

Names Exchange of

It was (and still is) a common practice for two people, of the same age and sex to exchange names, as a sign of affection. Analogous to such an exchange was the practise of taking the name of a person superior in social rank, as a mark of respect. A concrete example of this custom came directly under my notice in 1923, on the island of Marakii.

Talking one day on the verandah of my house with half a score children of the island, I passed round for inspection the photograph of one of my own small daughters, aged 8. I noticed that one girl, of about 14, considered the picture for a long while with an expression of rapt contemplation. At last she handed it back to me with the simple remark, "Ai bia ara-u ara-n te tui aci" (Would that my name were the name of this child).

Some days later, a deputation of elderly and old men waited on me with copious presents of native food. They informed me that they were the elders on both father's and mother's side of the mother of the young girl, whose name was Teabruaka. They brought their present of food with a formal request that their daughter might be allowed

to assume the name of my child. On consent being given, they appointed the next Sunday afternoon as the day for the ceremonial assumption of the name, and invited me to attend, with every servant, orderly and clerk employed in my service.

On Sunday therefore I repaired at the appointed hour to the house of the girl's parents: my servants, etc., had preceded me to the reunion. In a small clearing to the west of the house I saw the guests gathered. My own people were seated in a half-circle to southward of an enormous pile of native food of every description. The site of the girl completed the circle on the northern side.

When I arrived, the child, led by her adoptive grandmother, approached me, and taking me by the right hand begged me to be seated. Had my daughter been present, it would have been she to whom this welcome would have been addressed. Presents of mats and native produce were then brought and laid at my feet to be conveyed to my child.

At this moment also, it was incumbent upon me (on behalf of my daughter) to make return gifts

to the girl who was taking her name. I noticed too that in accordance with native custom, all my own servants (who may be regarded as representing the uteri of my daughter) had brought a gift of some sort, which was now presented.

The exchange of courtesies being over, the ceremonial Katenu-ara (making-to-fit name) began. The senior old man of the girl's father's uteri approached the pile of food in the midst of the circle. Choosing at random a piece of the food, he held it aloft on the palm of his right hand, and facing north, called aloud "Te bu-n anti meang" (The bird of spirits north)

On behalf of the spirits of the north, the whole concourse answered, "O!"

Turning south, the officiant then cried again "Te bu-n anti maiaki" (The bird of spirits south). And again the people answered, "O!" In like manner were then addressed the eastern spirits, the western spirits, and the spirits of Karawa (sky) and Mone (underworld), the assembly

answering "O." to each successive call. All the spirits being now called, the operator addressed them as follows:
 "Here is your food; do not come here,
 'We are casting off the name Teabaska
 'and we are taking the name of Joan.
 'Here is your food. Do not come here.
 'Health and peace!'"

This address being finished, the old man gave the food to a boy of the village, who took it and laid it on the ground outside the circle. There it remained untouched, the food of the spirits, a propitiatory offering to keep them from bringing evil chance within the circle and thus upon the new name.

After this ceremony the food was distributed among the guests, and the meal became informal. From that moment the girl concerned was called by her new name of Joan.

Names.

In ~~giving~~ making an adopted child or grandchild his uigoa (namesake), a native very often did not give away his real name, but what was called tiki-na, its affinity or extension.* A single name might have many such affinities, which were obtained by playing variations upon its vowel sounds as a rule, and sometimes upon its consonants. A simple example of tiki is Te mea, which is the affinity of the original name Te mea: in like manner, Tokintekai becomes Te katekai; and Te kahu, Te kahu. In other cases, the tiki was arrived at by adding a syllable, as Te kai-Te kairo; or in duplicating a syllable as Beia-Bebia.

This practice of giving the namesake a slight variant of the adoptor's name is said to be intended to avoid confusion of reference, and in this it seems a very sensible institution.

Sometimes a native wished to confer his name on several persons, in which case he would have to find two, three or even more tiki. ~~Under~~ Under such circumstances, the affinities discovered seem to a European ear to have departed sometimes very far from the original. For example, during his lifetime an old man ~~named~~ ^{called} Nauoko, of Tarawa, ~~found~~ ^{used} no fewer than five variants of his name. Starting from the original, in order of discovery, they were as follows:— Nauoko, Tenuki, Te aboka, Hakeia, Hakeanga, and Hare. Even the first of these, closest in sound to the original, seems

* Tiki = stretched, tant, extended; Kartika = pull. Thus tiki as applied to a name means its extension or derivative.

to our ear rather far-fetched. The last three sound not in the least like the real name. But to the native, I am assured, the first four at least have preserved pretty well the tonal qualities of the original, especially as they conserve the K sound. The last, Uāre, it is explained, is a secondary extension, through the intermediate ^{forms} Uākeia and Uākeanga, and is intended to be reminiscent of these two variants rather than of the original.

There was no rule for the guidance of those who wished to find their name-variants. The sounds which appealed to the ears of an individual as suggestive of a particular name were those selected. It was generally the actual owner of the name who invented the tiki, but the choice might also be made by an intimate relation or friend. Sometimes the variant seems to have been the result of pure accident. For example it was the adoptive granddaughter of Nanoko who furnished the first tiki of his name, by persistently calling him Tenoki when she was a very small child. As a matter of sentiment, he actually took the name of Tenoki for several years after this, but later on reverted to the original Nanoko, and gave the variant to the little girl, who is now a middle aged woman and still bears the name of Nei Tenoki, being considered the namesake of her tibu.

It is interesting to show what Nanoko did with the other tiki of his name:—

Teaboka, the second variant, he gave to his household cat; when this pet died, he assigned the namesake to a dog, which is still living;

Uākeia, together with his real name of Nanoko, he gave away to the great-grandson

of his father's sister (i.e., his own grandson in a classificatory sense), whom he adopted as his tibu;

Uakeanga he kept for himself, as a term of endearment to be used by those especially intimate with him. This variant and its use thus correspond precisely with our own practice of using diminutives (e.g. Bill for William) in a familiar way.

Hare he gave away as a sign of pity and affection to a lad who was mentally deficient. This boy was not ~~related to him~~ ^{as a relative} but was always kindly treated by ^{Nauoko} ~~him~~, and conceived a dog-like affection for him; though never adopted, he practically lived in Nauoko's household and fed from his hands. The variant Hare represents the cretinous lad's attempt to pronounce the affectionate term Uakeanga.