

KAVA-DRINKING IN SOUTHERN VANUATU: MELANESIAN DRINKERS, POLYNESIAN ROOTS

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This paper examines a set of Polynesian loan words in the non-Polynesian languages of the Tafea Province of Vanuatu which relate to the preparation and drinking of kava (*Piper methysticum*). I will show that, although there is evidence that people in this area drank a kava-like substance before Polynesian contact, it was speakers of the Polynesian Outlier language Futuna-Aniwa who introduced not only the kava plant and the drink derived from it to their Melanesian neighbours, but also certain techniques of kava-preparation and certain social behaviours relating to the drinking of kava. A comparison is drawn with Pohnpei where, although kava also seems to derive from a Polynesian source, the Polynesian contribution to the lexicon of kava-preparation and kava-drinking appears to be restricted to the name of the plant and the drink, suggesting that either the plant was not introduced from Polynesia, or that a similar substance was drunk there, with some ceremony, before Polynesian contact.¹

LANGUAGE CONTACT IN TAFEA

Crowley (1994) has described the languages of Erromango, Tanna and Aneityum as being "well known for their tortured phonological histories".² Whilst I feel that the adjective "tortured" is perhaps a little excessive, nevertheless the nature of phonological developments in the Southern Vanuatu languages does make it easier to identify loan words than is the case in many other parts of the Pacific.

Among the processes which distinguish Southern Vanuatu phonological histories are loss of pretonic and word-final Proto Oceanic vowels, initial accretions of *n* + vowel to many nouns and of a vowel to many verbs, as well as numerous, often unusual, changes in Proto Oceanic vowels and consonants. Thus a directly inherited Proto Oceanic word which develops regularly in a Southern Vanuatu language is formally quite different from a cognate in a Polynesian language. This is illustrated in the words in (1) below, where I have marked the occurrence of primary stress in the Proto Oceanic forms to illustrate pretonic vowel loss; Anejom̄ represents the Southern Vanuatu languages, while the slash (/) marks off accreted material from the root.

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(1) Proto Oceanic	Anejoñ	Futuna-Aniwa	
* <i>taliŋá-ña</i>	<i>in/tijga-n</i>	<i>tariga</i>	“(his/her) ear”
* <i>púti</i>	<i>no/hos</i>	<i>fushi</i>	“banana”
* <i>qupi</i>	<i>n/u</i>	<i>ufi</i>	“yam”
* <i>maqúrip</i>	<i>u/mu</i>	<i>mauri</i>	“alive”
* <i>tólu</i>	<i>e/sej</i>	<i>toru</i>	“three”

So when one examines words like those in (2), one can be reasonably confident that the Southern Vanuatu form is indirectly inherited, having been copied from a Polynesian source.³ The “expected” forms in (2) are those which would have occurred if the word was directly inherited and normal phonological rules had applied.

(2) Proto Oceanic	actual	Anejoñ	expected	Futuna-Aniwa	
* <i>kiajo</i>	<i>na/kiato</i>		<i>nacet</i>	<i>kiato</i>	“outrigger-boom”
* <i>koro</i>	<i>no/koro</i>		<i>necer</i>	<i>koro</i>	“enclosed residence”
* <i>waga</i>	<i>ti/vaka/ti/vaka</i>		<i>navac</i>	<i>vaka</i>	“canoe” ⁴

There has been considerable contact between the Polynesian and non-Polynesian societies of Tafea. Two recent studies, for example, document the adoption of a moiety system by Tanna societies from Futuna-Aniwa, and the subsequent copying of names for those moieties by Futuna-Aniwa from Tanna (Lynch and Fakamura 1994), and the quite heavy copying of maritime terms by all the Southern Vanuatu languages from Futuna-Aniwa (Lynch 1994). The pan-Southern Vanuatu word for “dog”, *kuri*, clearly has a Polynesian source; on the other hand, Futuna-Aniwa *pakasi* “pig” seems to be copied from one of the Southern Vanuatu languages (Sie *nompcahi*, Lenakel *pukas*, Kwamera *pukah*, Anejoñ *pikad*) and does not reflect Proto Polynesian **puaka*. Terms for varieties of breadfruit, taro and yam seem to have crossed the sea in both directions — along, presumably, with the plants to which they refer.

An assessment of the degree of language contact in Tafea shows that, while copying has definitely been a two-way process, the languages and societies of Erromango and particularly Tanna and Aneityum seem to have copied more heavily from Futuna-Aniwa than Futuna-Aniwa has from them. Kava and kava-drinking is one semantic field which shows this clearly.⁵

THE ORIGIN OF KAVA

Piper methysticum is believed to have originated in northern Vanuatu. The northern islands of Vanuatu — possibly further narrowed down to the island of Maewo — are probably the likely location of initial kava-domestication:

Vanuatu is the center of origin of kava cultivars. *Piper methysticum* exhibits its highest degree of diversification in this archipelago. ... It is possible that all kava cultivars trace back to a single ancestral plant somewhere in northern Vanuatu ... From northern Vanuatu, kava clones spread disjunctively throughout the Pacific Islands, carried by a flux of back migrations, accidental canoe drift voyages, and intentional exchanges of plant material. (Lebot, Merlin and Lindstrom 1992:51-3).

Clark (n.d.) reconstructs Proto North Central Vanuatu **maloku* with the meaning “kava”, and Crowley (1994) gives numerous examples of reflexes of this form. He also points to an apparent cognate in Fijian with the meaning “quiet, subdued” (the actual form, not given in Crowley’s paper, being *māloku*). Given the way in which kava is drunk in Vanuatu, where one is expected to sit quietly and “listen” to the kava (see below), the Fijian form is formally cognate with the Proto North Central Vanuatu form, with an explicable semantic shift.

Kava was probably exported from North-Central Vanuatu to Fiji, where it is known as *yaqona* (from Proto Oceanic **kona* “bitter”), and from there to Polynesia, where it acquired the name **kawa* (possibly an original form also meaning “sour, bitter”). However, although there is strong linguistic evidence for the antiquity of kava in northern and central Vanuatu, such evidence does not exist in the south (Crowley 1994:95).

TERMS FOR KAVA IN TAFEA

Now the forms with the meaning “kava” in the Tafea languages are not derived from **maloku*. The forms are:

(3) Sie *nacave*

Lenakel, Southwest Tanna, Whitesands, Kwamera *nikava*

North Tanna *nika*

Anejom̄ *kava*

Futuna *kava*

On the basis of the evidence from these languages, Crowley (1994:95-96) suggests

that kava may not have been present in southern Vanuatu even while it was present in the north, and that it was introduced much later via back migrations

from Polynesia, and that the Polynesian words for kava were borrowed into these languages relatively recently. ...

Huffman (pers.comm.) and Lebot (1989:93-94) report that oral tradition in the southern islands of Vanuatu points to Futuna representing the source of kava in these islands, with Tonga and Samoa representing the islands of origin further to the east. If this is in fact the case, it could be that kava was introduced into the southern islands of Vanuatu when the ancestors of the present-day speakers of Aniwa-Futunan [sic] — themselves already kava-drinkers — arrived from the east.

It thus appears reasonable to conclude that the term *kava* — and the plant and drink to which it refers — was introduced into the languages and societies of Southern Vanuatu from Futuna.

Many named varieties of *Piper methysticum* in Southern Vanuatu languages are simply compounds involving the base “kava”. In Anejom̄, for example, we find *kava-apeñ* (dark in colour, < *apeñ* “dark”), *kava-cai* (tough, < *incai* “tree”) and *kava-mesei* (dry, < *mesei* “dry”), though some varieties are compounds of other roots, like *nidi-noholai* (lit. “liquid of rudderfish (*Kyphosis cinerascens*)”). Lenakel *nikavakava* “k.o. kava with dark branches, not often drunk” and Kwamera *nikovakava* “k.o. kava with strong root fibres” obviously involve reduplication.

However, there is one variety of kava grown in Tanna which does appear to have a Polynesian origin:

(4) Lenakel *tipuga* “k.o. kava presented to a chief after a fight”

Kwamera *tapuga* “k.o. kava artificially sprouted at an upper node of a planted cutting”

Compare these forms with Futuna *tapuga* “k.o. kava ‘only consumed by men of chiefly rank, long roots, tall stems’ (Lebot and Cabalion 1988:66)”.

Now Tannese oral tradition, as was mentioned above, suggests not only that Futuna was the source of “true” kava, but also that before its introduction people drank “wild kava” (Lebot and Cabalion 1988:71). The botanical evidence appears to be as follows:

Piper methysticum Forst., like most cultivated plants, is a derived form of a fertile wild species. It bears a great resemblance to the *Macropipe[r] latifolium* Forst./*Piper wichmannii* C.DC. species. This ‘wild kava’ has a very similar morphology and grows wild in many areas of Vanuatu.

... [Footnote: It is now certain that *Piper wichmannii* C.DC., not *Macropiper latifolium* Forst., is the ancestor of kava.]

Kava’s mythical origins on Tanna and Pentecost are of particular interest because they refer to [*Solanum aviculare*, an introduced species] as being the descendant of a ‘wild kava’, which could be *Piper wichmannii* C.DC., and as the raw material for the preparation of a drink. (Lebot and Cabalion 1988:10).

Brunton says of *Piper wichmannii* that

the roots are more fibrous [than those of *Piper methysticum*], the taste is very bitter and unpleasant, and the effect is one of pronounced nausea. Nevertheless, in some parts of Pentecost, when there is insufficient kava for a large feast, people may fetch some *Piper wichmannii*, which is known as 'wild kava', from the bush and mix it in as a stretcher. ...

Pierre Cabalion has told me that, according to the botanist David Frodin, the people in the Nomad area of Papua make kava from *Piper wichmannii* ... [and] mix the ash of a palm with the kava to make it less bitter and more palatable. (Brunton 1989:32-33).

So *Piper wichmannii* is drinkable (if only just!), and it appears that there was a kind of intoxicating drink made from this plant before the introduction of "true kava" to Southern Vanuatu societies. The linguistic evidence would support this view: the terms for *Piper wichmannii* in the non-Polynesian languages of Southern Vanuatu are quite clearly indigenous rather than copied from the Futuna compound *kava tua* "wild kava":

(5) Sie	(u)lompumpam
Lenakel	nakivam
Kwamera	nikeghup
Anejom̄	nouhaḗ

These terms are indigenous and, apart from the non-cognate Kwamera form, suggest an earlier form something like *IVpam[pam].⁶

OTHER TERMS ASSOCIATED WITH KAVA

But it is not just the term *kava* which has been copied into Southern Vanuatu languages from Futuna. There is evidence that Polynesians not only introduced the plant and the drink, but a whole set of other socio-cultural phenomena associated with kava-drinking.

Kava Bowls

The traditional preparation of kava in Tanna is described as follows by Brunton, and similar statements could be made about Erromango and Aneityum:

Kava was prepared in a *niko*, a wooden, canoe-shaped bowl about half a metre long. The root was broken up into pieces which were cleaned with a wad of coconut husk. Men and youths would then bite off portions, which they would chew for a few minutes until the kava was completely macerated, when it would be disgorged into the *niko*. ...

When there was sufficient kava in the *niko*, water from a flask (*uipil*) made from a hollowed-out coconut was poured over it. ... A strainer (*nivhau*), made from the stem of a banana, was then placed into the bowl. This absorbed the liquid, at the same time excluding most of the solid matter. [Footnote: Gray,

who appears to have been a reasonably careful observer, states that cordage fibre was used (1892:661).] The contents of the stem were poured into a cup made by gathering up the sides of a fresh banana leaf, and the kava was drunk through a piece of wild cane from which the pith had been removed. (Brunton 1989:97).

The Lenakel term *niko*, which refers to the canoe-shaped kava bowl, is the term for “canoe” and also “moiety”; cognate terms for “canoe, moiety or other social division” in other languages are Sie *lou*, and Anejomĩ *nelcau*. Kwamera *inteta* has the same semantic range, though it is not formally cognate. The canoe-shaped kava bowl is referred to as *lou* in Sie, and by a compound involving “canoe” in Anejomĩ (*nelcau-tan*). None of these terms is of Futuna origin. Sie *lou*, Lenakel *niko* and Anejomĩ *nelcau* derive from a Proto Southern Vanuatu form something like **na-layau*, which is not related to Proto Oceanic **waga* “canoe”.

There is, however, one kind of kava bowl which is known in Kwamera as *taporoka*. This appears to derive from Futuna *poruku* “kind of canoe” with the Futuna article *ta* prefixed.

Kava Strainers

In various parts of the kava-drinking Pacific, strainers, which are used to separate the solid matter from the liquid kava, are made of a variety of substances, among the more common being the bark of *Hibiscus tiliaceus* and the fibrous leaf sheath of the coconut. The following terms are found in Southern Vanuatu languages referring to the coconut leaf sheath and/or to kava strainers:

- | | | |
|-------------|---------------|---|
| (6) Sie | <i>nugat</i> | “coconut fibrous leaf sheath” |
| Lenakel | <i>nigis</i> | “coconut fibrous leaf sheath” |
| Kwamera | <i>nenha</i> | “coconut fibrous leaf sheath (used to strain kava)” |
| Anejomĩ | <i>nenes</i> | “coconut fibrous leaf sheath” |
| (7) Lenakel | <i>nivhau</i> | “k.o. kava strainer” |
| Kwamera | <i>nafáu</i> | “kava-bowl (shaped like a canoe)” |
| Anejomĩ | <i>nafau</i> | “kava-strainer” |

The forms in (6) are related, and probably derive from a Proto Southern Vanuatu form **na-(nŋ)ati* “coconut fibrous leaf sheath”. On the other hand, the Lenakel and Anejomĩ forms for a kava-**strainer** in (7) (a) appear to be formally very similar to the Kwamera word for a kava-**bowl**: Kwamera *nafáu* means “kava bowl (shaped like a canoe)”, and (b) probably derive from a Futuna source. (There may have been a semantic shift in Kwamera, with *nafáu* changing in meaning from the strainer to the bowl in which the strainer was placed.)

There are two possible Futuna sources for these forms:

(8) *fao* “coconut branch”

fau “hibiscus tiliaceus” < Proto Oceanic **paRU*

The regular development of Proto Oceanic **paRU* “hibiscus (tiliaceus)” in Southern Vanuatu languages is as follows:

(9) Proto Oceanic	* <i>paRU</i>
Sie	(<i>o</i>) <i>ren/vau</i>
Lenakel	<i>nu/vo</i>
Kwamera	<i>ne/vo</i>
Anejom̄	<i>in/hau</i>

So the terms for strainer in (7) could be copied from Futuna *fau* “hibiscus tiliaceus”.

On the other hand, the terms in (7) could derive from Futuna *fao* “coconut branch”, as it is the fibre from this branch which is, or was, used to strain kava on Futuna (Seru Kuautoga pers. comm.).⁷ Intramorphemic *ao* sequences are not permitted in Tanna languages, so both *fau* and *fao* would be copied as -*fau* or -*vhau* (Lenakel *v* + *h* coalesce as [ϕ]). However, Anejom̄ does permit intramorphemic *ao* sequences, so at first glance the Anejom̄ form suggests *fau* “hibiscus tiliaceus” as the source. However, there is a word *nafao* in Anejom̄, meaning “k.o. shellfish (*Pleuroploca trapezium*); vagina”. It is possible that Futuna *fao* is the source of the Anejom̄ and Tanna forms, and that Anejom̄ has changed the pronunciation to *nafau* to avoid the homophony with *nafao*.⁸

If the Tanna and Anejom̄ forms are copied from Futuna *fau* “hibiscus tiliaceus”, then presumably the bark of this tree must have been used at some time in the past to strain kava, though this practice is rare today. If, on the other hand, they derive from Futuna *fao* “coconut branch”, then we have to explain why this term was taken into Southern Vanuatu languages when there was an already existing word for the fibrous material found on this branch (Proto Southern Vanuatu **na-(nŋ)ati*). One possible explanation is that there has been a multiple semantic shift in Futuna *fao*, from “coconut branch”, through “fibrous substance on coconut branch, used as a kava-strainer”, to “kava-strainer (material unspecified)”.

Chewed Residue

The residue of chewed kava is known by the following terms (a hyphen indicating direct possession):

(10) Sie	<i>name-</i>
Lenakel	<i>napur</i>

Kwamera *nipwar, nipware-*
 Anejom̄ *nuwuhu-*

These are not related to the Futuna term *ta* (which may derive from *tae* “excrement”). However, the terms in (10) are not specific to kava: they can also refer to the remains of chewed sugarcane, grated coconut, or anything else from which the liquid or juice is extracted. Thus although kava-chewing may have been introduced to Southern Vanuatu from Futuna, there was no need for a specific term meaning “chewed kava residue” to be copied from a Polynesian source.

Ritual Spitting on Tanna

There is a custom in Tanna, but much less common in Erromango and Aneityum, which is described as follows:

On Tanna, men make *timavha* with their last mouthful of kava, spitting a broad spray into the air, then uttering a statement or invocation to the spirits. (Brunton 1989:72).

Lenakel *timavha* corresponds to Kwamera *tamafa*, which Lindstrom (1986:128) defines as:

prayer, communication with ancestors which consists of spitting out one’s last mouthful of kava and softly uttering commands, prayers, wishes, orders, etc. to surrounding ancestors present at the kava-drinking ground.

These terms derive from Futuna *taumafa*, defined by Capell (1960:44) as “sacrifice, offering”. He goes on to say:

Sacrifice (*taumafa*) of several types was in use: 1. Libations of *kava* at the beginning of the kava-drinking and on occasions of thanksgiving for successful fishing.

In Futuna, the first mouthful of kava was spat out, and men called on the spirits, then drank the rest (Capell 1960:57).

The Futuna term itself is a reflex of Proto Polynesian **taumafa* “ceremonial food, firstfruits offering”. The chiefly kava ceremony in Tonga is called *taumafa kava* (Lebot, Merlin and Lindstrom 1992:153), *taumafa* being the kingly word for “eat” (replacing *kai*).

The Aftermath

Polynesian influence extends to the vocabulary used to refer to various activities or experiences following the drinking of kava. Brunton says that once kava has been drunk,

the drinker then discarded his banana-leaf cup and took his share of *nahunu* [food which men eat after drinking kava, and which cannot be taken back to the hamlets]. He would not have eaten for some hours, as Tannese assert that otherwise the effect of kava is reduced. ...

The men would ... sit for an hour or more, experiencing the effects of the drink, 'listening to the kava', as the Tannese say. (Brunton 1989:100).

The verb "to eat food after kava" in Southern Vanuatu languages is given in the first column in (11) below, and the derived noun in the second column:

(11) Sie	<i>ovunu</i>	<i>novunu</i>
Lenakel	<i>ahunu</i>	<i>nahunu</i>
Kwamera	<i>afunu</i>	<i>nafunu</i>
Anejom̄	<i>ofono</i>	<i>nofono</i>

This appears to be copied from Futuna *fono*,⁹ defined by Dougherty (1983) as "food customarily eaten after drinking *kava*; to eat in the traditional manner after drinking *kava*".

There is a Proto Polynesian reconstruction **fono* "food served with kava" with reflexes in Tahitian, Tuamotuan, and Tikopia, as well as Rotuman (Ray Harlow pers. comm.). Dougherty suggests that this term may derive from Proto Polynesian **fono* "deliberative assembly". The connection with the notion of a group of men sitting down at the end of the day discussing village matters over a bowl of kava is superficially plausible. However, in Southern Vanuatu men tended to talk while the kava was being prepared, but not after kava had been drunk — at least, not in any serious manner — whereas the terms in (11) refer specifically to food eaten after kava has been drunk. Thus while these terms do have a Polynesian source, I am a little wary about accepting Dougherty's suggestion that they ultimately derive from Proto Polynesian **fono*.

As to the effects of kava, Sie, Anejom̄ and Futuna have directly inherited reflexes of Proto Oceanic **kona* "drunk, intoxicated, poisoned, bitter", Anejom̄ having a transitive and intransitive pair:¹⁰

(12) Sie	<i>acan</i>	"bitter"
Anejom̄	<i>acen</i>	"sour, poisonous, salty"
	<i>ecnii</i>	"(kava+) make (someone) drunk"
Futuna	<i>kona</i>	"to be drunk, poisoned; bitter, acid, unpalatable, poisonous"

Sie has the form *emlu* to describe intoxication, which is probably cognate with Proto North-Central Vanuatu **maloku* "kava" (see above). Tanna languages, however, have two separate terms, the semantic difference between them being unclear to me:

(13) Lenakel	<i>akona</i>	"be poisoned or drunk such that one's mind is affected"
	<i>apus</i>	"drunk, intoxicated"
Kwamera	<i>akona</i>	"poisoned, drunk, unconscious"
	<i>apus</i>	"rest; intoxicated, drunk"

The second term in each of these languages is not copied; Lenakel and Kwamera *apus* may be related to Lenakel *ipus* “(knife+) blunt, (fire+) extinguished”. However, the first term in both languages (*akona*) is clearly of Polynesian origin.

The connection between bitterness, poison and intoxication or temporary mental imbalance caused by drinking kava is fairly obvious, and it would seem that the non-copied forms probably referred to bitterness, to poisoning from fish or other substances, and possibly also to the effects of drinking *Piper wichmannii*. In Tanna, the forms deriving from Futuna *kona* may thus have specifically referred, at least initially, to the taste and the effects of *Piper methysticum*.

KAVA TERMS IN TAFEA: SUMMARY

Polynesian influence on the drinking of kava seems to have been particularly strong in Tanna, weakest in Erromango. This itself is consistent with other copying patterns in Tafea — and, of course, with geography, as Aniwa is very close to Tanna, and Futuna is much closer to Tanna and Aneityum than it is to Erromango. The data presented earlier are summarised in Table 1; the glosses next to the Futuna terms are intended as summaries of the meanings of these terms in Southern Vanuatu languages.

Table 1: Polynesian Terms in Southern Vanuatu

Futuna	Sie	Lenakel	Kwamera	Anejorñ
<i>kava</i> ‘kava’	yes	yes	yes	yes
<i>tapuga</i> ‘k.o. kava’		yes	yes	
<i>poruku</i> ‘k.o. bowl’			yes	
<i>fao</i> ‘strainer’		yes	yes	yes
<i>taumafa</i> ‘spitting’		yes	yes	
<i>fono</i> ‘food’	yes	yes	yes	yes
<i>kona</i> ‘drunk’		yes	yes	

KAVA IN POHNPEI

It is interesting in this regard to look at another non-Polynesian society into which kava is also believed to have been introduced from a Polynesian source.

Geraghty (pers.comm.) reports that the Ponapean word *sakau* and the Kosraean *suhka* represent fairly old borrowings from Polynesian **ta kawa*, suggesting a Polynesian rather than a Melanesian origin for kava in Micronesia. (Crowley 1994:95).

And Ken Rehg (pers. comm.) informs me that *sakau* could indeed be derived regularly from Proto Polynesian **te kawa* "the kava".

In addition to meaning "kava", Ponapean *sakau* now also means "any intoxicating beverage; to be drunk or intoxicated". There is also the related term *wen-sakau* "dried kava after the extraction of the juice" (cf. *ering* "ripe coconut", *wen-ering* "dried coconut meat after extraction of oil").

I do not have access at this time to Lee's Kosraean dictionary.¹¹ However, a perusal of Ponapean lexical items related to kava-drinking (Rehg and Sohl 1979) shows apparently no other Polynesian influence in this area of cultural behaviour. The following words, for example, do not appear to owe anything to Polynesian influence:¹²

- (13) *ahmwadang* "food or kava served prior to a formal meal or kava ceremony"
ihn "quantity of kava placed in hibiscus bast"
keleu "Hibiscus tiliaceus, the inner bark of which is used as a bast in the preparation of kava" (also *kolou*)
kemenseng "a kava planting, or area where kava is planted"
litepw "initial effects of kava or alcohol"
wengkid "completely extract all the juices from a batch of kava"
wenglopwon "squeeze kava"
wengmad "squeeze kava"
wengpoar "of kava, to be processed for drinking for the last time"

Now there is another term for kava in Ponapean, *kalaidong*, which Rehg and Sohl label "archaic". If indeed *sakau* was a Polynesian introduction, then *kalaidong* might possibly refer to some other *Piper* species which was drunk prior to Polynesian contact.¹³ However, *kalaidong* (whatever it was) presumably must have been drunk on a fairly regular basis, and with a certain amount of accompanying ritual, since only if this were the case could we explain the wealth of indigenous, non-Polynesian terminology associated with kava-drinking. In Southern Vanuatu, on the other hand, "wild kava" may have been drunk rather less frequently, and with much less accompanying ritual; otherwise one would expect a far greater range of non-copied vocabulary associated with kava-drinking.

DISCUSSION

Before Polynesian contact, the Melanesians of Southern Vanuatu obviously knew “wild kava” (*Piper wichmannii*), and presumably drank it, at least occasionally. However, it would appear that the drinking of “wild kava” was not a particularly common pursuit — doubtless because of the taste and the nauseating effects if for no other reason! — and was carried out in a fairly unritualistic manner.

When they were introduced to *Piper methysticum* by speakers of a Polynesian language, they took over not just the plant, the drink, and the term for these, but a whole complex of technology and behaviour: mixing bowls and strainers; spitting and incantations; and special food to be eaten after kava. Some of them also copied words to describe the after-effects, which presumably must have been different enough from previous experiences to require a new word. Elements of *Piper wichmannii*-drinking remain, but they are overshadowed by Polynesian elements.

NOTES

1. I am grateful to Terry Crowley, Ray Harlow, Ture Kailo, Monty Lindstrom, Jean-Pierre Nirua, Ken Rehg, Malcolm Ross and an anonymous reader for comments on an earlier version of this paper.
2. The languages of these three islands belong to the Southern Vanuatu subgroup of Oceanic. I will use the terms “Southern Vanuatu” to refer to the (non-Polynesian) languages of this subgroup, and “Tafea” to refer to the (languages of the) Province as a whole, including the Polynesian Outlier islands of Futuna and Aniwa.
In Tafea languages, orthographic *c* = /ɣ/, *d* = /θ/, *g* = /ŋ/, *m̄* = /mw/, *p̄* = /pw/, while *i* is a high to mid central vowel. Published sources of data on Tafea languages include Capell (1960, 1984) and Dougherty (1983) for Futuna-Aniwa; Capell and Lynch (1983) for Sie, Erromango; and, on Tanna languages, Lindstrom (1986) for Kwamera and Lynch (1977) for Lenakel. Data from other Tanna languages and from Anejoṁ are from my own field notes; Edward Nalial supplied additional data from Sie, and Sero Kuautoga from Futuna-Aniwa, while Mere Pulea provided the Fijian cognate of Proto North Central Vanuatu **maloku*.
3. I use the term “copying” rather than “borrowing”, following Crowley (1992), as being a more accurate description of what actually takes place in these situations. Anejoṁ has accreted an original article onto the vast majority of nouns. This article derives from Proto Oceanic **na*, and takes the form *n* + vowel. In some cases, a copy from Futuna has come into the language with the Futuna article *ta/te/ti* attached.
4. The Anejoṁ form *tivakativaka* refers to a particular kind of ocean-going canoe

- which sails from Port Patrick in the north of the island to Futuna; the general term for "canoe" is *nelcau*, which is not a reflex of **waga*.
5. The fact that kava is not grown on Aniwa (Ture Kailo pers. comm.), plus the Tannese stories about the origin of kava, suggest specifically Futuna as the source; and in what follows, I will refer to the language simply as Futuna.
 6. The Lenakel form *nakivam* appears to have accreted *k*, but otherwise derives from the unreduplicated form: Lenakel *i* is one of two regular conditioned reflexes of Proto Oceanic **l*. Anejom̄ *nouhaḗ* appears to have lost the **l*; *h* is the regular reflex of **p*, and *ḗ* is one regular conditioned reflex of **mp*.
 7. Nowadays, manufactured material is more commonly used as a kava-strainer, with stockings and sari-material being particularly sought after.
 8. Given the strong taboos in many parts of Tafea on women drinking kava, or even being present while kava is prepared or drunk, it is probable that the secondary meaning "vagina" would have been enough to bring about the change from expected *nafao* to *nafau* in Anejom̄.
 9. Futuna-Aniwa *o* is often borrowed as *u* in Tanna languages; e.g. Futuna-Aniwa *marino*, Lenakel *a/melinu* "calm, peaceful"; Futuna-Aniwa *kiato*, Lenakel *ni/kiatu* "outrigger boom".
 10. It is possible that Lenakel *agin* "sour, bitter" also directly continues Proto Oceanic **kona*, but the development of **k > g* is unusual. However, *g* is one of the regular reflexes of **k* in North Tanna and Whitesands, so the Lenakel form may be a loan from some other Tanna language, although there is no Whitesands form *agin* with the meaning "bitter".
 11. An anonymous reader informs me that the Kosraean word for kava is *suhka*, but that there are no other particularly Polynesian-looking words for other components of the kava complex.
 12. The symbols *ah* and *ih* represent the Ponapean long vowels /a:/ and /i:/, while *d* represents a voiceless dental stop.
 13. Ken Rehg informs me that there are two different stories about the origin of kava in Pohnpei: "One is the familiar rat story of Polynesia, and the other tied the plant to a local deity." This would be consistent with the interpretation that kava may have been introduced quite early to Pohnpei (as *kalaidong?*), and then re-introduced by Polynesians (as *sakau*).

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