BORROWED MOIETIES, BORROWED NAMES: SOCIOLINGUISTIC CONTACT BETWEEN TANNA AND FUTUNA-ANIWA, VANUATU

John Lynch and Kenneth Fakamuria
University of the South Pacific

There is a history of considerable contact between the people of Tanna, Futuna, and Aniwa, three islands in the Tafea (Southern) District of Vanuatu. This essay addresses one aspect of that contact, which involves elements of social organization: Tanna societies appear to have borrowed a moiety system from Futuna or Aniwa, but Futuna and Aniwa have borrowed the Tannese names for these moieties.[1]

The people of Futuna and Aniwa speak two fairly closely related dialects of a Polynesian Outlier language. The languages of Tanna are also Oceanic, but not Polynesian, and have undergone considerable change in the phonological structure of words. Borrowings in either direction, therefore, are relatively easy to identify, which makes the nature of the contact easier to reconstruct than in some other parts of the Pacific, where the languages in contact are relatively similar phonologically and borrowings are consequently more difficult to identify.

Only one area of borrowing has been documented in detail to date. This concerns maritime vocabulary: The Tanna languages have borrowed very heavily indeed from Futuna-Aniwa in a range of semantic fields such as fish names, names of winds, names of parts of the canoe, fishing technology, and so on (Lynch nd.). Considerable borrowing (probably more by the Tanna languages from Futuna-Aniwa than in the reverse direction) is apparent in other areas of material culture, although these have not been fully documented as yet.

Origins of the Tanna Moiety System

Five languages are spoken on Tanna, and different sources of informa-
tion come from different language-areas.[2] Lindstrom's dictionary of
Kwamera defines both *Koiameta* (also *Kaviameta)* and *Numrukwén* as
"one of two traditional social moieties which today have no marital or
residential significance" (1986:63, 102). The corresponding Lenakel
terms are *Koiameta* and *Numrukuen* (Lynch 1977).

   The moieties are referred to as *inteta* (sometimes *niteta*) in Kwamera
and as *niko* in Lenakel, terms that also apply to ships or canoes. The
moieties are supposed to have been introduced to Tanna at the end of a
period called Niproou (Lenakel) or Nipróu (Kwamera), referring to a
mythological time of peace before the onset of warfare, group land
ownership, marriage exchange, and so forth, all of which are associated
with the two canoes or moieties. Guiart's version of the origin story is as
follows:

> Deux hommes, s'appelant respectivement Numrukwen et
> Koyometa, arrivent en pirogue près de Yakutèrës (Yatukwey,
> Port-Resolution); leur pirogue coule; ils prennent tout ce qu'il y
> avait dans la pirogue et se retrouvent à terre, dans un abri sous
> roche d'accès difficile, sous forme de deux pierres, l'une rouge
> *(Koyometa)* l'autre blanche *(Numrukwen).* (Guiart 1956:93)[3]

Part of the origin story told to one of us goes like this:

> The people came to Tanna in two ships, *Kaplilau* and *Niproou,*
> and landed at *Lenimtehin.* They lived like we do, and they
> spread around Tanna, and life was good; there was no anger,
> only friendship in the beginning. But then they began to fight
> each other. . . . They went on fighting, and one hit another
> with a sling. And he was hurt and said to his brother, "My
> friend, I want you to avenge me". . . . And he threw a stone
> and hit one of them on the forehead and killed him. This was
> the first death, and they looked on death there and grew angry.
> Then they took up the bow and arrow and war-clubs and began
> fighting.
>   The fighting was still going on when the white man came to
> Tanna. The people asked for guns, and he gave them some, and
> in exchange they sold the foreigner a small amount of land.
> They began shooting each other, and some tried hard to steal

guns from others, and the stealing of guns which the white man had exchanged for land kept going on. They bought a lot of guns, and the war went on apace with the island divided into two *niko,* Numrukuen and Koiameta.

Bonnemaison (1987) has a slightly different version again. The two moieties are closely linked with the two stones mentioned by Guiart, Numrukwén and Kaviameta, and with two canoes. In the beginning, everyone was together in the "canoe" *Nipróu,* and the island was at peace. But then there were two "canoes," said to have been commanded by Karapanemum and Mwatiktík (i.e., Mauitikitiki); and the *"loi des deux pirogues"* made warfare possible. Traditions vary as to whether fighting started in the Whitesands area as a result of a dispute over an exchange that was unequal, or in Middle Bush after a war "game" saw someone accidentally killed. In either case, the peace of *Nipróu* was broken by the arrival of the two canoes and the division into two moieties, Numrukwén and Kaviameta.

There is obviously some confusion in these origin stories. But the confusion is really on matters of detail: All accounts agree that there was a period without a system of dual organization and that a moiety system was introduced to Tanna.

The Tanna Moiety System

Although Humphreys (1926) argues that these moieties were geographically based, this does not seem to have been strictly the case, at least traditionally. Guiart (1956:90) notes that it is certainly true that, while the east and southeast coasts, the Lenakel area in the central west, and the Green Hill area in the north are heavily Numrukwén, and the southwest and much of the northwest are heavily Kaviameta,

> la plus grande partie des agglomérations du reste de l'île apparaissent divisées entre les deux groupes. Les *yimwayim* se réclament de l'une ou l'autre dénomination; il arrive même souvent que les dignitaires se partager entre *Numrukwen* et *Koyometa,* à l'intérieur du même *yimwayim,* sans que les informateurs considèrent ces cas comme aberrants. (Guiart 1956:90)[4]

He also notes that the preponderance of a certain moiety in a particular region of the island is due mostly to the relatively recent out-migration of one group from what was once a more mixed area (Guiart 1956:91).

Lindstrom agrees with Guiart that the distinction between the two moieties does not appear to have great practical significance today.

> Moieties once set the bounds of warring factions on the island. Major wars . . . occurred across rather than within moieties. . . . Although people usually know their moiety affiliation, they today rarely act on this. No major body of binary oppositions symbolizes membership in a moiety although one man explained that . . . Numrukwen arrived first, is "on the bottom," or female and has greater power, if less ability and knowledge with food than does Koyometa. Koyometa arrived second, is male, and controls the power to produce impressive foodstuffs. . . . Moiety affiliation, in addition, plays no part in people's marriage affiliations. Given a two-section kinship system with moieties, one might expect these groups to be exogamous--exchanging women between themselves. People assert, however, that moieties were historically endogamous. Men, according to their reasoning, were afraid to marry a woman of the opposite moiety lest she betray them to her brothers. (Lindstrom 1981: 72-73)

With the cessation of warfare, the importance of these two moieties has declined (although moiety divisions have spilled over into national politics, such that support of a particular political party often corresponds with moiety affiliation). Nevertheless, the moieties are still important in relation to land disputes and in dance-exchanges (Kwamera *nakwiari,* Lenakel *nikoviaar),* at which each moiety has its symbols: Kaviameta people are said to be red, are accused of having several languages, and their symbol is a red-breasted bird, the cardinal honey-eater *(Myzomela cardinalis;* Kwamera *kaviamtameta,* Lenakel *koiametameta);* Numrukwén people are said to be black (according to Guiart) or white (according to Bonnemaison), and their symbol is a domestic fowl with ruffled plumage. Particular species of yam, taro, and *Cordyline* are also associated with each moiety (see Bonnemaison 1987:291; Guiart 1956:91-92).

We shall note shortly that stones representing the moieties are important in Futuna. Apart from the original stones mentioned by Guiart, moiety-stones do not figure prominently in Tanna today. However, Monty Lindstrom informs us that Chief Rigiau unburied two such stones (named Kaviameta and Numrukwén) with much ceremony at Ianamwakel village on the east coast of Tanna in the mid-1980s.

The Intermediaries

In addition to the two moieties, there is a third, intermediary group. Lindstrom (1986) defines the term *Kout kisua* as:

> 1. Traditional social identity usually possessed by one or two men in a locality (i.e., in an *imwarim* group). These men mediated disputes between two traditional, non-residential, non-marital social moieties, *numrukuen* [*sic*] and *koiameta* by 'going between the canoes'. 2. A mediator between disputing local groups. 3. Spy, someone who informs the enemies of a group of its plans (1986:63-64)

The corresponding Lenakel term is *Kouatkasua.*

Lindstrom elaborates on the role of the Kout kisua (1981:73). He is "an intermediary who is able to talk safely with men of both moieties, one who 'goes between the canoes'. . . . [He] retains primary affiliation with either Numrukwen or Koyometa. Unlike his fellow moiety members, however, he historically approached the men of the opposite moiety to arrange the peace or deliver a message" (Lindstrom 1981:73).[5] This is, therefore, a traditional social identity usually possessed by one or two men in a locality, who act as mediators (and sometimes as spies).

In summary, then, Tanna societies have a tradition that speaks of a period when there was no division within the society and says that the current system of dual organization was introduced to the island. The moiety division was once important militarily, but this is no longer the case; however, moiety membership is still important in traditional ceremonies (and also to some extent in modern politics), and there is also a group of intermediaries that mediate between the two moieties.

Published Accounts of the Futuna-Aniwa Moiety System

West Futuna-Aniwa is a Polynesian Outlier language spoken in two dialects, one on Futuna and the other on the neighboring island of Aniwa. There are basically two major published sources of information on Futuna-Aniwa language and society, in the works of Capell and Dougherty.

Capell's 1984 dictionary gives *Namruke* as the name of "one of the two moieties in Futunese society" but does not list the name of the other. He does, however, list *Surama* and *Yefotuma* as the names of the two Aniwan moieties. In his anthropological study, Capell noted that

there seems little doubt that in pre-Christian days both Futuna
and Aniwa societies were based on dual organization. This does
not appear in [Gunn's] *Gospel in Futuna,* nor in any of Dr.
Paton's writings on Aniwa, but the names Iefotuma and Sura-
ma are given as the two geographical divisions of Aniwa, and
Dr. Gunn, in conversation with the present writer (to whom
study of the kinship system had already suggested the likelihood
of a moiety system) was able to recall that after the writing of
his book he had learnt from some of the old men that two divi-
sions had previously existed on Futuna. The name of one was
Namruke, the other was not recorded. These, however, were
not territorial divisions, and they have been allowed to lapse.
Very little detail of their function is likely to be obtained now.
They would both be found in the same hamlet, membership in
them was inherited through the mother and carried certain
obligations (such as taking turns in giving feasts), and each had
its own *marae* or public square with sacred banyan in each
hamlet. (Capell 1960: 2)

Dougherty gives the names of the two moieties in Futuna as *Namruke*
and *Kavimeta* (1983:636-638); the gloss for each, contra Capell's asser-
tion that these are matrilineal moieties, is "one of two major *patrilineal*
descent groups of Futuna" [emphasis added]. Dougherty also mentions
a third descent group, *Fana,* defined as a "descent group which func-
tions as a mediator between two moieties based on descent, Kavimeta
and Numruke [*sic*]. Members of Fana were born into one of the major
groups and raised by a member of the other descent group, usually a
mother's brother" (Dougherty 1983:636). There is a clear parallel here
between Futuna Fana and Tanna Kout kisua.[6]

The Futuna Moiety System

Research by one of us has shown that the two *vaka* or moieties *(vaka,*
"canoe"), which are known as Namruke and Kawiameta, were defi-
nitely in existence in pre-Christian times: Unlike in Tanna, there is no
tradition in Futuna of a period before the existence of a dual-organiza-
tion system, nor is there any tradition of the moieties' having been intro-
duced to Futuna (from Tanna or elsewhere). Traditionally, cross-moiety
marriage was prohibited, and thus one was born, married into, and
remained Namruke or Kawiameta.
    The main activities or preoccupations of the two moieties in the past

seem to have been feasting, which involved the exchange of pigs, yams, taro, and sugarcane, and the resulting "wars" that broke out (presumably as the result of disputes about these exchanges). Namruke are characterized as being quiet but evasive and calculating, thriving on the accumulation of wealth. Kawiameta, on the other hand, are supposed to be outspoken, direct, and straightforward.

Both *vaka* are found in each village, and each village has a Namruke and a Kawiameta *marae.* Stone images relating to both moieties are found in each village. The Namruke image, known as Fatu, is largely hidden below ground (as befits the Namruke character); the Kawiameta image (Sura), on the other hand, is much taller, with very little of it below ground (again befitting the more "obvious" character of Kawiameta people).

Whatever the situation might have been in the past--see Capell's comment that membership was matrilineally inherited--these moieties today are clearly patrilineal descent groups, with land, chiefly titles, and magical instruments passing from father to (usually) oldest son, If a man has only daughters, these rights pass through the (oldest) daughter to her (oldest) son.

Over time, cross-moiety marriage took place, giving rise to a third *vaka,* the Fana. A Fana person is supposed to have personality traits of both Namruke and Kawiameta, and they act as intermediaries between the two other *vaka* in cases of disputes and the like. The Fana have no *marae,* and there are no stone images associated with them. Fana people associate, or are associated, with Namruke or Kawiameta on the basis of their personality traits rather than on the basis of the *vaka* to which their father (or mother) belongs.

The Aniwa Situation

The situation on Aniwa is similar to that on Futuna, and we will mention here only points of difference. There is a tradition that the island was originally divided into two moieties: Sura, which occupied the north of the island, and Yefatu, which occupied the south.[7] These divisions, however, have now lapsed: The two patrilineal moieties still on Aniwa are not geographically discrete; they are now known as Kawiameta and Namrukwen, and there is a tradition of their having been borrowed from Tanna.

There are also a number of submoieties, including Tarua, Nafuci, Fakagiagi, and Ipake. Of these, Tarua is classified as Kawiameta, and people from this group claim to be the original inhabitants of Aniwa;

the other groups are classified as Namrukwen, and are said to be "out-siders," originally from Tanna. There is apparently no group on Aniwa corresponding to Futuna's Fana.

Who Borrowed What from Whom?

Moiety systems are of some antiquity among Oceanic-speaking peoples (see, for example, Blust 1980, 1981), and one might expect that both Tannese and Futunese-Aniwan societies would have had their own moiety systems and their own names for those moieties. Thus what is initially most striking in this comparison of Futuna-Aniwa and Tanna moiety systems is the similarity in the *names* of the moieties of the three islands:

Futuna		*Namruke*	*Kawiameta*
Aniwa		*Namrukwen*	*Kawiameta*
Tanna:	Kwamera	*Numrukwén*	*Koiameta, Kaviameta*
	Lenakel	*Numrukuen*	*Koiameta*
	Whitesands	*Numrukuen*	*Koiamera*

Clearly, there has been contact between the islands; but the contact has been two-way in nature.

Borrowed Moiety Names

Looking at this initially as a purely linguistic problem, it would appear that the Futuna-Aniwa *names* should be treated as having been bor-rowed from a Tanna language. While consonant clusters and word-final consonants are rare in Futuna-Aniwa, they are common features of Tanna phonologies. Given this, the Futuna form *Namruke* with its medial consonant cluster looks "foreign," and the Aniwa form *Namruk-wen* with the final consonant looks more foreign. So the linguistic evi-dence would suggest that the moiety names are Tannese and have been borrowed into Futuna-Aniwa, and this accords with the Aniwa tradi-tion of borrowing these groupings from Tanna.

The most likely source of these loans is Kwamera. On the east coast of Tanna, which faces Futuna and Aniwa, three languages are spoken: North Tanna, Whitesands, and Kwamera. Whitesands has undergone a regular **t > r* sound change, and one of its moiety names is *Koiamera,* an unlikely source for the Futuna-Aniwa form *Kawiameta.* (North Tanna has undergone a similar change.) Kwamera has two alternate names for this moiety, *Koiameta* and *Kaviameta,* the latter being the

closest of all Tanna moiety names to the Futuna-Aniwa form. We can therefore refine the hypothesis and propose that the Futuna-Aniwa moiety names were borrowed from Kwamera.

A Borrowed Moiety System

However, Futuna has no tradition of these moieties' having been introduced from outside: Capell's statement quoted above makes no mention of this, and though incomplete information was made available to him (or Gunn), it seems clear that the moiety *system* in Futuna has always "been there." While Aniwa does have a tradition of borrowing the current system from Tanna, there is also knowledge of a precontact moiety system there.

We should also point to the cognation between the Aniwa moiety names *Sura* and *Yefatu* and the Futuna names for the stone images *Sura* and *Fatu.* We therefore hypothesize that Futuna, like Aniwa, always had a system of dual organization, and that *Sura* and *Fatu* are the original names of the moieties in both Futuna and Aniwa.

However, there *is* a tradition in Tanna of the moieties' having been introduced from outside. Bonnemaison in particular provides us with some valuable information on this matter. In the time of Nipróu, there was no dual organization. But then came the two *niko,* the two canoes, one of which was commanded by Mwatiktík--the *Polynesian* culture-hero Mauitikitiki. It is clear from various traditions that a dual organization was introduced to Tanna: Bonnemaison's version would suggest that this introduction had a Polynesian origin, and Futuna or Aniwa are the logical sources.

So we have reached the following conclusions:

1. Futuna-Aniwa "always" had moieties, which were known as Sura and Fatu.
2. Tanna did not always have moieties. There is distinct evidence of a moiety system having been introduced and fairly strong evidence that it came from a Polynesian source.
3. Nevertheless, the current Futuna and Aniwa names for the two moieties are borrowings from the Kwamera language of Tanna.

We thus appear to have a situation where Futunese and/or Aniwans introduced a moiety system to Tanna, and both then later borrowed the Tannese names for those moieties! This clearly requires some explanation. First, we need to look at the names of the moieties in Tanna languages, since these are not of Futuna-Aniwa origin. The Kaviameta

moiety has as its symbol the cardinal honey-eater *Myzomela cardinalis,* known as *kaviamtameta* in Kwamera,[8] *koiametameta* in Lenakel. There is clearly a connection between the name of the bird and the name of the moiety, and it is possible that the moiety name is derived from the name of the bird that symbolizes it.

Monty Lindstrom (pers. com., 1993) has suggested that the name *Numrukwén* derives from Kwamera *rukwé-ni,* "his wife"--that is, the wife of the cardinal honey-eater. The prefix *nam-* is occasionally used to nominalize verbs and other word classes in Tanna languages, and there may have been assimilation in Kwamera and other Tanna languages from an earlier form *Namrukwén* (< *nam-rukwé-ni)*--from which the Futuna-Aniwa form would have derived-to *Numrukwén,* because of the u in the following syllable. Lindstrom also informs us that, although there is some reference in Tannese tradition to Numrukwén as the "older brother" and Kaviameta as the "younger brother," there are also traditions about fights between brothers in which the younger brother ends up on top, and the older brother becomes his wife.

Granted then that the Tannese attached names of their own to the borrowed moieties, why, though, did the Futunese and the Aniwans borrow Tannese names for moieties that they already had, and had names for? Let us go back to an earlier quote from Capell. He says that the missionary Gunn, "after the writing of his book . . . had learnt from some of the old men that two divisions had previously existed on Futuna. The name of one was Namruke, the other was not recorded. These . . . have been allowed to lapse" (Capell 1960:2).[9] It may be, then, that the moiety system lapsed in Futuna, with the names *Sura* and *Fatu* simply being used to refer to the stones in each *marae;* it is also clear that the original Sura/Yefatu division in Aniwa was allowed to lapse. Subsequently, a moiety system was reactivated on both of these islands, possibly for internal reasons or possibly because of contact with Tanna. In either case, it was this contact that led to the adoption of the Kwamera names for the two moieties.

Finally, as far as the "intermediate" moiety is concerned, there does appear to be considerable similarity in the role of the Fana in Futuna and the Kout kisua in Tanna. However, there is no linguistic evidence of borrowing here, in either direction.

Conclusion

It is clear that there were far-reaching sociolinguistic contacts between Tanna and Futuna-Aniwa societies. We have shown that Tanna societies

borrowed a moiety system, probably from Futuna-Aniwa, and that Futuna-Aniwa subsequently borrowed the moiety names from the Kwamera language of Tanna. We have speculated that the original Futuna-Aniwa dual-organization system may have collapsed to a considerable extent, possibly because of the presence of Christian missionaries on the island, but that it then later regenerated, partly due to influence from Tanna.

NOTES

1. We are grateful to Monty Lindstrom and two anonymous reviewers for valuable comments on an earlier draft of this article, and to Ture Kailo for information on the Aniwan moieties.

2. The orthography generally follows the published sources on the various languages: *i* represents a mid (sometimes high) central vowel, equivalent in at least some phonetic environments to the *a* in English *ago* or the *i* in New Zealand English *this,* while the acute accent marks irregular (i.e., non-penultimate) stress. Spellings tend to vary with author: for example, Lindstrom and Lynch both write **Koiameta** for the name of one of the moieties, but Lindstrom gives **Kaviameta** as an alternate, while Guiart and Bonnemaison (and also Lindstrom in one publication) write this name as **Koyometa.** Generally, we use the Kwamera terms for the moieties and related concepts in the text but retain other spellings in direct quotations.

3. Translation: "Two men, named Numrukwen and Koyometa, arrive in a canoe near Yatukeris (Yatukwei, Port Resolution); their canoe sinks; they take everything in the canoe and find themselves on the shore, in a rock shelter difficult of access, in the shape of two rocks, one red *(Koyometa),* the other white *(Numrukwen)."*

4. Translation: "The large majority of settlements in the rest of the island appear to be divided between the two groups. The **yimwayim** make use of the name of one or other denomination; it even often happens that leaders are divided between Numrukwen and **Koyometa,** within the same **yimwayim,** with informants not considering these cases aberrant." What Guiart writes as **yimwayim** is Lenakel **iimwaiimw,** Kwamera **imwarim.** This corresponds to Bislama **nakamal** and refers to a ritually important circular clearing in the forest where men prepare and drink kava, hold important decision-making meetings, prepare and carry out exchanges and feasts defined to be traditional in character, and stage traditional dances.

5. Note that Kwamera **isua** and Lenakel **asua** mean "sail, travel by sea"; hence the image of the intermediaries sailing between the two canoes.

6. Capell appears to make no mention of Fana in either of his studies. Both dictionaries give as meanings for **fana** "to shoot, a bow; a mainmast," but it appears that these meanings are not related to the name of this descent group.

7. The terms given by Capell--**Surama** and **Yefotuma**--are actually **Sura** and **Yefatu** (not **Yefotu)** with the suffix -**ma,** "and"; thus **Sura-ma** means something like "the Sura people." While Futuna-Aniwa **fatu** means "stone" (and also "star"), we know of no meaning for **sura** other than as the name of the moiety or moiety-stone.

8. Kwamera **kaviamtameta** derives from an unidentified root, **kavia,** plus **imtameta,** "pink, reddish."

9. The book in question may have been either **The Gospel in Futuna** or **Heralds of the Dawn.**

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