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KINSHIP AND ASSOCIATION IN RAPANUI RECIPROCITY[1]

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To kin or not to kin: that is the question that strikes the fieldworker in those small societies where people reckon their kinship affiliations cognatically.[2] The problem is not merely an analytical one, bedevilling the mind of the analyst, pouring over the field friends who have become fieldnotes, reducing to circles, triangles, and lines the genealogies of dead and living links. It is a daily dilemma for the people among whom the inquiring and annotating foreigner comes to work. The practical problem lies not so much in knowing who one's kin might be in a small scale, face to face society of a few hundred or a few thousand persons. It rests uncomfortably in deciding which persons are to be treated as non-kin, particularly when it comes to the distribution of scarce resources in goods and services, land and labor.

How do individuals become attached to and identified with particular kin groups? Or, what might comprise a code of intimacy made visible (and public) by which someone who merely is relatable becomes a close kinsman? Herbert Blumer (1969:79) writes that "human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or by ascertaining the meaning of one another's actions." The significant actions in most (if not all) human societies are those prestations[3] in goods and labor used to objectify the bonds of association, the character of the control involved, and the limitations the persons involved in the transaction wish to communicate to one another. On Rapanui, transactional relations largely employ a rhetoric composed of kin based denotata.

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[1] Rapanui is the term the modern Easter Islanders apply to their island, their language, and to themselves. A Ph.D. scholarship from the Australian National University supported my research on Easter Island between 1972 and 1974. I would like to thank those Rapanui who were kind enough to assist me in my work, particularly Leon Tuki Hey, José Fati Puarakey, Aurelia Hey Riroroko, and Victoria Rapahango Tepuku. In Canberra, I am grateful to Dr. Marie Reay who was my supervisor after my fieldwork.

[2] Insofar as a society holds a myth of common descent from one or a few apical ancestors, it too may be seen as cognatic in operational terms. See Keesing (1970) for an ingenious reworking of Fortes's data to show how perspectives from the analysis of cognatic societies may untangle some of the problems bedevilling the ordering of so-called unilineal ones.

[3] The translator of Marcel Mauss's *The Gift* (1969:xi) made the following note: "There is no convenient English word to translate the French *prestation* so this word itself is used to mean anything or series of things given freely or obligatorily as a gift or in exchange; and

I present what is to some extent a gloss confirming Mac Marshall's (1977) examination of Trukese notions of the nature of nurture, as they relate to Rapanui. But, while Marshall concerns himself with diagramming the structure of associations in kinship and friendship, my task is to discuss the processes, the significant actions which people use to bind together and operate the structure Marshall proposes. Furthermore, I make explicit how the analysis of symbolic interaction relates to association and its attendant access to and control of the labor power of others. It is people and their productive capacity, not merely material products, which the Rapanui negotiate in their exchanges. The products or services in exchange are simply symbols[4] of the association, desired or actual. In the course of the discussion, I make reference to the earlier work on Rapanui by Edwin Ferdon (1958) and criticize Marshall Sahlins' scheme of reciprocities in the light of my emphasis upon association and labor in Rapanui reciprocity.

Rapanui's history throughout the two thousand years or so that people have lived there has rarely been ordinary or stable, as I chronicle elsewhere (McCall 1979). Enormous monoliths bespeaking pan-island cooperation followed by the systematic destruction of complex ceremonial centers, a cult involving the worship of a high god, and fierce internecine fighting, in roughly that order, comprise the Rapanui prehistory recorded in carved stone or informant's tale. Europeans first came upon the lonely, fifty-five square mile island in 1722. Over 3,600 miles from the South American coast and about the same distance to Tahiti, Rapanui's nearest neighbor of any consequence is Pitcairn Island, about a thousand miles distant. Bereft of anything attractive to the rapacious colonial mind, only about fifty ships stopped to trade for sweet potatoes or carvings for the first century and a half that the place was known to Europeans. During a few months in 1862-63, ships containing various nationalities, but sailing from the Peruvian port of Callao, raided the island, carrying off hundreds into contract servitude and leaving disease in return. The inevitable missionary enterprise turned up to find about a thousand people who survived the slavery and sickness. Through more disease, ill-fated outmigration to Tahiti, and conflict between a redoubtable French trader

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includes services, entertainments, etc., as well as material things." An equally good definition of *prestation* as I use it in this paper would be Firth's meaning (1973:372) that, "A gift involves the transfer of a material object, or the performance of a service over time which involves the displacement of material objects."

[4] Sahlins (1976: 120ff.) prefers "motivated sign" for what I more conventionally refer to as a symbol.

and the missionaries, the numbers continued to drop. In 1877, when missionaries departed and the erstwhile trader-self-styled king assassinated, the population fell to its nadir of 110 persons.

From these 110 persons, only less than a third of whose marriages produced two or more offspring, the present population of nearly 2,000 originated. The last century has seen the island transformed from Chilean colonial backwater to English sheepranch, to naval station, to its present incarnation as a developing tourist center. In 1973, of the 1821 Rapanui that I recorded in my census, 484 persons lived off their island, mainly in other parts of Chile.

Association has been an important preoccupation of the Rapanui from the time of the solid stone figures of the past to the present era of speedy jet travel. Evidence from prehistory suggests that extensive trade networks existed between the sometimes hostile clans before the coming of the Europeans whose social and economic structures strive to encapsulate the tiny sociality. The basic principles of association, based upon kin and commerce, have remained the same.

For the Rapanui, the island has been twice born, but not in a religious sense. As is typical of many other societies, a culture hero, Hotu Matu‘a (Great Parent) for the Rapanui, established the hierarchy of clans with his immediate offspring. The depredations of the 1860s and perhaps before exterminated many of these kin groups from the mythological founding order. The present islanders trace their descent, their rights to Rapanui land, and order their associations according to descent from known ancestors who survived the events of the last century and refounded descent groups as apical ancestors. Outsiders who either resided on the island or merely visited it and who left offspring may also figure as eponymous ancestors in disputes over land and labor or marriage choices. The structure of these associations I trace in detail elsewhere (McCall 1979).

Rapanui Ideas about Giving and Receiving

Public and formal ceremonies involving exchanges and their prestations are rare and most of the business of transactions for association transpires between individuals, though the groups whom these individuals represent are present in the minds of the participants.

The prototype of the successful man is the *tangata* ***hōnui*** (man of substance). He is a rich man who can afford to give. The term *tangata* ***hōnui*** carries a moral connotation that he ought to look after those whom he recognizes as either affinal or consanguine kin. Because of this, with few exceptions, there is no agreed upon list of *tangata* ***hōnui*** for the entire Rapanui population. Being a *tangata* ***hōnui*** does not give one community-wide political power, but having influence in the affairs of many persons is a contributing characteristic of persons pointed out as men of substance. A *tangata hōnui's* riches comprise productive land, numerous affiliates of kin who labor for him, and, increasingly today, a role in tourism. In order to participate in tourism which is operated entirely by Rapanui who may hire Chileans as advisers, a man must have a large house to receive paying guests, family members who can attend to the cleaning of the rooms, and kin affiliates *(hae-hae)* who can supply garden produce, fish, and sometimes meat to feed the tourists. All *tangata hōnui* today have one or more motor vehicles for transporting tourists around, and these were acquired through contacts with outsiders. No man of substance in tourism can operate without some extensive associations with outsiders, not only from Chile, but from places further afield. These outsider associations, which the Rapanui discuss in terms of friendship, are strictly business arrangements that involve standard commission and booking arrangements though they exploit less transactionally formal ties also with former clients. Most of the *tangata hōnui* in tourism hold down jobs in the Chilean public service which gives them further access to contacts with outsiders who may be of benefit.[5] All those involved in tourism can trace their associations within Rapanui society, showing how each of the persons related to them by consanguinity or affinity contributes to their operation.

Another path to being a *tangata hōnui* is through commerce in goods from off the island. The two activities, commerce and tourism, rarely overlap. The prime qualification for a career as a commercial *tangata hōnui* is to have some kinsman off the island purchasing the required goods for resale on the island. Alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages feature as specialities while others sell small dry goods. No successful Rapanui food merchant existed during my fieldwork; small shops and enterprises came and went according to the fortunes of those Rapanui involved.

One *tangata hōnui* is the son of an outsider and with his brother, occupies a prominent position in Rapanui government employment. He is the eldest of the family and has built upon his inheritance from his father to assume a position of wealth in the community. He is a quiet, even self-effacing man, but his contacts with kin and commerce are extensive. He funds a liquor business which the largest Chilean merchant operates on his land; and since the military coup in Chile in 1973, his brother holds a high military post on the island. Moreover, his sons and daughters occupy important positions in the local Chilean public service, the only source of regular employment on the island. Through his wife, he has access to a number of other families and quietly collects his affiliates who become obligated to him through various acts of kindness. His connections with outsiders are excellent. Tourism, commerce, and extensive kin contacts combine in this one person to produce an individual of great substance.

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[5] The topic of tourism on Rapanui merits a separate and more extended discussion than is possible here. The use and indeed exploitation of the labor power of kin is becoming a major problem for the Rapanui. Differences in wealth, according to my informants, are much greater at the present time than was the case in the past. Formerly, what different material wealth islanders possessed from their kin was the result of exploiting contacts with outsiders and holding paid employment with them. Tourism results in the direct conversion of kin labor into cash money and in large amounts and will no doubt result in the formation of true classes in a Marxist sense in the near future.

Forty-seven percent of the adult Rapanui population is female though I heard of only one *vi'e hōnui* spoken of during my fieldwork. She directed the affairs of one nuclear family and whilst she had resources in kin labor, she had no outsider contacts or any interests in tourism or commerce. Her designation seemed to indicate her strong personality and dominance within her own close family more than cash convertible wealth. The lack of *vi'e hōnui* does not reflect a weak position for women but rather a strong patrilineal bias in Rapanui inheritance whereby women are said to leave the family to join that of their husband to whom they should not be related.[6] Another elderly lady, never spoken of as *vi'e hōnui* to me, nevertheless enjoyed great respect throughout the islander community and frequently bestowed little kindnesses in the manner of someone who would occupy such a position.

What is meant by giving for the Rapanui? The simple verb, to give *('avai)* is distinguished from one meaning to exchange or trade *(hō'o).* The same term *'avai* applies to giving something to both a family member and an outsider, though the intentions are different. When a kinsman gives another kinsman an object such as food or a service or the loan of an implement, it is implicit that what is happening is not so much an act of giving as one of sharing. Their common right to the object is symbolic of their common membership in a particular *hua'ai* or kin group. More often, people say merely that they are related *(hae-hae)* by virtue of one or more shared ancestors. People often use the Chilean term *familia* (family). If a Rapanui wishes to fully transfer ownership from one person to another, implying that ownership was not corporate in the first place, then he[7] must use a loan word from Spanish, *cambiare.* This term, *cambiare,* which means to exchange in Spanish *(cambiar),* means that one person gives something to another and that the ownership of the property involved in the transaction is transferred by the donor to the receiver, often in return

[6] See my discussion of incest as social control (McCall 1979: 180-86).

[7] The use of the masculine gender implies also the feminine, unless otherwise noted.

for something at the moment of the transaction. Rapanui *cambiare* their handicrafts to tourists for cash or trade. *Cambiare* is also the word Rapanui use to express the English, “to sell” or “to buy.”[8]

Selling can occur between kinsmen. This applies especially to merchandise purchased in Chile intended for sale on the island. Such items as tinned goods, cigarettes, clothing, cosmetics, and the like are sold by islanders in small kiosks. Money is the medium of exchange, though a merchant will accept handicrafts if he deals with tourists. People also sell services in this manner.

Ana’s first cousin, the son of her mother’s sister Pablo, demanded cash payment (in American dollars) for installing electrical wiring in her newly completed house. Pablo explained to me that he did not owe this service to his cousin as she had never done anything for him nor was she ever likely to. He did not consider that his skill as an electrician, learned in Chile, was the property of Ana. She had no rights over it and so he wanted cash for his work. With other cousins, Pablo was more generous and did do their electrical work without an immediate charge. They were closer to him and had helped him in the past, he said.[9]

Aside from giving as sharing and selling for cash, the Rapanui also recognize another kind of transfer which can be between both kinsmen and nonkinsmen. One can *hō’o* (trade or exchange). The assumption of common ownership here is absent as is the mediation of cash. Instead of giving, a person chooses to trade an object or a service. People may not expect the return of such a prestation immediately but may allow it to be deferred for some time. No specific counter prestation may even be in the minds of those in the exchange at the time of its occurrence, but the giver will recall the event at a later time to affirm the obligation of the recipient to repay.[10]

The Rapanui recognize that if they present something and if someone accepts it, then the recipient has an obligation, no matter how far in the future, to requite it *(hakahoki).* Often such unsolicited prestations are brought to another’s dwelling and left, without comment. The object does not bear the name of the giver, but its source identifies the donor. People know that a fish could only have come from a person known to have gone fishing on a particular day or a box of laundry powder could only have come from people known usually to have such for sale in their kiosks. The item itself and its value as measured in monetary terms is not so important as the act of prestation itself. The initial prestation will be spoken of as *hōʻo,* but subsequent reciprocity between these persons is *hakahoki.* After the initial opening of the relationship, people say that one is always reciprocating.

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[8] Mauss (1979:31) noted how the same lexical item referred to both buying and selling in many languages, including French.

[9] The cases quoted I have abstracted from my field notes. All names and other identifying characteristics of persons have been altered.

[10] A *tangata hōnui* goes about collecting associations through various prestations in goods and services which he might not call upon for some time.

Such reciprocities go on between kinsmen constantly. If the prestation is face to face, often a Rapanui will wrap the gift in paper or cloth so that no commentary is necessary. The giver places the parcel in the hands of the recipient or simply leaves it unceremoniously on a table or a shelf. Great skill is used to do this so that the recipient notices the object given but does not remark upon it. The acceptance of the object, with perhaps a momentary nod of the head or dropping of eye contact, is the only acknowledgment.

Some gifts have an intrinsic value, such as a piece of cloth, cologne, or some similar non-island product. People are pleased if a prestation does have such a cash or utilitarian value. Between very close friends or intimate kinsmen, the cash or utilitarian value of a gift should not be important. People call gifts between kinsmen *hakaaroha.* The more intimate the relationship, the less emphasis people place upon the value of the item in a transaction. Until the last few years, some of my informants report, Rapanui would react in a similar way to gifts from non-islanders. That is, that any trinket given by an outsider to an islander had a special importance merely because it was an outsider who gave it. Even today, small favors and gifts from outsiders receive an enthusiastic welcome. People display such *hakaaroha* gifts from outsiders in their homes and may refer to them as tangible proof that a certain outsider is a friend of theirs.

Services, too, may be offered without demand or may be the result of agreement. Whenever a man is working on a project such as building a house or a boat or ploughing a field, some kinsman is likely to drift along without notice and simply begin to assist. Sometimes they exchange words of greeting, but the talk usually launches directly into some topic quite unrelated to the work at hand. Services extended over several days by someone are recompensed by providing food on the job. Some people call this food provided for work *umuanga, umu* being the word for the traditional cooking place--an earth oven--and *anga* being any kind of productive labor. Women whose husbands are working on some task at home always have enough food ready for the midday and evening meals to provide for any assisting visitors. Those present merely come to the table without formal invitation when the wife or other female kinsmen serves the food. To receive work from someone and not provide them with something to eat would be an insult. Though such casual help may or may not return to continue the work, there are cases where the terms of the reciprocity have been worked out in advance. Young men, sometimes a group of four or five and usually acknowledging their kinship, agree to build their respective houses together. They each have their own materials, but they share their labor *(te anga).* In turn, or sometimes simultaneously, they all work on one another's houses. Most often, such collective labor involves brothers or first cousins, both of whom are known by the same term, *taina.*

The female equivalent is the making of shell necklaces in the family kitchen. Often sisters or first cousins, also *taina,* stop and chat for a short period and join in the task. Women may also clean fish or assist in some other way with food preparation cooperatively, but people do not deem contractual relations shifting from house to house appropriate to them. Women and men both suppose that adult, married females each do their own housekeeping. Women do not do men's work such as construction or farming and so do not need the contractual relations that men find so useful.

Ha'i (embrace) is the act of gift prestation to initiate, activate, or renew ties of kinship. Sometimes, a kin relationship becomes distant *(ko roaroa 'a)* and so something is necessary to renew it, to bring it "closer." *Ha'i* may entail stopping by a person's house and joining in some work being done there. If the offer of work is accepted, that may be sufficient *ha'i.* Another approach is to turn up with a gift at some ceremonial occasion, such as a wedding, funeral, or, more recently, a birthday party. People regard as *ha'i* a donation of food or liquor to the festivities. If the object of one's attention accepts the gift, then he signals his willingness to enter into (or to renew) a relationship.

Many Rapanui believe that ties *(here)* should always be kept active with kin, no matter how distant. To do this, a person may *ha'i* on a given occasion without any specific request being made. For example, Simon used his brother as a go-between *(nave)* for a family with whom he wished to associate but whose kin ties with him had been dormant for some time. Simon's brother had married a girl from the Motu family and when that girl's mother died, Simon gave a gift of food through his brother to the Motu's for the funeral feast. Once Simon had done this, the Motus invited him to the funeral feast. Simon took this opportunity to further ingratiate himself with people there in whom he had an interest.

Food, Feelings, Sharing, and Friends

Food occupies a central and evocative place in Rapanui emotions. Rapanui believe that the *manava,* which they see as the gut or abdomen, is the location and origin of all emotions, very like the theory behind medieval courtly love in the European tradition or that in modem evolutionary theories of the visceral brain. To remember someone or some place is to “cry in one’s gut.” A person who is indifferent or demonstrates no emotion to another has a lump in his gut *(manava hatu).* Someone who is in love with someone else, usually heterosexually, has a dead stomach *(manava māte)* and may refuse to eat. Love for someone who is far away or for someone who has died long ago results in a deep pain in the stomach as though something had been torn or stabbed inside the abdomen. A broken heart for the Rapanui is a broken gut *(manava more).*

The most important expression of kinship is through sharing food. It demonstrates that one person cares *(aroha)*[11] for another. The expression of *aroha* in this way declares the kind of empathy and compassion that English renders as “love,” but without the sexual connotation for which entirely different terminology applies. The greatest compliment that can be paid to a householder is to say that his home has much food *(ravakai)* to give to people. Distribution of food to people at (usually) ceremonial occasions, such as weddings and funerals, is done by a close kin of the host, called *motuha.* Distributing the food in measured quantities to each person present *(haka he‘e)* is not enough; it should be done so that each person present receives a portion appropriate to his relationship to the host.

People may differ in their opinions of what is correct *(rite).* Allocating unintentionally a portion that is too small or inadequate is to give crumbs *(haka ēpe)* to someone. If an individual feels that he has been given a smaller amount purposely to create a feeling of disappointment, then he accuses the host of *haka kemo.* Such a slight to someone with whom one had a close relationship would connote a withdrawal of affection *(aroha)* and would be a signal (and a blunt one at that, if done publically) that the host no longer desired kin relations with the guest. *Rūo* is to leave a feast with a feeling of resentment against the host for such a slight. Persons who receive enough to eat, but who do not obtain enough surplus to take home with them from public or ceremonial feasts, may also feel *rūo.* In contrast to dining in the home on ordinary occasions, the important part of a public feast is the distribution of the food, not its eating. Within a few minutes of the distribution, all except close kin of the host begin to move off to their homes where they will eat the food or give it to others.

Persons who do not participate in the four or five feasts given each year to celebrate Catholic religious days or who do not give food on informal occasions in their homes are *ngu.* I have heard this epithet applied as a nickname to some persons who behave in this way. For example, Manolo never feeds relatives when they come to his house and never contributes to any of the public feasts given on the island. When he and his family are eating a meal, if anyone knocks on the door, he quickly hides the food so that they will not have to be invited to eat. He does not do this for lack of food or money, but because he is stingy *(ngu). Ngu* carries with it the notion that a person is always reluctant about giving things or services, while *ohumu* can be only a temporary lapse of generosity to kin. A very stingy person who always fails to share with his kin is miserly *(paka ohio).* Such a person lacks *aroha* (affection) for all persons and is interested only in hoarding and retaining goods and services for himself. People avoid and make jokes about such misers.[12] A miser never gives feasts, nor is it likely that such a person would go to any such gatherings. To fail to give for the Rapanui is to fail to love. An extremely stingy and miserly person *(tangata ohumu hio-hio)* has closed nails *(mangungupura).*

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[11] Rapanui *aroha* seems to be precisely cognate with the Trukese concept of *ttong* (Marshall 1977:656-57).

Proof of *aroha* between kinsmen is the constant sharing of goods and labor amongst them. *Aroha* includes not only love but also a sense of identification with another person. Those who have *aroha* for another know what their kinsmen wish and ideally should be able to anticipate requests and desires. *Tangata hōnui* have *aroha* for persons to whom they are related. People who have *aroha* for each other have confidence or trust *(pe'i)* in one another and they support each other in disputes with others.

People see *aroha* as correlating with intimacy in kin relations. At its most restricted, within the nuclear family, people assume that a husband has *aroha* for his wife and vice versa and parents and their children have reciprocal *aroha.* Beyond this, a person should have *aroha* for anyone to whom he acknowledges that he is related *(hae-hae).* If *aroha* is not shown by reciprocal prestations, then some reason must be given for its withdrawal or absence. Such reasons are expressed by the Rapanui in concrete terms of failure to provide goods or a service at one or more particular and named occasions.

Expression of *aroha* beyond the immediate kin exists in friendship. *Hoa* (more archaic, *hokorua*) is the term for persons who are like family in intimacy. In the complicated and interwoven descent from those few fertile individuals in the last century, not many today can claim to be completely unrelated to a large number of other Rapanui. Nevertheless, people do recognize friendship as a special, nonkin relationship. Rapanui initiate, activate, or renew friendships through the prestation of gifts *(ha'i).* Some Rapanui aver that friendship requires more effort to achieve if there is no accepted kinship basis for the association, either through affinal or consanguinal ties. Gifts given as expressions of *aroha* for family are not nearly as crucial as they are for friends. Friends are seen together in each other's company working together and sharing the same interests, sometimes business interests. Many people say that siblings and cousins are always there *(he taina ho'i taua),* so they must be close and have *aroha.* Friends have a special relationship; while it should not supplant kin ties, it ought to be like kinship in emotional and practical (i.e., exchange) terms. People say that friendships are optional; and for this reason, the energy required for maintaining them is greater. Nothing about them can be taken for granted, whereas kinship ought to exist simply as a fact. People do not acknowledge, except in conflict, that kinship and friendship both require tangible and continuous demonstrations of *aroha.*

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[12] I am preparing a paper on teasing, gossip, and nicknames to show how these can be analyzed using a unitary structure as an aspect of social control and the expression of values.

One reason for forming a friendship, rather than declaring kinship, is that one's kinsmen could protest their being brought into a relationship of which they did not approve. The Rapanui are freer to form friendships than they are to recognize kinship ties, especially nonagnatic ones. Kinship involves the declaration of common rights in property and labor and may have implications beyond the individuals who declare themselves fast friends *(hoa here).*

Affines of similar age are often friends and recognize that their friendship began when their siblings married. Besides the *aroha,* one can feel easy with friends. Friends often joke and especially close ones may come to feel as close as kin, contributing even to life crisis ceremonies in each other's families. A Rapanui man of middle age may have only two or three persons whom he considers as good friends *(repahoa).* Women, on the other hand, often have many more close friends in addition to their kinsmen. Women visit much more frequently than do men. Older women with adult offspring particularly say they have a good deal more time on their hands than men for visiting, as most older men, but few women are involved full time in cash earning activities.

Affection, Respect, and Disappointment

The expression of *aroha* through reciprocity is not without its restraints. A system based purely upon reputed affection could be abused by the unscrupulous who might make excessive demands *(tingo).* Prevention of the abuse of *aroha* is contained in the notion of respect (*mō'a*).

Among collaterals, *mō'a* is a restraint or the generosity required by the expression of *aroha.* Relations between siblings are characterized by restraint. The ideal sibling relationship is one in which mutual respect is demonstrated and they do not step on each other *(ina ko eke tu'u taina).* To step upon a sibling means to demand too much or to compete openly and without the feelings of *aroha.* For example, Pāhi was an ancient figure who always came to his kinsmen's homes just as the meal was being served. He did this because he wished to eat all of the food of his family members, but he never worked to produce any himself. Today, if a kinsman comes too often just at meal time, he or she may be greeted by, "Oh, look, here comes Pahi;" a clear allusion to the old story that every adult knows. This gentle rebuke is usually sufficient to remind a kinsman of his lack of respect *(mō'a).*

I observed that whilst someone may come to visit a kinsman or a friend out of *aroha,* respect requires an approach to the dwelling only from the front door. Further it is customary to approach a person's house[13] making some sort of noise, such as whistling or humming, so as not to startle the occupants. Some persons send small children or dogs on ahead of them to announce their arrival at a house. If the person to be visited is not close, either as a friend or kinsman, then it is desirable to call out before approaching the house so as to obtain permission from the owner to approach.

Rapanui assert that respect should be a part of the relationship between spouses. This show of respect includes avoiding altercations in public places for public disputes not only show disrespect between those engaging in the conflict but also demonstrate a lack of respect to others present. Spouses should also refrain from gossiping about one another, for it is a sign of disrespect to impart confidential *(ponoko)* information about whom someone has trust *(pe'i).*

Mutual respect should also be embodied in the relationship between parents and children. Along with their special feelings of *aroha* for one another, children demonstrate respect to their parents by obeying their commands. Children reciprocate parental *aroha* by giving their labor and its products to their seniors. If respect predominates in a parent-child relationship then a child should not look his parent directly in the eye, an action called *hira-hira* and an insult. Parents in turn reciprocate that respect by not having disputes in front of their children or discussing certain topics, such as sexual behavior when they are in their presence. If any distinction occurs between the sexes, it is that a *poki* (child) ought to have affection for his female parent and respect especially for his male parent. Just as many Rapanui would deny this, saying that respect should be for both male and female parents, as should affection. If a child feels that his parent has failed to give him respect and/or affection, he may use this as an explanation for refusing to aid his parents when old.

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[13] Most nuclear families or couples intending to have children occupy their own separate dwelling or are in the process of constructing their own house.

An old couple in their seventies had had many children, but as adults they refused to care for them. The old man was known in the community as a stingy person who always sold his goods and was never generous. His natural offspring charged that he fostered many children and made them work in his fields to make him rich. Many supported his natural and fostered offspring when they refused to bring the old couple food when they fell ill.

Labor *(te anga)* is represented by the Rapanui in visiting one's close friends and kin; that is, not selfishly hoarding all of one's time for productive activities for one's own benefit. Children who wish to express their respect and affection to their elders may do so by performing small tasks around the household or by co-opting for labor intensive projects such as building construction or farming. The old man in the previous case raised *(hangai)* a number of children in his time, but most of them accuse him of using their labor power for his own benefit. They remember the hard work, but observe that they were poorly fed by him. Food, as we see at the onset of this ethnographic section, is prime recompense for labor. If a person gives his labor out of *aroha*, but does not receive recompense, he feels disappointment.

Haka viku[14] describes the feeling a person has who has been denied something which that individual feels is his right. It occurs among small children who are being served food. The Rapanui say that someone *haka viku* is distressed because the person doing the distribution of the coveted items singles out a particular person for embarrassment. Siblings especially are prone to *haka viku* and regard unequal distributions as indicating whom the parent favors or, obversely, for whom the parent feels less *aroha. Haka viku* is also the feeling people have when they do not receive the portion of food they believe corresponds to them at public or ceremonial feasts.

A person who is *haka viku* is very quiet. He looks at the ground and refuses to meet the eye of the person whom he believes has slighted him. He will not speak or explain his complaint and just stands, waiting for the fault to be rectified. When an individual displays *haka viku*, others present often begin to tease him. This usually results in the *haka viku* person simply going off and remaining to one side of the main activities. I saw this *haka viku* behavior on a number of occasions and between all sorts of parents; that is, adoptive and natural, fathers to son and sons to mothers, etc. There did not appear to be anything in the parent-child relationship that determined *haka viku.* No children, or adults for that matter, were known to be especially prone to such behavior.

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[14] I employ *haka viku* in the English sentences as it figures in Rapanui expressions. *Haka viku*, without modification, is a verb describing action. An individual is *haka viku*, does *haka viku*, and acts *haka viku*. It is also an adjective for someone behaving in that recognized manner.

The major distinguishing characteristic of *haka viku* behavior is that the person demonstrating it absolutely refuses to accept the profferred, inadequate prestation. *Haka viku* is rejection of transaction and such a ban on interaction may continue for some time. Whilst interaction may resume, a victim may remember the incident for some time and bring it up again to justify refusal of some goods or service.[15] There was no one in the community who had not caused someone to *haka viku* and against whom no one held a grudge for having done it to them at one time or another.

Haka ika, to be like a victim, is the same, sulky kind of behavior as *haka viku*. A common *haka ika* by both males and females is if their spouse or close friend fails to pay sufficient attention to them and, instead, seems to court the attentions of another as expressed in visits and services performed. Though my informants would perhaps not see it this way, *haka ika* seems to be the response to faulty distribution of attention, whilst *haka viku* is faulty distribution of goods.

The only requital *(haka hoki)* for disappointment, for failure of *aroha* and/or ***mōʻa*** is revenge, but that is another story.

Conclusions

The Rapanui have a clear concept of labor power or purposive and productive labor *(te anga).* And, they recognize when someone slights them, either in the prestation of goods *(haka viku)* or services and attentions *(haka ika)* for one represents the other (Mauss 1969:11). The receipt of goods implies that work is also to be received or gained, while the receipt of attention in the form of productive labor implies that should the need arise, goods will be given also. Goods, thus, have not become fetishistic; they are convertible to the labor required to produce them, though there are no exact equivalences between goods and labor (see Mauss 1969:43, 64). Performance is at the center of Rapanui associations and the Rapanui require a steady flow of both goods and labor for a relationship between kin or other associate to continue, as is the case in other societies (Mauss 1969:10-11).

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[15] This is rather like Price's remarks (1978:342): "On the level of everyday friction and quarrels, the most important conceptualization of hostilities is known as "planting sweet potatoes" [reference omitted]. The relationship begins with a wrongdoing of some kind (insult, unwarranted denial of a request, etc.) by A against B. B makes no immediate "repayment," but waits--sometimes for years--until A is in a situation where he needs B's co-operation or assistance. The justification given by B for his own counteraction is that A 'planted sweet potatoes' long ago, and that they are only now ready to harvest, referring to the fact that sweet potato plants crop unexpectedly long after the original potatoes have been dug."

The fundamental difference between my observations and those of the archaeologist Edwin Ferdon, who also investigated exchange on Rapanui, lies in the desire for giving and receiving prestations: Ferdon's Rapanui were anxious that someone would transact with them, while the people amongst whom I lived feared that goods and services (labor) would be rejected if offered.[16] The areas with which I wish to contend with Ferdon lie in his typology of exchanges, which he gives as forced gift exchange, deferred exchange, and steal trading and, finally, the influence of cash upon the Rapanui.

The first category of "forced gift exchange" is clearly that kind of transaction reserved only for short-term visitors and his only concrete example of it is an instance between himself and an islander. It is the brusque version of the traditional *ha'i* I discuss above, or, as Gouldner (1973:251-52) identifies it, a "starting mechanism." Mauss (1969:25) designated the same initial prestation as a "solicitory gift." Whilst it is true that the initial reciprocity was specified in the form of some scarce item held by the outsider, it is just as true that future exchanges were to be forthcoming, if the initial prestation gained acceptance. In this regard, the *ha'i* involves not only immediate satisfaction of a want but has two other components. It is at once an "index of commitment" or a token, in Raymond Firth's words (1973:382). It shows that one person wishes to associate with another. But, occasionally, such *ha'i* were trivial in nature. When the value of the initial gift is under what is required in return, we may be certain that we are dealing with what Firth (and the Semites) termed an "earnest" (1973:381-2; Mauss 1969:47). Such a gift is a promise of a future, even larger prestation and can be used to excite the interest, particularly of outsiders, with the Rapanui. The Rapanui knew that Ferdon and his associates had come to their island looking for rare objects to take away with them. The leader of the expedition, Thor Heyerdahl, had made that clear from the onset and the islanders had had over two centuries' worth of experience dealing with outsiders wanting to take away souvenirs for both scientific and personal use. The Rapanui realized that the archaeologists' goods were limited, so they hurried to trade for the specific item they wished before any other islander did so. The identity of the actors (outsiders) and the nature of the objects involved (scarce) transformed the indigenous *ha'i* into what Ferdon saw as "forced gift exchange."

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[16] There are three problems which complicate my contesting of Ferdon's earlier data (1958): Firstly, Ferdon does not specify the exact kin relationships in the cases he cites and so it is difficult for me to evaluate what his examples mean. It would be unjust for me to criticize too harshly the imprecision of his material, resulting as it did from casual observations, as he himself admits, made during his six-months' stay as an archaeologist on Rapanui in the mid-1950s. Secondly, Ferdon was on Rapanui a generation ago and the island at that time was an isolated sociality; the islanders were prevented from even short excursions under the watchful and paternalistic eye of the Chilean Naval Governor. What effect this isolation might have had upon the conduct of the Rapanui as it relates to Ferdon's material is difficult to decide, given the first problem of being unable to trace the cases. Finally, the time of Ferdon's observations was a very special one, during the visit of the Norwegian Archaeological Expedition under the direction of Thor Heyerdahl. Informants told me about the excitement and intense activity that was characteristic of that brief time. The whole tenor of life was altered and enormous quantities of desirable goods and money flowed from a generous and sometimes gullible foreigner population who were eager to exchange ideas and goods with the Rapanui.

"Deferred exchange" is Ferdon's second category and is cognate with my remarks about *ho'o* and *haka hoki* above. Again, the items involved in Ferdon's example are scarce ones, such as chocolate bars, cigarettes, and other objects originating from the outsiders. Ferdon continues to tell us how the Rapanui deal with scarce objects in unusual circumstances, but he gives us little information about how they carry out day-to-day actions with the persons whom they regard as kin or friends until he comes to his third form of Rapanui exchange which he calls "steal trading."

Without knowing more details, his description of this "technique" is very difficult to evaluate:

> Nothing observable in a man's home is secure from relatives. It is not *uncommon* for a native to enter a relative's home and, when his host is not looking, grab an item and run to the door. Upon reaching the door, however, he must stop and laughingly show the purloined object to his host, who all of my informants agree, can only laugh and let the man and the object go. (Ferdon 1958: 144-5, my emphasis)

I too saw such actions, but they were performed by drunks, from whom much bizarre behavior can be expected, or, on several occasions, as the license permitted to the few mentally defective Rapanui who move about the island. Their behavior could hardly be called common as Ferdon avers. I also observed on a number of occasions cousins and good friends jostling each other and taking items out of one another's pockets. Such teases are part of the proclaimed intimacy of many relationships, they are not a method for obtaining desired goods. To call it "steal trading" and to equate it with an "exchange technique" is missing the point of the action. What Ferdon calls "steal trading," the Rapanui would refer to simply as play or *kore.*[17]

[17] When actual theft does occur and a known minority of islanders do steal, it is not for play but taken very seriously. Theft for the Rapanui would be taking something from someone's house while that person was absent.

Finally, Ferdon discusses the Rapanui's use of cash money, averring that they find the use of money very new but recommending that the Chilean government, with patience, could teach them something about it. The historical facts are very different. Church collections in cash existed in the 1880s[18] and a decade later various currencies flowed freely on the island as this report by an early Chilean governor made clear:

> They [the Rapanui] are particularly fond of money, and by work, they obtain it from the whites established on the island or by selling their articles to sailors, with whom they also exchange for clothes and other objects. Recently on Easter there have been circulating between 600 and 700 pesos in silver coin from various countries, principally from Peru and Chile. There were besides some pounds sterling, valued because they fetch seven silver pesos for each one of them. (Toro Hurtado 1893:205-6, my translation)

This hardly sounds like a population unused to money. Again, Ferdon fails to appreciate the object involved in the exchange; the kind of money. To say that money "was simply paper to the Easter Islanders" is true today when it comes to the frequently devalued Chilean currency.[19] Unlike perhaps some Europeans, the Rapanui have no illusions about what money is. They see it as simply a convenient medium of exchange for obtaining the goods and services they require. It is a commodity among many for achieving these goals.

Marshall Sahlins apt aphorism, "If friends make gifts, gifts make friends," is not less true for the Rapanui than for any other known population (1965: 139). The circulation of goods and services is an integral part of the fundamental axiom of association as it exists for the Rapanui. "Gifts. . . . maintain an ongoing relationship," as Firth (1973:377) remarks. For persons to recognize that they are related, that they are kin, some sort of a genealogical tie must be found to unite them in a manner distinct from the association of friends. Due to the small size of the population, this is not difficult to achieve. Once *ha'i* occurs, then a concatenation of obligations follows that should be,

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[18] The archives of the parish church on Rapanui contain records by French missionary priests of collections made from the islanders, suggesting that cash money in French francs did circulate. Donations of materials were noted separately.

[19] Since at least the 1950s, Chilean currency has been subject to frequent devaluations. In 1975, the situation became so serious that a new unit of currency was established, but devaluations have continued.

> . . . . arranged into chains of mutual services, a give and take extending over long periods of time and covering wide aspects of interest and activity. (Malinowski 1929:67)

It is true that people notice failure in a relationship as partite; that is, they can cite an instance of an attention reserved or an item withheld, but the model is like the partite droplets of a pointilist painting, for from the distance of time and continued association these separate instances and dots of visible association meld into a holistic pattern, “through a vast and complex network of undischargeable obligations” (Price 1978:344). This is the attitude of sharing to which Mac Marshall (1977) draws our attention. What he does not say is that there is a materialist as well as emotional basis to this axiom of association that people symbolize by sharing. The sharing is in a mutual pool of labor or in a mutual pool of goods produced by that mutual labor. Mauss (1969:Note 128) remarks that through exchange, the giver acquires “the right to control those to whom one gives.”

In the context of kinship, sharing is a “within” or a together relationship enjoyed by persons who share a corporate identity based upon descent. In terms of Rapanui ideology, the giving of something in exchange *(haka hoki)* should not occur between kin, for this implies a “from-to” relationship (Reay 1959:93) and would belie the corporate character of the pooled resources. In this regard, Sahlins’ concept of pooling (1972:188) implies power to enforce corporate ownership vested in a strong and recognized leader, while sharing is an individual decision, but enforceable collectively through the threat of excommunication, in congruence with a concept of corporate rights in communally produced and maintained property.

But, if all Rapanui are able to trace a relationship when they choose to do so, then only sharing should be possible. *Ha‘i* as a partite concept should not exist, nor should reciprocity *(haka hoki)* as a calculated, at least initially, goal. It is usual in human societies for reciprocity to be unimportant between close kin, as Sahlins’ diagram seeks to demonstrate. Yet, in practice, the Rapanui will sometimes treat quite close kin as others in exchange relations, denying effectively corporation.

I return to the problem of what anthropologists call cognatic kinship, for such a technique of actively using criteria of reciprocity and treating otherwise acknowledged kin as exchange partners whilst affirming that the exchanges at other times are nothing more than the sharing of resources appropriate to comembers of a family provides a rationale either for shedding unwanted kin or, when expedient, for counting a genealogically remote cousin as closer kin than one of lesser degree. It results in a curious syllogism:

Family share goods.
I will not share goods with you.
You will not share goods with me.
We are not family.

This attitude makes it easy for people to remove certain ancestors from their genealogies when it suits them simply by terminating exchange relations with the other descendants. Such behavior constitutes a revolt against the normatively ascriptive nature of kinship. It is also the Rapanui solution to the problem of structurally unbounded cognatic kin groups (see Hanson 1970). Marshall's Trukese material (1977:650) shows a similar attitude, wherein if nurturance and sharing between persons who have previously recognized their common kinship "be consistently ignored," then, too, is the relationship so discarded. Kinship is more a matter of performance than structure.

In order to transfer the emphasis from structure to performance, Sahlins' scheme of reciprocities must be recast as follows:

Structure	**Performance**
Generalized reciprocity	When reciprocity does not matter (sharing).
Balanced reciprocity	When reciprocity does matter (initiating relationships).
Negative reciprocity	When people deny reciprocity.

The-degrees-of-intimacy model proposed by Lebra (1975; compare Sahlins 1972:199) is entirely compatible with the above, for nearness and intimacy are attitudes, not structural principles. Reciprocity is not, as Sahlins would have it, a class of exchanges. Exchange is rather the context of or occasion for reciprocity, with the latter being a social value associated with exchange. The "pooling" that Sahlins brings into his discussion of reciprocity is a ceremonial relationship based upon the power and authority of a central figure. Pooling and sharing are on a continuum of power relations with pooling being a form of directed sharing through a central figure.

Sahlins' carefully-argued scheme is not so much incorrect as it does depict how reciprocity operates among individuals who regard themselves as part of a social group. But his scheme is incomplete as it does not tell us how people begin such relations, why they are maintained, or why they are terminated. That is what I have tried to do here for Rapanui.[20] Furthermore, I suggest that such a perspective, as displayed above, would be readily applicable to any human society.

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[20] I am preparing a theoretical article, reexamining the crucial Maori ethnography upon which Mauss (1969) based his famous essay and which has been used by Sahlins, amongst others, as a basis for schemes of value in exchange. I stress in that article a labor theory of exchange and association.

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