marital status.

Similarly, children are identified with their parents. This is a function, in part, of our theories of conception and shared substance [see Schneider 1968]. But the fact that children take their parents' surname reinforces the perception of identity. This is further reinforced in Christian families by giving to one's offspring one's own name, while in Jewish families, deceased relatives are remembered through the act of naming children for departed kin. On occasion, children are also named for admired persons, whether kin or not, with the implicit hope that this will help the youngster share admirable qualities held by the illustrious namesake. An attack on someone's name is taken as an offense almost equal to a physical assault. People often go to great lengths to protect or maintain their "good names."³

On Anuta, a small Polynesian outlier in the eastern Solomon Islands, names carry a significance as great as that found in the West. The association of a person with his/her name may be just as intimate. Potent social bonds are frequently established through the naming process. Nonetheless, the permanence and exclusivity that we impute to names is absent.⁴ An analysis of Anutan names thus suggests a rather different concept of "personhood" and of relationships among persons than is found in Western cultures.

TYPES OF NAME

The Anutan word, ingoa, may be glossed as "name." Any class of objects generally has an ingoa, so that one may say, "Ko te ingoa o te poi rakau na, ko te petau"--"The name of that (type of) tree is te petau (Calophyllum)." In addition, every Anutan building, canoe, garden, major geographical or geological feature, and section of the island has its own individual name. Every person, with the exception of some--but not all--stillborn fetuses and infants who die within their first few days of life, has at least one name.

Anuta has three distinct but interrelated personal naming systems. These involve the ingoa tangata or ingoa pouri (the traditional "personal name"), the ingoa pakauku tapu ("Christian" or "baptismal name"), and the ingoa pakamaatuaa ("marital" or "parental name"). In the course of a normal life, each Anutan is given at least one name of each variety; however, the names are given at different times during one's life and indicate somewhat different things about the individual.

"Personal Names"

If Tikopia, which was first studied at a time when half the island was still practicing the traditional religion, may be taken as a reliable guide, the original Anutan term for the "personal name" was probably te ingoa tangata--tangata meaning "man" or "person." Since the arrival of Christianity, this type of name has been termed te ingoa pouri (literally "darkness" name), indicating that this was the name that people had before the Church "brought them the light."⁵

The names are generally long strings of morphemes which have meaning by themselves in the Anutan language. Examples include Katoakitematangi ("All to the Wind"), Tearaamanu ("Path of Birds"), Tauvakatai ("One Canoe"), or Tipungavaerua ("Carpenter Divide In Two"). However, the literal translation of the names is taken to have little significance. As in the contemporary United States, where a man named Smith is not assumed to earn his livelihood by making horseshoes, the Anutans tell us that such names as Tearaamanu or Tauvakatai are te ingoa pero ("a name only"). Names such as Vakangoto ("Sunken Canoe"), which designates a girl who was named for a canoe that sank on a voyage to Patutaka, an uninhabited island 30 miles away, are very much the exception.

This is not to say, however, that "personal names" are insignificant. People frequently are named either for illustrious Anutans of times past or for their direct--generally "patrilineal"--ancestors. This implies an identity between present-day Anutans and their namesakes from earlier times, thus emphasizing the continuity of descent lines and implicitly merging the present with the past. In addition, it is hoped that by sharing a name with an ancestor of some stature, one will come to share the characteristics of the ancestor who bore it.

The "personal name" is given at or shortly after birth and is chosen either by the parents or some other close relative. The nature of the relationship established by a name between bestower and recipient is not explicitly articulated, but the right to name a child is thought to be an honor. Sometimes several people will vie for this privilege with several names being proposed. In such a situation, all parties but one will usually concede the honor, and the bestower of the name is generally determined on a case-by-case basis. Occasionally, however, the contenders will be adamant--leaving a child with two or more "personal names."

As of 1973, of the 284 living and recently deceased Anutans for whom "personal names" had been recorded during research, eight had two and none more than two. However, this appears to be a gross understatement. When asked to identify someone by his/her "personal name," most informants simply gave the one which was currently in common usage.

In addition, secondary and tertiary--and, for that matter, even primary--names were sometimes forgotten or unknown to the informants. This was true particularly for (1) deceased individuals, (2) people who had emigrated and had not been part of the Anutan scene for many years, and (3) children who were stillborn or who died in infancy. Twelve of the 13 persons who were listed as never having been given a "personal name" were children who did not survive early infancy. Another was a child of a

man who had moved to Honiara, married a Melanesian woman, and had given his daughter only a Christian name. When this girl is required to produce a surname, she probably will use her parents' Anutan "marital name." (More information about use of surnames for official records is given below.) In addition to Anutans who were never given "personal names," those of many people were forgotten. Furthermore, informants were unsure as to whether or not many children who died in early infancy or were born dead had ever been given "personal" and/or "baptismal names."

Additional "personal names" often are acquired when Anutans visit Tikopia (and vice versa). Anutans frequently visit Tikopia for longer or shorter periods. Voyaging between the two islands and intermarriage between members of the two populations have been common for many generations. Each Anutan patongia (elementary domestic unit) has a special relationship referred to as tauranga with one or more Tikopian paito--the analogous unit on that island. Visitors and emigrants generally seek out their tauranga units immediately upon their arrival. Members of those units serve as the former's hosts, and often give their guests new "personal names" to underscore their close relationship.

For persons bearing multiple "personal names," this researcher could not discover any system for determining which name would be involved, but in every case just one "personal name" was in common usage. Some probing was required to discover if the individual in question had other names. Often, follow-up procedures were not conducted to find out whether the subject(s) might have had others.

Since a "personal name" is given at or shortly after a person's birth and is maintained throughout life, it is not age-specific in any precise sense. However, it is rarely employed after marriage; thus, its use tends to indicate one's position in the life cycle. There is nothing in a name which unequivocally identifies it as pertaining to persons of one sex or the other. Morphemes with such diverse meanings as "chief," "warrior," "ocean," "canoe," and "fragrant flower" appear both in men's and women's names. Once a name is attached to a person of one or the other sex, however, that name is only used for others of the same sex. Thus, a man may share a "personal name" with a male ancestor and a female with an ancestress, but research has not uncovered any "personal name" which was held by both males and females--either simultaneously or at different times.

The Anutans consider the utterance of someone's ingoa pouri ("personal name") to be a sign of intimacy. Therefore, persons who must be respected owing to their kinship status--for example, parents, parents-in-law, and parallel-siblings-in-law--may not be referred to or addressed by their "personal name." In contrast, "marital names" have certain forms which may be invoked in special circumstances without any implication of disrespect. "Baptismal names" are generally not used for such relatives, but for quite different reasons. However, despite the intimate association of the "personal name" with its bearer, the name is (1) sometimes temporary, (2) can be superseded by another later in life, (3) may stand side by side with other names of the same type, and (4) is rarely used for

many people. In common parlance, lengthy names are often shortened so that, for example, Katoakitematangi becomes Matangi, Topetuuteava becomes Tope, Keripakatuu becomes Pakatu, and Poraumaatua becomes Maatua.

"Marital Names"

Anutans are given a new name of a different type when they marry. The husband and wife share the same name, which is prefaced by the title Pu in the man's case and Nau in the woman's. Pu and Nau are perhaps analogous to the English "Mr." and "Mrs."; but in contrast with the Western system, the woman does not take a name initially born by the husband. When the couple is referred to as a unit, they are called Ta _____ (The _____'s); so that Pu Tokerau and his wife might be designated Ta Tokerau (The Tokeraus).⁶ After marriage, "personal names" become inoperative for most purposes; from this time on, the parties are usually referred to and addressed by kin terms or their "marital names."

Most often, the shared name was previously held by an ancestral couple in the husband's partiline--commonly the paternal grandparents. Frequently, however, the former bearer of the name was an illustrious personage in a collateral line, and on occasion, an entirely new name is created. Not a single case has been recorded in which a couple was given the name of either party's parents--a fact which stands in striking contrast to the Tikopian naming system.⁷

Upon a spouse's death, the survivor maintains the "marital name" until he or she remarries, at which time the old name is abandoned and the newly established couple is given a new "marital name." Formal divorce is not presently accepted on Anuta; thus, widowhood followed by remarriage is the only situation requiring a change in "marital name."

Occasionally, however, a name is changed while a marriage is still in effect. One such occurrence took place while research was being conducted on the island. In that instance, a widower name Pu Ropanga remarried and became known as Pu Nukurava. Ta Nukurava lived together for several months under that appellation. In November 1972, Pu Avakope, Pu Nukurava's FFBS, returned from two years' residence on Tikopia. During his stay on Tikopia, Pu Avakope had lived with his domestic unit's tauranga ("Tikopian bond-friend"), Pa Ngarumea. In order to cement his relationship with Pu Avakope's unit, Pa Ngarumea sent a message with Pu Avakope who was returning to his home island: Pa Ngarumea wanted Pu Nukurava to share his name. Pu Nukurava accepted the suggestion, and during the last weeks of the field investigation, became known as Pu Ngarumea, the namesake of his unit's Tikopian friend. (When this happened, Nau Nukurava also changed her name. Her role in the drama, however, was incidental since she had come from a different domestic unit--in fact, she was a native Tikopian--and the point of the name change was to forge a closer bond between Pa Ngarumea's and Pu Avakope's units.)

"Marital names" thus may change. It is not unusual for someone to have two or three "marital names" during the course of a lifetime. Unlike

"personal names," however, an Anutan has but one "marital name" at any given time. Sometimes Anutans may use two or three "marital names" in referring to the same person, but this seems only to be done when the designated individual has recently changed his/her name and others have not yet become accustomed to using the new name or have some emotional commitment to the older one: for example, if a person was known by the original name at a time when he/she was married to a close relative of the addresser. Such a situation, however, would be characterized by the Anutans as one person calling another by the latter's former name, not as one person having two names.

"Marital names" are normally just that. However, on occasion, an unmarried person may be called by a "marital name" for honorific purposes. Pu Tokerau, in whose house I was living, wished to emphasize his connection with me by having me share both his "personal" and "marital names." Most Anutans continued to call me by my English name (Richard) most of the time. But occasionally I was addressed as Pu Toke, and--on very rare occasions--as Katoakitematangi. In this case, the "marital name" was used to assert an identification of myself with Pu Tokerau. More often, however, the "marital name" would be used to designate an unmarried person in order to indicate respect for age. For example, Arikitoro was a bachelor in his forties and was generally expected not to marry. Yet, as recognition of the fact that he was at an age when marriage would have been appropriate, Arikitoro was sometimes called Pu Totoro.

As in the case of the "personal name," "marital names" are frequently shortened in normal discourse. For example, Pu Tokerau was generally addressed and referred to as Pu Toke, Pu Tepuko as Pu Puko, and Ta Pen-uakimoana as Ta Moana.

The identity between a married person and his/her "marital name" is potent. The familiarity implied by addressing or referring to a "parent," "aunt," or "in-law" (other than the "cross-sibling-in-law") by the "marital name" is unacceptable. However, if one's parents or in-laws must be specified, there is a variant which may be used. Pu and Nau may be replaced by Mana i ____ ("Father in ____") and Papae i ____ ("Mother in ____"), respectively, when speaking of or to a "parent," either real or classificatory. A father's sister is addressed or spoken of as Makitanga i ____ ("Aunt in ____"). A "father-in-law" may be addressed or spoken of as Mana i ____ or Te Maatuaa i ____, a "mother-in-law" as Papae i ____, and a man's "brother-in-law" as Tangaata i _____. A "parallel sibling-in-law" may be referred to or addressed as Tau ma i ____, regardless of sex.⁸ The existence of these forms suggests that the association of the individual with the "marital name" may be a bit less intimate, though no less important, than that with the "personal name."

"Baptismal Names"

According to oral traditions and genealogies, names of the first two types ("personal" and "marital") have been in use as long as the present population has been on Anuta. The first settlers are said to have been led

by men named Pu Taupare and Pu Kaurave. Their sons were known as Toroaki and Ruokimata, respectively. "Baptismal names," of course, are a recent introduction, coming with the Anglican Church in or about 1916. They have been incorporated into the Anutan naming system, but their association with Anutan concepts of personhood is perhaps somewhat less profound.

As the term implies, a "baptismal name" is usually presented at a child's baptism. Some children are given a Christian name at or shortly after birth--usually by their parents--and are commonly known by that name from that time forward. Thus, one sometimes hears of a still-born child or a child who died in infancy which is remembered by its Christian name. The ingoa pakauku tapu ("baptismal name") is not formally recognized, however, until presented by a Church official at the youngster's baptism. No Anutan has ever risen higher than the rank of catechist in the Anglican Church, and priests have only been in residence on the island on two occasions--each of short duration. Because the catechist is not permitted to perform baptisms, Anutans must wait for the infrequent visits of someone bearing at least priestly status for their children to be baptized. Therefore, a child may well be a year old before anyone of sufficient stature in the Church gets to the island.

"Baptismal names" are generally common English names, Biblical names, or--more rarely--Mota names. The latter were introduced because for many years the Mota language (from an island in the Vanuatu) was used as the lingua franca of the Melanesian Mission. Whatever the source, "baptismal names" are pronounced using an Anutan phonology, and most people on the island are not accustomed to writing, so that it was often difficult to get them to spell their names. Thus it took many months to figure out that "Araples" was really "Alfred," that "Ata" was "Arthur," and that "Ellena" was "Eleanor." Anutan spelling of names is sometimes unorthodox, leading to such constructions as Ezikel (presumably Ezekiel) or Edor (Etta?). These names are sex-specific, generally following European convention; but, occasionally, a name is given to a child of the "wrong" sex--Pu Notau, for example, has a daughter named Sylvester. In some cases a "baptismal name" was unidentifiable, even at the end of the study period. In these instances it was assumed that names like Linges, Nomleas, Altaban, or Kasta were Anutan renderings of Mota names, but the author is uncertain.

Often Anutans are named for a Biblical character, the sharing of a name with such a person being taken to imply a connection between the two. Thus, when Pu Tokerau decided that I should be baptized on Anuta, he selected "John" as my "baptismal name" in honor of his favorite saint, St. John the Beloved. Alternately, one may be named for a Church official. For example, one child was named Alfred for a former Bishop; another was named Patteson for the martyred Bishop of Melanesia who was slain in the Reef Island early in the 19th century. However, it seems that "baptismal names" are never used to establish a connection between two Anutans. There was only one case of a Christian name being bestowed in honor of a fellow Pacific Islander: Harry Matakiapo, the son of the senior chief, was named for Mama Harry, a priest from Gizo in the western

Solomons, who spent 1960 on Anuta. [See Feinberg 1979, 1980a for an account of Mama Harry and his impact on Anuta.]

Occasionally, two or more Anutans share the same "baptismal name." Such namesakes address each other as Ingoa ("Name") and share a sense of camaraderie. However, no case is known in which a particular "baptismal name" was chosen because it was borne by another Anutan. "Baptismal names" are rarely changed. The one case on record involved a girl who had been baptized as Gwendolyn. However, when she was due for confirmation, Pu Tokerau had her confirmed under the name Cecelia because he thought Gwendolyn too difficult to pronounce.

The use of Christian names does not seem to be tabooed on the manner of "personal" or "marital names." This may be in part a function of the fact that the "baptismal name" is of a new type, introduced by an institution with different traditions, operating according to different rules, and thus perhaps exempted from some older Anutan custom. Still more significant may be the fact that persons who may not be called by name because of their relationship to ego are generally in the parental generation (or--in the case of parallel siblings-in-law--are at least adults), and, therefore, are likely to be married. Thus they are unlikely to be called by their "baptismal name" despite the fact that this would not be strictly tabooed.

"Baptismal names" are used almost exclusively for unmarried people. Some children are called by their traditional "personal name" while others are almost always addressed and referred to by their "baptismal name." This author could not discover why Anutans felt that one or the other type of name was more appropriate for a particular individual. As far as it could be ascertained, the choice was arbitrary; but once determined, it was followed consistently. Thus, Robert Pakapu invariably was known as Pakapu, while Judah Mataamako was generally called Judah. In any case, once one marries, one is called by the "marital name" with both the "personal" and "baptismal names" falling into general disuse.

The major exception to this generalization is in dealing with Europeans. Anutans are aware that Europeans often find their traditional names difficult to pronounce and remember. Thus, in presenting themselves to Europeans they identify themselves by the "baptismal name." For purposes of official records--which the government and other European-derived institutions attempt to keep--Anutans are expected to provide a given name and surname. For the former, the "baptismal name" is presented; the surname is usually an abbreviated form of the "personal name." For example, John Topetuuteava is known as John Tope, and Pu Tokerau (Basil Katoakitematangi) was known as Basil Matangi.

Additional Modalities of Address and Reference

It has been cogently argued that proper names are not a wholly isolated or discrete phenomenon, but that they form part of a larger set including titles, kinship terms, teknonyms, and other appellations [see particularly Lévi-Strauss 1966]. In comparison with many cultures, however, the Anutans' set appears to be somewhat abbreviated.

Informal appellations of the type encountered in many Oceanic societies appear to be absent on Anuta. Anutans do not use "fame names" as in Pukapuka [Hecht 1981]; "abusive names" as in Kapingamarangi [Lieber 1981], Rapanui [McCall 1981], and Bellona [Kuschel 1981]; or "nicknames" as apparently are found in much of the Pacific. There are shortened forms for many "personal" and "marital names" in common use, as outlined above, but these are seen as variants on the types already discussed rather than a distinct genre.

Political titles are substituted for proper names only in referring to or addressing the two chiefs. The senior chief may be termed te Ariki i Mua or Tui Anuta; the junior chief is te Ariki i Muri, te Ariki Tepuko, or Tui Kainanga. However, even with the chiefs, substitution of the title is not mandatory. The only taboos on proper names are those associated with certain kinship categories, as indicated above, in which case kin terms or a special form, which has been referred to elsewhere as "kinship" titles [see Feinberg 1973:17-20; 1983:Chapter III] is appropriate.

In addition to proper titles, social statuses and strata bear linguistic labels. Men of the two senior kainanga ("clans") are known as maru; those of the junior clans are pakaaropa. An eldest child of either sex is te urumatua. The leader of a social unit is said to be its tapito. These terms are all distinct from personal names in that they denote the occupants of various structural positions, the holders of which always bear the same titles. However, unlike chiefly titles, there are numerous Anutans in each category at any given time, and all those in a single category are given the same label. In other words, these terms do not uniquely distinguish any Anutan from all of his/her contemporaries.

Corporate groups have names, and individuals may be identified as members of a particular corporate group. However, the group's name is rarely incorporated as part of an individual's personal name. Moreover, while there are some names like Pu Pangatau, which always seems to have been applied to someone in the Kainanga i Pangatau, others are applied to members of units with divergent designations. Thus, the most recent Pu Rotomua was a member of the Kainanga i Pangatau, rather than the Rotomua clan. Similarly, someone may be said to own a particular (named) plot of garden land or to live in a particular house, but the house or garden name rarely becomes a part of the individual's own name.

NAMING AND IDENTITY

"Identity" is a word that is employed in many different senses by writers with divergent vantage points. Here it is used in its broadest sense: a person's identity is his/her answer to the question, "Who (or what) am I?" Thus it is closely related to the psychological notion of self-concept or self-image. On the other hand, self-concept is not purely individual or idiosyncratic; one's view of "self" is based in large part on others' perceptions of the individual, and how the subject perceives the perceptions of others. Therefore, "personal identity" is inseparable from one's structural position in society. Since such a position involves both differentiation from some people and an assertion of a kind of unity with

others, the usage of "identity" in logic and mathematics to convey a sense of sameness is also relevant.

The Anutan answer to the question, "Who (or what) am I?" is that one is above all a human being--tangata ("man" or "person") or atangata katoa ("humankind"). One thus possesses the general characteristics of a human being, the fundamental attributes of personhood. In addition, one is a particular human being: an Anutan (1) with a particular place in the Anutan social structure, and (2) with particular ties to specific other human beings--living and dead--both on and off the island.

From the Anutan point of view, a person is created by the physical union of two other human beings as the semen of the genitor mixes with the genetrix's blood to form the fetus. People have a temporal side as manifested in their corporeal bodies while they are alive on earth, and an incorporeal side as evidenced by the belief that after men and women die they become spirits. Prior to the establishment of Christianity, the premier dieties were said to have been spirits of deceased human beings. Even in 1972-73, no Anutan was encountered who appeared to doubt that such dieties had existed. With the coming of the Church, the pagan tupua ("gods") ceased to exert much influence over temporal affairs, but the bush continues to be haunted by atua ("spirits"), some of whom are ghosts of deceased relatives or ancestors. Anutans presently aspire toward the Christian goal of "everlasting (spiritual) life." The ultimate source of all good things including safety, food, and life itself, is said to be the Christian God. In days of old, the pagan spirits served this function.

Different people have different degrees--and kinds--of intrinsic worth and manuu ("power"), depending upon their positions in society. Essential to the calculation of such worth and "power" are considerations such as to whom one was born, from what people one is descended, and what social connections one may have with other people--living and deceased. Such connections may be substantive or behavioral, the latter being bound to the notion of aropa--a word denoting positive affect as expressed in the giving and/or sharing of labor or material assistance, particularly food. "Personal names" are an important mechanism for establishing behavioral connections among human beings and expressing aropa.

Bound to the notion of intrinsic worth is the idea that people ought to know their place in society and act appropriately. People with superior manuu ("power," "efficacy," or "mana") are expected to show their aropa for those below them in the social hierarchy by using their "power" to promote the general well-being; those at the lower echelons express their aropa by ceding honor and obedience to those above. If things are working properly, society indeed is like an organism. There is even some linguistic evidence that the Anutans think in terms of this analogy; for example, the use of pokouru ("head") to designate leaders of various social units. A kind of organic solidarity is thus seen explicitly as essential to the well-being of society and the individuals who make it up. Anyone who threatens that solidarity by failing to show proper respect for those above--or compassion for those below--faces social condemnation. Supernatural sanctions in the form of illness are a likely consequence of deviating from one's socially ascribed position.

From the above account, it is apparent that the Western concept of a person as

...a bounded, unique, more or less integrated motivational and cognitive universe, a dynamic center of awareness, emotion, judgement, and action organized into a distinctive whole and set contrastively both against other such wholes and against its social and natural background.... [Geertz 1976:225]

is--literally and figuratively--foreign to Anutans. On the other hand, the Balinese attempt

...to stylize all aspects of personal expression to the point where anything idiosyncratic, anything characteristic of the individual merely because he is who he is physically, psychologically, biographically, is muted in favor of his assigned place in the continuing and, so it is thought, never-changing pageant that is Balinese life.... [Geertz 1976:226, see also 1973]

is equally anathema to the Anutan view of personhood. Anutans see people as occupying definite positions in an elaborate and relatively stable social structure, but as long as one is faithful to that structure in its broadest outlines, they leave a great deal of freedom for individuals to express themselves. People are respected and remembered for their strength, skill, intelligence, courage, and generosity--as well as for their structural positions. Within limits, it is even possible to alter one's genealogically ascribed position on the basis of behavioral criteria. Individuals are remembered for their particular accomplishments and disappointments, abilities, and limitations. Even people of inauspicious birth have risen to become leading figures in Anutan history while others of the highest birth are remembered for unpleasant personalities and intellectual or emotional deficiencies [for examples, see Feinberg 1978a, 1979, 1980a].

The simultaneously conjunctive and disjunctive nature of the person in Anutan culture is reflected and expressed in the simultaneously conjunctive and disjunctive character of Anuta's naming system. Each Anutan has several names, any one of which is likely to be shared by other people--past and present--thus establishing a sense of commonality between them. Yet the total configuration of names--"personal," "marital," and "baptismal"--attached to any person uniquely identifies that person and distinguishes him/her from all other individuals, many of whom may share with him/her specific elements of the configuration.⁹

Marcel Mauss [1967] described gift-giving as a "total social fact." A similar point could be made about Anuta's naming system. Names are used by the Anutans to identify contemporary people with their forebears, thus metaphorically asserting the continuity and essential unity of their history. Similarly, they may be used to identify contemporary people with each other, or to distinguish one from other people, past and present. Names may express a formal friendship or a bond of solidarity as in the case of tau ingoa ("namesakes"), who are thought to be closely related by virtue of the shared name and are expected to assist each other periodically through the presentation of material goods and services. Shared names may

assert equality in what might otherwise be a hierarchical relationship. Or, conversely, competition for the privilege of bestowing a name may become a means for expressing one's superiority over another. To call someone by name conveys a sense of intimacy, while avoidance of a name connotes respect. All three types of name are capable of being used for all three purposes, although in somewhat different ways.

The power of a name to affect its bearer is not limited to human beings, but appears to be a fundamental premise of Anutan metaphysics. It is assumed that objects with a common name also share other characteristics. This is well illustrated by the case of Pu Tokerau's cat, Communist. Pu Toke had heard over the chief's radio that the Americans were fighting "the Communists" in Vietnam. The Americans, through the Pacific Campaign in World War II, had developed a reputation for being a powerful military force, and yet the Communists appeared to be holding their own. Thus, Pu Toke reasoned, Communists must be pretty tough, and he named his cat "Communist" in hope that the animal would "grow up to be a strong fighter."¹⁰

CONCLUSION

Names are potent symbols for expressing close relationships. This may well be because names among both the Anutans and ourselves are in a unique position to create both metaphorical and metonymic relations simultaneously. A name is attached to a person and the attachment of two persons to the same name creates a relationship of contiguity between them. At the same time, a name is "possessed" as an essential characteristic. Thus sharing a name is similar to sharing hair color, facial features, height, build, sex, age, or any other feature intimately associated with another individual.

However, while sharing a name creates both metaphorical and metonymic bonds for Anutans and for Westerners, there are important differences between the two naming systems. For Westerners, the primary relationship appears to be between the individual and his name; whereas, for Anutans the major relationship is between people, with the name mediating between them, forging a relationship. While a Westerner identifies with his name, an Anutan identifies other people, groups, or objects through his name.¹¹ As a result, an Anutan may have several names--even names of the same type--simultaneously, and go through many shifts of name during a lifetime without feeling any threat to his/her identity. An Anutan may go through an identity crisis, but if it occurs, it is for reasons other than alienation from one's name. Thus, while the woman struggling to express her identity after marriage by retaining her maiden name is perfectly intelligible in terms of our culture, the problem is incomprehensible to the Anutans.

NOTES

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Chicago's Department of Anthropology. The paper was initially prepared for a symposium entitled "Personal Names and Naming in Oceania," at the annual meeting of the Association for Social Anthropology in Oceania, February 25-March 1, 1981, in San Diego, California. The author is indebted to Julia Hecht, Rolf Kuschel, Jacob Love, Bradd Shore, and Martin Zelenitz for many helpful comments on an earlier draft of this work. Some of the data herein presented have appeared in the JOURNAL OF THE POLYNESIAN SOCIETY under the title: "Some Observations on a Polynesian Naming System: Personal Names and Naming on Anuta."

- 1 These observations were made in a literary context, but they apply equally well to other facets of American and Western European culture.
- 2 Many scholars going back at least to Mill [1973] have argued that names in Western cultures are devoid of meaning and serve merely as labels [see also Akinvaso 1981]. Others have suggested that while names may have some psychosocial value even in the West, most Americans and Western Europeans are unaware of their considerable significance [e.g., see Nicolaisen 1978, Gaffney 1971, Coleman et al. 1980]. This position has become untenable--if, indeed, it ever was--in light of the concern with names expressed by feminists and others through the decade of the 1970s.
- 3 That names express and summarize the essence of one's personality is nicely illustrated by Michael Herbert Dengler, who recently decided to become known as 1069. "For him, the number 1069 symbolized his relationship to nature, time, the universe, and essence.... It represented his authentic identity" [Lockney and Ames 1981]. The courts denied Dengler's petition for a legal name change.
- 4 In other words, one is not assumed to keep the same name without significant change throughout his life. The same individual may bear several names even of the same type. Most Americans, by contrast, have one "first" name, one "middle" name, and one "surname" or "last" name. With the exception of a woman when she marries, those names are expected to remain constant for most people.
- 5 Of course, issues discussed in this paper relate to broader matters of Anutan social structure and cosmology. These questions have been addressed elsewhere and need not be repeated here. The interested reader is referred to the following works. The light and darkness metaphor is explored in Feinberg [1978b]. The relationship between genealogical and extragenealogical factors in the Anutan cultural definition of kinship and what has been loosely termed in this article as "descent groups," as well as the manner in which it is possible to modify one's genealogically ascribed position through appropriate acts are detailed in Feinberg [1981a, b]. A complete inventory of Anutans, living and recently deceased in 1973, and the names by which each of them was known is contained in Feinberg [1981b:Appendix F]. For relations between Anuta and its nearest neighbor, Tikopia, see Feinberg [1973, 1979, 1981a, b]. For a Tikopian viewpoint on these relationships, see Firth [1954, 1963]. An account of the major categories into which Anutans divide humankind and the relationships among these categories is presented in Feinberg [1980b, 1981b:Chapter VII]. The central notion of aropa is discussed in Feinberg [1978a, 1979, 1980a, 1981a, and particularly 1981b]. Rank and authority are systematically explored in Feinberg [1978a, 1983], while the role of illness as a sanction enforcing the system of authority and rank is addressed Feinberg [1979, 1980a].

- 6 "Marital names" on Tikopia follow a similar form. A married woman is Nau ___, and a married man is generally known as Pa ___. On Tikopia, Pu is normally reserved for a revered old man or illustrious ancestor. Pae is occasionally used in place of Pa for euphony. The Tikopian analogue to Ta is Sa. Tikopian forms will sometimes slip into Anutan speech, but Anutans recognize these as foreign intrusions. As far as it could be ascertained, "marital names" following this form are unique to Tikopia and Anuta. The closest ethnographic analogue that has been found in a perusal of the literature is the Banaban (Gilbertese) use of Nei as a female and Na, Nam, Nan, or Nang as a male title [Silverman 1971:25n and passim].
- 7 The Tikopian practice of a married couple taking on the husband's parents' name is seen particularly in the chiefly lines. The four Tikopian kainanga ("clans") are called te Kainanga i Kafika, te Kainanga i Tafua, te Kainanga i Taumako, and te Kainanga i Fangarere. Their chiefs take the "marital names" Pa Kafika, Pa Tafua, Pa Taumako, and Pa Fangarere, respectively. Their wives are Nau Kafika, etc. Normally, a chief's successor is his eldest son. If the prospective chief should marry while his father is alive and holding office, the son and his wife take on the name held by his parents prior to his father's succession to the chiefly title. Thus, when the eldest son of the Ariki Kafika marries, he (the son) will be known as Pa Fenuatara, and his wife will be Nau Fenuatara. The eldest son and daughter-in-law of the Ariki Tafua are Pa and Nau Rangifuri. Upon their own succession, these men and their wives change their "marital names." On Anuta, by contrast, the chief of the Kainanga i Mua is never called Pu Mua. The head of the Kainanga i Tepuko may or may not be called Pu Tepuko (but never if his father was so named). The same is true of the non-chiefly heads of the Kainanga i Pangatau and Kainanga i Rotomua.
- 8 Other kin are generally called by name, although Tuatina i ___ ("Mother's Brother in ___") and Nuna i ___ ("Grandparent in ___") are optional alternatives which may be used to indicate respect.
- 9 In this regard, my own experience provides a valuable illustration. When I first arrived at Anuta, I was incorporated in the patongia ("domestic unit") of Pu Tokerau and made the latter's taina ("brother," "parallel sibling"). Significantly, I was also presented with his name so that my Anutan appellation became Pu Tokerau, Katoakitematangi. In a sense, then, I became Pu Toke's alter-ego. In Anutan terms, I had no distinct identity. My most prevalent identity was that of an American; hence I was addressed most often by my English name. When the Anutans discovered that I had never been baptized, they determined that on the Bishop's next visit, I should be taken into their Church. Pu Tokerau, who also was the island's catechist, decided that I should be baptized as John. The baptism never materialized. However, if it had, I could then have been called by a name--Pu Tokerau, John Katoakitematangi--bestowed upon me by Anutans while I was residing on their island. The total name would have distinguished me from all of my consociates. I would have thus assumed--for the first time--my own distinct identity within a thoroughly Anutan framework and asserted a degree of independence from my host.
- 10 This case might suggest that the literal meanings of at least some names are important to Anutans, and that they are important in far more than a commemorate sense, as in the case of Vakangoto (see p. 29 above). My impression of the name's significance to Pu Tokerau, however, does not support this interpretation. The reason "Communist" suggested

to Pu Tokerau a potent warrior had nothing, in my estimation, to do with his understanding of the word's denotative meaning. Rather, a certain group of people was known as the "Communists." Those people were proving themselves empirically to be effective fighters. Therefore, Pu Toke felt that if he named his cat "Communist," the cat might grow to share this characteristic with those people.

- 11 Of course, it is easy to exaggerate this opposition. All societies consist of individuals participating in relationships of mutual interdependence to varying degrees with varying numbers of other individuals. As Lévi-Strauss [1966] has pointed out, proper names always both identify one as a member of a class and as a particular individual within that class. Although contradictory tendencies exist, however, particular cultures may emphasize one or another pole. Thus, Americans--imbued with the ethic of "rugged individualism"--tend to express their identity by asserting their individuality. Anutans, on the other hand, emphasize collective action and cooperation in most facets of their lives. For them, personal identity most often is expressed through their identification with others.

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