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WIRU PENTHONYMS*

I

"A name is a document epitomising personal experiences, historical happenings, attitudes to life, and cultural ideas and values."

M. Fortes: Names among the Tallensi of the Gold Coast.

In chapters six and seven of *La Pensée Sauvage*, Lévi-Strauss investigates ways in which proper names of persons are formed in a number of societies. If natural categories are used as operators to distinguish and identify social groups, he asks, what happens at the level of personal names? How are individuals identified with and distinguished from each other by means of their names? Lévi-Strauss argues that personal names, like names of social groups, must involve an act of classification, even though, when used, they refer to unique entities rather than to classes of things. Using Lévi-Strauss's two concepts of history and system (1962: 212, 228), one can put this another way. At the level of the individual history and system meet. Every individual is physically and historically unique, yet he is born into a social position and takes his place within a social system. It would be appropriate, then, if personal names were to bridge these two aspects of the individual's situation by classifying him as well as pointing to his unique identity. In practice, we find that in some societies names stress the individual's uniqueness, in others they draw attention to his social position, or explicitly link him or identify him with other individuals; and functional reasons can be suggested for these variations (cf., e.g., Goodenough 1965: 275).

An individual's personal name *may* distinguish him from all other members of his group, community, or society; at the very least, in

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a particular event where his name is used, this is likely to be so.¹ But at the same time, his name may mark him as a member of his community or society, simply because it belongs to a pool of names which is specific to the society. The pool may be large enough to give a unique name to every individual in the society for a number of generations (as in Truk, Goodenough loc. cit.); or, on the contrary, it may include only a limited number of names. There may be rules specifying how such a limited number can be distributed among individuals, and these often reflect ideas of social identification and social continuity, which are linked to certain cultural values. Lévi-Strauss himself (1962: 240) assures us that one never simply names: in giving a name one classifies either the person who is named or oneself. It is because of these characteristics of name-pools that his dictum holds good. Names either indicate that the named individual belongs to a certain social group or category; or that the bestower of the name thinks of himself as belonging to some category — for example, the category of aesthete (Lévi-Strauss 1962: 241). We may add that names can also indicate things at more than one level. At the highest level they may simply announce that the giver of a name speaks a certain language. Further characteristics of the giver or recipient may be specified at succeeding levels.

It should be noticed here that Lévi-Strauss is referring to the initial action of bestowing a name. When names are used by others subsequently, they may, as I have noted, serve simply to identify the individual, as Ryan (1958: 111) has maintained for the Mendi. Implicitly, also, Lévi-Strauss is referring to the overall distribution and semantic import of names. Ryan (loc. cit.: 109) cites examples that, in fact, fit Lévi-Strauss's contentions. Mendi fathers avoid their wives when these have new-born children because of fears of pollution. They are not formally shown their child until more than a month after the birth; and sometimes they do not give the child its first name 'for several months'. In the meantime the child may be called *n'andap*, 'the unseen one', or *mbinawi*, 'the nameless one', and these names may subsequently be retained. Such names classify their bearers, for they tell us something about the common situation of Mendi children in the first few months of life.

¹ There are many exceptions. Laycock (1969) mentions the Bougainville usage whereby persons who enter an area of bush-land owned by X all call each other X while walking through it, as the spirit which guards the place will allow only X to walk through it! This is an amusing example of a personal name being suddenly used as a category term for a particular purpose.

In his own discussion Lévi-Strauss distinguishes between systems in which names are constructed by reference to a clan totem animal or totemic complex and ones in which names are 'entirely distinct from the system of clan appellations' (1962: 235, transl. 1966: 177). He gives examples of the first from American Indian societies:

"The proper names of the Sauk are said always to be related to the clan animal: either because they mention the name of the animal itself, or because they suggest one of its habits, attributes, or characteristic qualities... [Among the Osage] the rule of formation is the same... Thus, for the Black Bear clan, we have... Flashing Eyes of the bear, Tracks on the Prairies, Fat in the skin of the black bear, and so on." (1962: 229, transl. 1966: 173).

This mode of creating names Lévi-Strauss calls *detotalization*: that is, the names for different parts of a species of animal, or for its actions within an environment, are applied to individuals as personal names. Earlier in the book (1962: 194), he shows how among the Osage clan totemic creatures are classified as 'charcoal animals', for each has a number of parts that are black or charcoaled; these parts in different animals are treated in ritual texts as equivalents of each other (e.g. muzzle = beak). In this case we can speak of an 'imaginary dismembering of each species' (1962: 195), which constitutes a kind of logical grid. Whether we can speak of such a grid in the case of Osage proper names is less certain. Is a finite set of names for parts or actions of the totem animal taken, or can different parts and aspects be taken to form new names? Such questions are clearly relevant to the size and dynamics of the Osage name-pool. And unless there is a finite set of names or a finite set of specific rules about how names can be created, it is perhaps difficult to speak of *detotalization*, at least if we mean by this a process of systematically 'dividing' an animal into a number of parts which, taken together, would reconstitute the animal as a whole.

But, whether we use the term *detotalization* or not, the procedure of naming individual group members after parts of a totem species seems to convey a message: that the individual, albeit unique, is a part of his group, just as his name refers us to a part of the species which stands for his group. Room in such a system can be left for the creation of new names by adding to the totemic complex or choosing further aspects of its constituents from which names can be drawn. This process of snowballing complexity could have occurred among the Iatmul, to whom Lévi-Strauss refers (1962: 230), for each Iatmul individual may have 30 or more names, each derived from a part of the totemic complex with which he has affiliations.

The other procedure for name-formation Lévi-Strauss illustrates by

reference to the Iroquois, Mohawk, and a number of African peoples. Iroquois names refer to parts of the sky or flowers etc., or actions in relation to these. The things chosen in these cases are not totemic species, but Lévi-Strauss argues that they are used to provide names by the same process of detotalization as he finds in 'totemic' naming systems. He adds that, in the case of the Mohawk, we can see how names are invented: for example, the name Ice-floating-down-the-River is given to a child born when ice was thawing on the river (1962: 236).

Although the processes of name-creation here may be formally similar, there remain contrasts. In the first cases (Sauk, Osage etc.) we are not told why a particular name is chosen for an individual out of the totemic complex; whereas in the case of the Mohawk, at least, we are. The underlying message seems to be different in the latter cases also: the names do not refer us to a social group but rather seem to identify the individual by means of some historical event, which explains why a particular natural category is chosen as his name. To state the contrast more strongly: while all Lévi-Strauss's instances seem to involve the notion of the name-pool, Sauk and Osage names refer us to system, or structure; Mohawk names to history, or events. Wiru names, I shall argue, can be analysed in terms of this contrast between structure and event also.

II

"Now no matter, child, the name: Sorrow's springs
are the same."

G. M. Hopkins: Spring and Fall. To a Young Child.

The Wiru live in the Southern Highlands District of Papua-New Guinea. They number over 16,000 people, speaking a single language which belongs to the East New Guinea Highlands Stock (Wurm 1964: 77). After early patrols in the 1950s, they were pacified by the Australian Administration in 1960. Traditionally they live in hamlet-settlements within wider districts; since 1962 hamlets have become consolidated into villages, but a district may still comprise more than one village. A number of groups, sometimes related as segments of a phratry, occupy a single village. Other segments, and individual male members, of the same phratry may be found in further villages also. The segments within a village usually intermarry, and there can be

rivalry and suspicion of poisoning between them. Villages act as units in pig-killing festivals; and in the past the district was an important unit in warfare (Strathern 1968: 546).

The village I worked in is called Tunda.² It is occupied by segments of Peti phratry and by associated segments and individuals of other phratries. In Tunda I surveyed the names of the children of 18 men, and took details on other names also. In 1967 Tunda contained some 400 people (men, wives, children and other kin), of whom 80 were currently married men. My survey thus covered about 20 % of the married men. I did not take a random sample, and therefore do not offer statistical tests of the survey results.

Early on in my stay Kapu, who is the son of a now-deceased 'big-man', or leader, in Tunda, gave me the following generalisation: "All our names have to do with poisoning accusations."³ He instanced the name *Toema*, which is derived from one of the Wiru words for poison, and added: "If one of our group dies of poisoning, we call the next child who is born *Toema*, in order to mark this." As a further example, he told me: "A big-man is said to be like a cassowary bird, *Kebi*. If one of our big-men dies of poison, we call the next child who is born in his group of kin *Kebi*. We are sorry for our man who has been poisoned, and so we call the children by these names."

In Kapu's examples the names express grief for a kinsman's death. A death which is held to result from poisoning should also be avenged, and the names are a reminder to the dead man's kinsfolk to secure revenge by counter-poisoning. The springs of this naming custom are thus to be found in the emotions of grief and the desire for revenge felt by small groups of kinsfolk, especially when one of their leaders dies.

² I worked there during May-December 1967, financed by a Research Fellowship from Trinity College, Cambridge.

In my orthography I have followed Administration spelling of area and place-names which are likely to appear on maps. Otherwise I follow the phonemic transcription established by Dr Harland Kerr of the Summer Institute of Linguistics. It should be noted that the phoneme /t/ is frequently heard in the allophonic form of 'r' or 'tr'; and that /b/, /d/, and /g/ in the transcription represent prenasalized consonants. Thus /b/ is pronounced as 'mb', and so on.

³ I cannot here go into the details of beliefs about poison. It is sufficient to say that I call it poison rather than sorcery-stuff because it is believed that it causes death directly through ingestion by the victim, and poisoning techniques are contrasted with the technique of *nakene*, by which personal exuviae are stolen and hung up over certain pools: the sorcerer mutters an incantation and the pool rises till it engulfs the exuviae, when the owner of the exuviae is stricken and dies also.

Neither of Kapu's examples involves the direct transmission of a dead person's name to a newly-born child, although this also occurs. Instead the names employ *pedo agale*, 'concealed talk'. In one case the name clearly refers to poison, but no-one outside a close circle of kin will know who it is that is suspected of being a poisoner. In the other case the child is called 'Cassowary', since big-men such as the one whom the name commemorates are said to be like cassowaries. (The cassowary is said to resemble men, as it stands up on its two legs in the way men do; conversely, both big-men and handsome young men are spoken of as having fine legs, like those of cassowaries. For parallels cf. Bulmer 1967.)

Another example follows the logic of the 'cassowary' name. Children are sometimes said to resemble in their noses their mother's or father's brother. If this is so, they are either called directly *Timini*, 'nose', or more often *Kaila*, 'hornbill'. The hornbill has a prominent beak (= nose), hence its name is used to refer to the similarity in noses between the child and its senior kinsman. There is further significance in the usage, for the nose is regarded as the seat of anger and also may stand for ability. A big-man can be called *ali timini*, 'nose-man'. Children who take after a kinsman in nose may take after him in ability as well. As one man put it: "The nose of the child follows the spirit (*yomini*, a lexeme also used for 'shadow') of the dead man; that is why we call children by these names."

The bestower of such a name thus expresses his grief for a dead kinsman; he *may* also be asserting that the child will take after the dead person. The statements are oblique. For one thing, the child does not directly receive the dead person's name; and, second, the name he does receive does not explicitly identify its referent. The name for a part, or an aspect, or an action of the dead becomes a proper name for the child, and the name then stands for the dead kinsman. The operation here can be called synecdochal (a part stands for the whole) or metonymical (an attribute is substituted for the whole thing which is meant). I shall call this category of names 'metonymical sorrow-names', or *pentonyms* (Greek *Πένθος* = grief).

As I have mentioned, direct succession-names occur also. Both these and those constructed by metonymy are referred to in Melanesian Pidgin as *senis-nem*, names which 'take the place of' the person who has died. There is a nice ambiguity in this phrase. *Senis* means 'change'. Most often it is applied to a successor: *senis bilong mi* can mean someone who takes on my job after I have gone, or, with a similar

import, 'my son'. Thus, although either the name or the person who bears it has changed, there is 'continuity' involved when a *senis-nem* is used.

In Tunda my survey yielded 74 instances where I obtained the meaning of names.⁴ Table 1 gives a broad division of the meanings into categories; Table 2 illustrates these; and Table 3 indicates the types of relationship between a child who receives a sorrow-name and the dead kinsman to whom his name covertly refers. Also, in Figure 1, I give an example of the naming of a number of children after a single dead big-man.⁵

TABLE 1

		No. of instances
A. Sorrow-names	1. Metonymical sorrow-names	36
	2. Direct succession-names	8
	3. Names referring to defeats and killings in warfare	4
		48 = c. 65%
B. Event-names	4. Names referring to a miscellany of current events	13
	5. Names referring to disputes between the child's father and others	9
		22 = c. 30%
C. Child's appearance-names	6. Names referring to sex, colour, or survival of child	4
		= c. 5%

TABLE 2

A. *Sorrow-names* (excluding 2, which does not require illustration here).

1. *Metonymical names.*

- a. referring to circumstances of burial (5 instances) e.g. *Tata-me* = Leaf + female suffix. The reference is to banana-leaves used to wrap a dead man's body in.

⁴ Most of the names involved belong to the children of the 18 men whom I interviewed specifically on this topic. Others belong to further persons who live in Tunda. A very few are instances of names whose meaning I recorded but which no person in Tunda at present bears.

⁵ Although children address their parents by a kin-term, parents often use their child's personal name in return. In using the name they are covertly referring to a dead kinsman also, if the name is a sorrow-name, although I am not asserting that this is uppermost in their minds *whenever* they use the name.

- b. referring generally to circumstances of death, (3 instances) e.g. *Pika-me* = He lay [dead] + female suffix.
 - c. referring to poisoning, (5 instances) e.g. *Titake* = [They are killing him] for no reason [since he has not poisoned them]; *Temo* = Who [killed him]?
 - d. referring to the bringing back of a body from war, (2 instances) e.g. *Ewa-me* = Litter + female suffix. The dead man was brought home wounded in a litter.
 - e. referring to time taken to die, (1 instance) e.g. *Epete* = He lingered on.
 - f. referring to a wound, (1 instance) e.g. *Pewe* = marsupial-bone arrow tip.
 - g. making a direct statement of sorrow, (4 instances) e.g. *Ei-nu* = Exclamation of grief + -nu; *Ena* = *Enamiki*, i.e. They do not see [those who are now dead].
 - h. referring to a part of the man who died, (6 instances) e.g. *Toape* = calf-muscle; *Pine* = head-hair.
 - i. referring to dead men's actions, status, or decorations, (4 instances), e.g. *Oloi* = Trench [dug by dead man]; *Itame*, from *iti kaka* + -me = He was a big-man; *Kalatu* = Type of bird-feather.
 - j. referring generally to killings (not further analysed), (3 instances).
 - k. calling child by kin-term used by bestower of name to dead person, (1 instance) i.e. *Ata-nu* from *Atai* = Father.
 - l. making a metonymical representation of the name of the dead person, (1 instance) i.e. *Upame*, from *Punupo*, Upame's dead mother's brother. A part of Punupo's name is taken to form the new name, together with a female suffix.
3. *Group-situation names.*
 - a. making a reference to scattering, (2 instances) e.g. *Unuka* = [They are] surrounding [us].
 - b. making a reference to decimation, (2 instances) e.g. *Nate* = [We are a] small [group].

B. *Event-names.*

4. (There are several different categories but none crucial here. An example would be *Aguname*, a female name called after the name of a Female Spirit whose cult was celebrated at the time when the girl who bears the name was born.)
5. *Disagreement-names.*
 - a. referring to exchange payments, (7 instances) e.g. *Waki* = They are not helping me [to raise a bridewealth payment]; *Tugu* = He is refusing to return a gift (from *tuguko*).
 - b. referring to poison-accusations, (2 instances) e.g. *Tolopi* = [They are making] accusations.

C. *Appearance of child etc.*

6. e.g. *Kulue* = dark-skinned; *Mena* = Not [a boy]; *Kida* = Only one to survive.

TABLE 3

Child is given name referring to:	No. of instances
FB or F's co-resident	
cross-cousin	11
FF	3
FFB	2
FFBS	3
Other male co-resident	
group-mates of F	9
F's co-resident	
group-mate's wife	1
MB (immediate and classificatory)	7
	<hr/> 36 <hr/>

Note: Categories A1 and 2 are both included, but amount to only 36, as in 8 cases the names were either abstract instances or ones in which I am unsure of the covert referent.

Tables 1 and 2 show that, in a sense, all the names involved derive from history: it was possible for me to discover particular historical circumstances which explained why each name was chosen. But many of the names also indicate certain values, as well as the feelings of their bestowers. This applies particularly to sorrow-names. Further, the mechanism of creating or choosing metonymical sorrow-names is closely analogous to Lévi-Strauss's concept of detotalization.

Among the Sauk and Osage, names for a span of clansmen are drawn from the names for parts of a totemic creature or complex. In the case of Wiru metonymical sorrow-names, words referring to significant parts or actions of a dead big-man are distributed as names to a narrow span of lineage and other kin.

The actual words chosen as names may be ones which have become common Wiru personal names: thus Toape (in Figure 1). An expression of affection for a person by reference to his calf-muscles is a standard Wiru idiom, and Toape thus becomes a common sorrow-name. Other words may relate to an idiosyncratic action or event: for example Bilawe, a name derived from a flower which grew in a ditch Takuna dug before his death. In this way, the total Wiru name-pool is con-

FIGURE 1

Notes: All the children italicised were named after Takuna, as follows: *Atai* = Father, cf. Table 2, A. 1, k. *Tibu* = a reference to the fact that Takuna's bones were not taken in the traditional manner to be placed in a shrine, since Missions were forbidding this. *Auka* = a reference to poisoning accusations. *Toape* = calf-muscle, a reference to Takuna's legs as a focus for admiration and affection. If a girl is very fond of someone, she may say that when he leaves her she will bite at his calf-muscles in sorrow. *Bilawe* = name of a flower growing in a trench dug by Takuna before he died. *Oloi* = trench, a reference to the same trench as the name Bilawe refers to. *Tatame*, cf. Table 2, A. 1, a.

stantly added to, although it is likely that some names do not last for longer than the life of their initial bearer. The same occurs through the addition of new event-names. A new name can also be directly transmitted as a succession-name after its first holder dies.

The choice of standard idioms and words for the creation of sorrow-names would tend to produce a duplication of names between persons; whereas the choice of idiosyncratic names with a cryptophoric meaning tends in the opposite direction. Again, males and females may have the same names, although there is a substantial range of names which appear to be sex-linked; and female names are sometimes the same as male ones, with the suffix-ame or-me added. The outcome of these factors is that in practice there is a moderate degree of duplication. Within one group in Tunda village in 1967, Widi peti, 9 out of a total of 78 persons had names that were not unique in the group; within another, Leonopeti, which has 72 members, there were 10 persons whose names were shared in this way. In all but one case the duplication did not extend beyond a pair of persons. The average degree of duplication within each of these groups was thus slightly less than 13 %.

(My figures exclude in-married wives. If these were included, the percentage of overlap would probably rise. I exclude them because I have *included* as many living out-married sisters of the group as I have records for. Again, if deceased ex-contemporaries of living group-members were counted, the figures would rise; but many of these died before current young children were born, and it seems best to take a sample of living persons.)

Table 1 also suggests an overall prevalence of metonymy as a means of creating names. As a statistical figure, this result of my survey may be misleading. Many of the names which I surveyed belonged not to adults, but to children who were born after warfare had been stopped. Following pacification, fears have grown among the Wiru that groups are gaining revenge for deaths inflicted in warfare by an increase in poisoning activities. A suspicion of poisoning is best referred to obliquely, in order not to draw attention to the likelihood that counter-measures are being taken; and this may help to explain the prevalence of metonymical sorrow-names in Table 1, for these names conceal their precise meaning from all but the bestower and his close relatives.

I distinguish between the bestower of a name, its current bearer, its covert lexical reference (i.e. its derivation from some common noun or verb), and its covert referent (or previous bearer, in the case of direct succession-names). Looking at Table 3, we see that close patrilineal kin predominate as covert referents of sorrow-names. Moreover, all but one of the covert referents are male, although the current bearers of the names may be either male or female. Only one dead female, and she the wife of a big-man, is chosen as a focus for the production of a sorrow-name. This absence of females may simply be an artefact of the limited number of the cases I investigated. However, it is a child's father who most regularly bestows a name upon it, and it is largely his previously co-resident, but now dead, kinsmen whom he wishes to commemorate. Furthermore, it is a man's male co-residents whose death he wishes to avenge and which he therefore marks in his child's name. Responsibility for avenging the death of an in-married wife belongs to her own close natal kin. However, this would lead us to suppose that the deaths of sisters or fathers' sisters would sometimes be commemorated. The fact is that it is men who are considered to be the main targets of poisoning, since it is they who are chiefly involved in rivalries and who were the warriors in the past. Hence it is most often their deaths which are attributed to poisoning and which therefore require to be avenged.

Figure 1 shows that a number of related children may be given names which all have a single dead kinsman as their covert referent. The genealogy in this figure has been simplified. Wives, and children not named after the big-man Takuna are omitted. Takuna's lineage-mates in fact have 13 children in all, so that about half bear sorrow-names referring to him; while Yodi, his brother-in-law, who is about the same age as Tami, has named only one of his seven children in this way. Takuna died in about 1960, and many of the children in question were born *before* his death, so it is safe to suggest that a considerable proportion of his close kinsfolk's children who were born *after* his death were named in covert reference to him. (The Wiru do not adopt new names following a death, as, e.g., the Kove of New Britain do — Chowning n.d.)

The children so named may not all realize the significance of their names. By the time they grow up, the covert referent's death may have been declared avenged, and their parents may not tell them why their names were chosen. On the other hand, it is just as likely that they will know, and that this will remind them of the past importance of the big-man. In any case the meanings are known to their senior kin; and the use of teknonyms among the Wiru perhaps serves to remind these senior kin of their dead relative.

Teknonyms are very frequently used between consanguineal kinsfolk, although there are no direct taboos on these using ordinary personal names to each other. It may be remembered that Wiru villages contain intermarrying groups; and, whereas consanguines can use personal names, there are several categories of affines who may not address or refer to each other in this way. The ban on personal names traditionally holds even between husband and wife. My informant Kapu's explanation of this was that husband and wife have a sexual relationship and hence are ashamed to speak each other's name; and that because these two have sexual intercourse other categories of affines should not use personal names either. Kapu's explanation is a little elliptical here, for he does not directly say what it means to use a personal name, but we can interpret it as follows: Kapu implies that if there was not a sexual relationship involved, it would be possible to use names; and in fact it is possible to do so between consanguines (who may not have a sexual relationship). Essentially, then, the taboo marks a difference between consanguines and affines. This is not an explanation of why *names* are chosen to express this difference; it merely states a structural fit for the naming usages. There are further ramifications of this problem;

for instance, why is the taboo extended to husband and wife among the Wiru? The major correlate seems to be the importance of payments to matrilineal kin (cf. Strathern 1968), but I cannot discuss the logical and sociological issues fully here.

The most stringent prohibition on names holds between a man and his mother-in-law, and should the son-in-law break it he must pay a fine of pigs and shell valuables, 'to relieve his shame'.⁶ A man must not even hear an in-law's name spoken in his presence. In these circumstances the use of teknonyms forestalls dangers of breaking affinal taboos. Moreover, teknonyms neutralise the contrast between consanguinity and affinity by converting all relationships into the former (cf. Benjamin 1968: 127).⁷ Brothers-in-law, for example, can address each other teknonymically, thus stressing the fact that they are fathers of children who are consanguineally related to them both.

I am suggesting two functions, then, for teknonyms. The first is a general one and does not depend on the internal semantics of names: teknonyms state that a child is an important link between affines. The second function is specific to sorrow-names: these make a covert statement about someone who is dead and is a link between a set of consanguineal kinsmen. The bestower of the sorrow-name expresses his relationship to a dead person through his child's name, and the use of the child's name as a teknonym continues to remind him of his dead kinsman — and perhaps of the necessity to avenge his death. The oblique nature of the reference in the name ensures that the

⁶ These taboos are reminiscent of those which Ryan (1958) describes for the Mendi. A Wiru man is also forbidden to see his mother-in-law's head uncovered. Connected with this is the fact that if a man hears a forbidden name of an in-law, he puts his hand on the top of his head and says *aūwe*, to indicate the shame he is expected to feel in such a circumstance. The word *aūwe* is used to encompass the term for mother-in-law, the rule forbidding a man to see his mother-in-law's head, and the general class of those affines whose names he may not speak or hear. Since the Wiru explain these taboos in terms of sexual relations between husband and wife, and since the mother-in-law's uncovered head seems to stand as a symbol for the shame felt if one hears the forbidden names, it is tempting to suggest an equation here between the mother-in-law's head and female genitals, following Leach in his essay on *Magical Hair* (Leach 1958).

⁷ In Mount Hagen, among the Melpa-speakers (Western Highlands District, T.P.N.G.) father-in-law and mother-in-law may be addressed as *kouwa* and *ape*, which are also the address terms for grandparents. We may suggest that this usage is another instance of an underemphasis on affinity, achieved through an equation between a man and his children, for the senior in-laws are grandparents to a man's children. Dr Marie Reay has observed similar usages among the Kuma, eastern neighbours of the Melpa-speakers.

statement is not too obvious to those who might be offended or threatened by it.⁸

Finally, it is significant that sorrow-names often focus on the death of a local leader or big-man. Other examples besides the one I give in Figure 1 suggest that the death of a big-man precipitates a greater proliferation of penonyms than the death of someone less important. This was especially likely in the past if the big-man died dramatically in warfare. A big-man gathers a small number of men about him as

⁸ There are further aspects of Wiru names which I have not managed to integrate into the discussion here. One comparative point is that persons sometimes have a first-given and an alternate name; and the alternates are in a regular relationship to the first-given names. There is often, in fact, semantic word-play between the two, as Franklin (1967) reports for the Kewa, neighbours of the Wiru; although the Wiru do not restrict the use of these alternate forms to direct conversation between affines. One can see, however, that their use helps to avoid the pronouncement of a name in the hearing of someone who is forbidden to speak or hear it. An example of the usage is that the ordinary name Kaila, = hornbill, has as its alternate, Ini, = bird. (Kaila can itself be a second name — as distinct from the alternate form of a name — given to a child by his maternal kin. Paternal and maternal relatives thus sometimes use different names for a child and continue this usage when he grows up).

In Mount Hagen there are similar affinal usages to those of the Kewa. A male Melpa-speaker must not address or refer to his senior in-laws by any personal name; must address and refer to anyone who bears the same personal name as these in-laws by an alternate name-form; and if their names coincide with common nouns denoting classes of things, he must use an alternate form for these common nouns also. Thus someone whose mother-in-law is called Kin, = pearl shell, must avoid this word and refer to all shells by the alternate form (which others also can use), Mande. Kin is known as the outside, ordinary, or true name for pearl shell (*mbi ingk*), Mande as the inside name (*mbi rukrung*). Franklin, in his article on Kewa names, suggests that word taboos of this kind should be taken into account by linguists when they are computing lexical cognates (Franklin 1967: 80). To put this point another way, we may suggest that such a system of affinal usages can be looked on as a spur to the proliferation of synonyms for a large number of lexemes. It is possible also that the synonyms are drawn from the usages of neighbouring dialect areas, and this could help to explain patterns of word-borrowing between languages and dialects of the same language. Analogous mechanisms may have been at work between the Wiru and their neighbours, the Kewa and Imbonggu. Thus, there is a Wiru name Kodo, whose meaning is given as 'Sorrow'. The ordinary Wiru word for sorrow is *ela*. Kodo is clearly cognate with an ordinary word in the Hagen language, to which Imbonggu is closely related, also meaning 'sorrow'. Perhaps the term found its way into Wiru first as a proper name as an alternate form for a name *Ela*, and was taken into Wiru speech as a common noun also. If this were so, it would be a parallel to the 'pumping' of words back and forth between the realm of common nouns and proper names which Lévi-Strauss (1962: 279) discusses for the Tiwi.

his close supporters in ceremonial exchange activities, and it is largely these men who name their children after him if he dies before them; so that the span of metonymical sorrow-names at least partly reflects the span of the big-man's close support-group. The co-operation which he induces may not outlast his own lifetime. Children named after him may call *their* children in turn by a different big-man who has become prominent. Sets of sorrow-names thus focus and re-focus on the big-men who are leaders of small support-groups within each village. The disappearance, re-creation, and re-application of idiosyncratic sorrow-names mirror these shifts in leadership through the generations.

To sum up: Wiru personal names can be seen as falling into two broad categories, sorrow-names and other event-names. All Wiru names in a sense refer us to history, as they relate (unless they are said to be given 'for no reason', which can occur) to some historical event: a big-man's death, a quarrel, the planting of a garden, the death of previous children, the performance of a religious cult, and so on. But sorrow-names tell us more than this: they reveal the emotions of grief and suspicion which follow a death; they fit with the aim of avenging deaths thought to have resulted from poisoning; used teknonymically, they remind those who have 'inside knowledge' what their message is; and their distribution parallels the gathering and dissolution of leaders' support-groups. They present to us a compact account of both history and system.

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