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1. INTRODUCTION

Personal names and expressions of greeting have existed since the earliest stages of human society. They are found in all societies in the world today, literate or illiterate. Are there any differences in terms of their function or meaning in societies where they are only spoken and those in which they are also written? How do such differences as religion, social organization, and historical period affect how people are named? Finally, in Japan, where the writing system in general use is the perhaps the most complex in the modern world, what kinds of problems does naming involve?

In this paper, I want to make some observations about personal names from the perspective of ethnology, with references to linguistics, in the hope that they may provide clues to the nature of civilization in general. Elsdon C. Smith's 1952 bibiliography lists some 3,400 items of research on personal names; the 1987 bibiliography by Edwin D. Lawson reports at least 1,200 sources in English alone. Most of these studies focus on the listing of personal names in a particular region and time, their classification, semantics, social functions, or etymologies; they do not necessarily deal with the relationship between naming and the history of human civilization that I wish to focus on here.

2. KINDS OF NAMES

A personal name distinguishes one individual person from others. To the extent that nothing has a separate existence apart from other things until it is named, a person comes into existence for the first time when he is given a personal name. In some societies, if a person dies before receiving a name, he or she is considered to have never lived and no funeral is held. Slaves, by definition, possess no place in society; in earlier European societies, they were simply called "foreigner" or carried

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the name of the land from which they had come [BENVENISTE 1969: 355–361]. In
the Khassonké society of West Africa, slaves went unnamed to justify treating them
as things rather than human beings [MONTEIL 1915: 344–345]. In short, no name is
given to a person whose existence is unacknowledged.

     For people in ancient times, there were important relationships between a name
and the person who bore it. The opening poem in *Man'yōshū* describes a scene in
which a man proposes marriage to a girl by saying, "Tell me where you live. Tell
me your name." Revealing her name would be an acceptance of his proposal. In
such cases, giving one's name was the same as handing over one's soul. Revealing
one's name casually was thought to weaken one's vital energy; if a curse were laid
on a name, its bearer would fear injury.

     According to Frazer, "Uncivilized people thought a name to be a vital part of
themselves. Therefore, they were very careful about how names were to be
treated" [FRAZER 1966: 190]. Let me illustrate with just one example. In the
Ilongot society of northern Luzon, it was believed that if a person mentioned the
name of someone who had died, the deceased would make him sick or do him some
other kind of harm. Instead of directly referring to the dead by name, people used
some kinship term (e.g. "cousin of so-and-so") or the name of the place where the
deceased was buried. Furthermore, those who happen to hold the same name as
the deceased changed it so that the dead person's name would not be invoked
[ROSALDO 1984].

     Nicknames originate from this avoidance of real names, and, as I will describe
later, many surnames arise from nicknames.

     But to return to the basic kinds of names, permit me to illustrate the range of
functions with some specific examples.

     A child's name commonly indicates hope for its uninterrupted growth. In the
Fulbe society of west Africa, where I have personally done fieldwork, names like
Booydo 'one who lives long' or *Wuuri* 'is living' (a verb) express the parents' fer-
vent wish for the child's survival. In an environment with high infant mortality,
this is only to be expected. Other examples are *Hino doon* 'is here' (a whole
sentence), *Malaado* 'the blessed one', *Woppetaake* 'will not be deserted' or *Nayeejo*
'an old man/woman'.

     But the same parental wish is often expressed in a reverse manner: *Gañaado*
'one who is hated', *Geddaado* 'one who is rejected', or *Alaa innde* 'one without
name'. Parents intentionally select such names in order to keep evil spirits away
from the child and prevent other parents from becoming envious. While superficial-
ly the opposite of propitious names, they too express parental wishes for the safety
of the child. An extreme case is a name meaning 'one who does not have a name',
which pretends to society and evil spirits alike that the child does not exist!

     A third kind of name quite common in African societies is one that reveals a
parent's honest feelings towards his or her family, relatives, or society in general.
A husband names his child 'not to give' (from the verb of the same meaning) to com-
plain that his wife does not give him enough food [MIDDLETON 1961]. A mother

calls her child 'everybody panics' because, when he was born, there was a theft in the village and everybody was running about trying to catch the thief; at a deeper level, she sarcastically implies, by alluding to the uselessness of trying to catch the thief, that after all all men are thieves [LIFCHITZ & PAULME 1953]. One even finds names like 'corruption' or 'shame'.

A common feature of names of this third kind, whether intended to teach a lesson or to criticize, and names of the first two kinds is that the message conveyed is the parents'. The child merely serves as the medium. People get the message of such names but never identify the negative meaning of the name with the child itself. The relationship between such a name and the person should therefore be classified as didactic rather than identificational.

A fourth kind of name reflects the order of birth of siblings and is observed in many places and ages. In Japan, calling one's sons *Tarō*, *Jirō*, *Saburō*, and so on has long been been dominant. In ancient Rome, names like *Primus*, *Secundus*, and *Tertius* were common. Among the Fulbe, there are different sets of names that indicate natal order for males and females respectively, and each set contains it own distinctive metaphors. For example, *Hammadi*, which is given to the eldest son, implies 'dumb', while the name *Samba* of the second son means 'smart fellow', reflecting the traditional Fulbe law of cattle inheritance [OGAWA 1984].

Japanese *Tarō*, *Jirō*, and *Saburō* were originally names used in public instead of the persons' actual names. After *Saburō*, the series continues up to *Jūrō* 'tenth son', which is followed by *Yoichi* (or *Yotarō*), *Yoji* (or *Yojirō*), and so forth. When such birth-sequence names did not unabmiguously designate an individual, a person distinguished himself by prefixing the name of his father as in *Jirōzaburō* or *Gorōtarō*. Descendants of influential persons sometimes reached back a generation or two, naming themselves *Magotarō* 'Tarō the grandson', *Hikoshirō* 'Shirō the great-grandson', and so on [YANAGITA 1962].

A fifth popular practice is to name a child after a close friend of the parents or a successful person in the community. In some societies, however, naming one's child after someone still alive is considered bad luck, a belief often observed in the Arab world. In Morocco, for instance, a child is named after a close friend or relative who has recently passed away (*necronymy*) [EICHELMAN 1988: 165].

In contrast, *teknonymy* is a system in which the parent changes his or her name according to the name given to the child, becoming known as "so-and-so's father (or mother)." This practice is seen throughout the Arab world, particularly on the Arabian Peninsula, where a son's father is called, for example, *Abu Nasīr* 'Nasîr's father' and his mother *Umm Muhammad* 'Muhammad's mother'.

A more complex form of teknonymy has been described by Geertz. In Bali, people believe that a personal name is something that belongs to the most private domain of the person: it is the core that remains after all social labels have been removed. Balinese therefore carefully avoid using personal names with almost religious zeal: to refer to one's ancestors or parents by their names is an insult. Balinese personal names (names of the common people at least, who represent 90 per-

cent of the entire population) consist of a word that does not carry any significant meaning at all. Propitious meaningful words are not used as names for children in order to wish them good luck. Rather the child is carefully named so that no one else in the community holds the same name; thereafter, the name is kept strictly secret. A limited number of birth-sequence names are used for everyday purposes instead, as was customary in Japan: *Wayan* for the first born, *Nyoman* for the second, *Made* or *Nungā* for the third, and *Ketut* for the fourth; the sequence of four names is repeated from the fifth child on.[1] Although not strictly linear, this set of names works because it is applied mostly to children or young people who do not yet have their own children. Once a couple has its first child, teknonymy takes over. The parents become, for example, 'Rugrug's father (mother)'. When the same couple has a grandchild, their names change respectively to 'so-and-so's grandfather (grandmother)', and later to 'so-and-so's great-grandfather (great-grandmother)'. Adults may thus change their names three times after their first child is born, accumulating up to four names in the course of their lives.

What does the teknonymy of Balinese society tell us about its people? Geertz summarizes this information under three major headings. First of all, the fact that a couple gave birth is considered important; *i.e.*, working together to reproduce is valued more than simply being wed. A couple earn their place in the society by giving birth to a child. Indeed, single adults are not allowed to participate in any social gatherings, and, in some villages, couples without children are even excluded. Teknonymy underscores the importance of couples with offspring in the community. Second, people are recognized for their contribution to society's regeneration and preservation, not for survival into old age. Even though a person grows experienced and becomes an elder, he cannot obtain social prestige unless he has a child. Finally, great emphasis is placed on successive generations. The continuation of the cycle of child producing grandchild, who in turns produces a great-grandchild, is considered far more important than the number of the children. Even though a person has only one child, it is considered more precious than many children provided it produces later generations [GEERTZ 1973: 368–379].

In short, an individual is valued not in terms of whose descendant he or she might be, but in terms of whom he or she has parented. An individual is judged by how much contribution he has made to the renewal of the society he belongs to: this is what the concept of teknonymy signifies. It places more importance on an individual who guarantees that the *status quo* will persist and be handed down to future generations than an individual who simply inherits the heritage. It is therefore justifiable to see in teknonymy a future-oriented conception of history.

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1) Here I follow Geertz. Dr. Surajaya, who is from Bali and was a participant in the symposium, has told me that *Made* or *Nungā* are for the second child and Nyoman for the third. I thank Dr. Surajaya and note his correction here.

3. NAMING METHODS IN THE HISTORY OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION

Having identified six ways of giving names based on ethnological (*i.e.* synchronic) considerations, let us now turn to naming in the Christian and Islamic worlds so as to establish a basis for comparing naming practices in literate and illiterate societies. In both the Christian and Islamic worlds society provides a limited stock of appropriate names for its members, and these stocks consist of names that reflect the dominant religion.

A handbook for Muslims lists a total of 1,080 names for both males and females and explains the meaning of each of them. Of these 730 are male names and 350 female. Naturally, direct reference to Allah is prohibited; 99 names, however, allude to the existence of Allah in different ways, such as *Al Rahman* 'the most merciful' and *Al Mumēt* 'he who brings death'. There are a further 55 names that refer to Muhammad, including *Ahmad* 'the admirable one' and *Mustafa* 'the chosen one'. The 527 most popular names include *Aktār* 'star, good luck', *Azuhār* 'radiant one', *Assad* 'lion', *Jamīl* 'beautiful, elegant'. These names do not seem to relate directly to religion but, when considered in a metaphorical sense, do have something to do with Islam. Women's names are also religiously based [QAZI 1974].

Turning to the Christian world, let us look first at names in France. Originally a Celtic land between Rhine and the Pyrenees, Gaul came into contact with the Romans from the beginning of the 2nd century BCE. From the end of the 2nd century CE, Germanic tribes started to invade and, in the 5th century, the great immigration of Visigoths, Burgundians, and Franks took place. Roman control over the Gaul collapsed in 475; France as we know it today was established in 532 by the Frankish conquest of the whole area. All these historical twists and turns are reflected in French names.

Some modern French names can be traced back to Hebrew names that antedate Greece and Rome, and, of course, Christianity. The Hebrews of that period named their children according to their physical characteristics at birth or with phrases that carried a message; e.g. *Laban* 'fair-skinned', *Michael* 'God is incomparable', *Emmanuel* 'God is with us', *Jonah* 'dove', *Rachel* 'lamb'. Names that have passed into French from the Hebrew Bible via Christianity include *Jean*, *Jacques*, *Joseph*, *Madeleine*, and so forth. Some Greek names that eventually entered French were calques from Hebrew; e.g. *Theodoros* and *Elisabeth*, from *Nathaneel* and *Elisheba* respectively.

When the Romans conquered Gaul, the Celts almost completely abandoned names in their own language (such as *Vercingetrorix* 'leader of the soldiers') for names in Latin. These names survived the Germanic invasions. (The only name in French that shows traces of German is the female *Geneviève*.) Up to and through the Middle Ages, they were basically of four types:

  1) Names based on the child's physical characteristics or the circumstances of
     its birth.

2) Names thanking God for the birth of the child or seeking God's protection (many ultimately from Hebrew).

3) Name used repeatedly to express the wish for perpetuation of a family. In this case, the name of the grandfather is given to the grandson.

4) Names made popular by events of history.

After the Middle Ages, the veneration of saints gained popularity and people began naming their children after saints of the Roman Catholic church. At the Conference of Trent (1563), France decided that all the Christians should have a saint's name. Later, however, the church allowed the use of the names of the famous figures from ancient history. This tradition persists up to the present day.

For a little while after the French Revolution, in the spirit of *liberté, égalité, fraternité*, the selection of names was left completely up to the individual, but this led unexpectedly to the names like *Mort aux Aristocrates*, *Racine de la Liberté*, and even *Café-Billiard* and it was decided on 11 Germinal 1803 to ban all names that did not appear in calendars. (This set was later augmented by regulations in the Napoleonic Code.) In France, each day of the year corresponds to a saint's name—hence the use of calendars. Some exceptions to this rule were names expressing gratitude to God such as *Dieudonné* 'gift from God', *Bénédict* 'blessed one', and some female variants of male names such as *Henriette*, *Juliette*, and so forth [DAUZAT 1925]. All French names today are governed by the same rule. The available stock is surprisingly small, consisting of no more than 500 names, but compounding and variants provide about 2,000 possibilities altogether [BESNARD & DESPLANQUES 1986, 1988].[2] As a general rule, they are all related to Christianity.

In all the West, England and the United States are the only countries that allow people to select names freely. Parents are able to create whatever names they like and names can be selected to harmonize with family names. Although Christians often choose names from the traditional stock of Christian names, the free choice all enjoy contrasts with the restrictions found elsewhere. The question of why there is such a sharp contrast between French- and English-speaking nations deserves close attention.

In Europe, the establishment of standard languages as a means of giving nation-states linguistic cohesion was delayed in Germany and in Italy, but promoted early in France, Spain and Portugal.[3] Under Richelieu's absolutist regime, France established the Académie Française, an organization devoted to the ad-

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2) The method of giving a child two Christian names (e.g. Jean-Jacques) started first among the bourgeoisie of the cities in the 17th century. It became more widely used among commoners from the 18th century through the 19th century. Naturally, these compound names are counted as distinct, as are female variants such as Paule, Paulette, Pauline, and Paula, all from Paul. Hence the grand total of 2,000 names [BESNARD & DESPLANQUES 1986, 1988].

3) As was pointed out in Calvetti's presentation, standarization of dialects was delayed in Italy. It is interesting to note, however, that the Accademia della Crusca, an academic organization formed with the purpose of maintaining the purity of Italian language in 1582, antedated the Académie Française [LAGANA 1988: 41].

vancement of arts and sciences named for Plato's school in Athens; long been under the protection of individual patrons, it was reorganized in the 17th century and placed under the direct administration of the government. In 1672, King Louis XIV himself became the patron of the Académie; it has been administered by the head of state ever since.

Although the movement to establish a standard language started early in France, the process of standardizing French was far from easy. According to a study done in 1793, those who were fluent in the Ile de France dialect at that time numbered only 3 million out of an entire population of 26 million. While the French revolutionaries wished to promote the principles of *liberté, égalité, frater-nité*, their approach to language was very strict: they declared that all the dialects other than that of Ile de France were remanents of the feudal regime and that those who spoke such dialects are anti-revolutionary. This belief was based on the assumption that a modern state must have a single, common language. If the use of various dialects were accepted, dialects would separate themselves from the stand-ard language and assert their independence. The unity of the nation would soon fall apart [HAUGEN 1966: 928].

This approach to dialects has remained unchanged in France since the 17th cen-tury. It is characterized by two features: the belief in the absolute authority of standard French language (the dialect of Ile de France), and the preservation of its purity. The belief that the key to social success is the ability to speak standard French is strong [COULMAS 1987: 67], and was transferred to all the French colonies.

In England, neoclassical trends born in the late 17th century continued throughout the 18th, a golden age of logic and literature. Scholars and those who were involved in literary activities attempted to analyze English in terms of logical rules and produced the "school grammar" that remains influential even today; their efforts also led to a unification of orthography and the standardization of both vocabulary and pronunciation. Thus the English, like the French, were engaged in the establishment of a model language quite early. But the English never erected a national linguistic institution like the Académie Française; in fact, the English we regard as standard today came into being in the 19th century. England not only ac-cepted different dialects within its borders but also was tolerant toward the develop-ment of distinctive forms of English in its colonies. In addition, English absorbed many foreign words. One of the reasons why English is so widely spoken today is surely this flexible attitude toward language.

Among all the Christian nations, France, with its Catholic majority, has always been centrally oriented and a strong believer in the absolute authority of the stand-ard French. England, on the other hand, is dominantly Protestant and tolerant of local autonomy. This difference in thinking seems to explain the difference in the way names are given in the French- and English-speaking worlds despite their com-mon Christian heritage.

Up to this point, we have said nothing about family names. Even today, many illiterate societies do not have names for individual families, usually using names

for tribes or clans instead.[4]   The peoples of ancient Europe also had only given names; not until the 10th century did they start to use something similar to what we call "last names."   They were at first created by means of suffixes or prefixes like -*son*, -*sohn*, -*sen*, *Mac*-, or *Fitz*-, all of which mean 'son of' (as in Anderson, Mendelssohn, Nicolaisen, MacArthur, and Fitzgerald).   From about the 16th century onwards, last names based on occupations, physical characteristics, or places or residence began to proliferate (e.g. Shoemaker, Smith, Taylor; Brown, Legros, Petit; Dupont, Laforêt, etc.).   Before this type of last name came into existence, people used to identfy each other as 'X's son Y', traces of which can still be seen in last names such as Hermann *Paul*, Gérard *Philippe*, etc.

At the risk of oversimplifying, we can say that many last names are nicknames that, with time, graduated to become full-fledged last names.   The very words *surnom* and *surname* (literally 'over names') suggest this process of origin.   Last names taken from one's birthplace or occupation may not seem very imaginative, but some quite creative last names describe the habits or personality of the named person [DAUZAT 1925, 1977].   People in modern illiterate societies show similar talent in creating imaginative nicknames, some of which might well become last names (family names) later.

4.   THE ROLE OF NAMES IN LITERATE AND ILLITERATE SOCIETIES

As already noted, there are at least half a dozen naming practices in illiterate societies, and names may be created out of verbs, adjectives, adverbs, or even whole sentences as well as from nouns.   The act of naming is limited only by the namer's imagination.   By contrast, in literate societies, freedom of expression may be curtailed, as when in Japan in 1947 the new Registration Bill put a restriction on the number of Chinese characters that could be used for children's names, limiting them to the 1,850 *tōyō kanji*.   This resulted in a lawsuit in 1950 in which the plaintiff claimed that his freedom of expression under the Constitution had been violated [NEUSTUPNÝ 1984].

Of course, no iliterate society allows total freedom in naming, but we cannot help being struck by the wide variety of naming practices in illiterate societies. They seem to have exhausted every conceivable method of naming.   Progress from illiteracy to civilization has, as brilliantly demonstrated by Lévi-Strauss [LÉVI-STRAUSS 1962], produced no genuine innovations.

Lévi-Strauss examined the taxonomic schemes of American Indian tribes and moved on to study totemic classification within individual tribes; this he followed with a study of how each individual is classified within a totem group.   (In American Indian society, the members of the same totem group have names related

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4)   We must, of course, define what range the word "family" should cover.   In general, people in an illiterate society are more keenly aware of clans or groups defined on the basis of common ancestry.   In this context, however, I have something in mind closer to the nuclear family than to the clan.

to an animal. For instance, if their totem animal is a crow, then names such as 'crow's peck' or 'crow with an egg under its wing' might be given.) These studies led Lévi-Strauss to the conclusion that names for a human beings are, in the end, just an extension of the totemic taxonomy used for classifying things other than people; *i.e.*, many naming procedures in illiterate societies are simply the result of interest in classifying individuals. Civilized society has merely refined some of these preliterate classificational schemes [LÉVI-STRAUSS 1962, chapters 6 and 7].

Naming methods of illiterate societies are generally of two kinds. One, the Limited Stock Type, involves the selection of names from a set stock (e.g. naming by natal order). The other, the Limitless Type, involves the creation of as many different names as one pleases. For example, members of the Tiwi tribe of Bathurst and Melville Islands, just north of Australia, have as many as three names, and no one in the tribe has a same name. Out of all the 3,300 names of 1,100 islanders, not a single person had the same name as anyone else [HART 1930-1931]. All naming methods can be placed on a continuum of variation between these extreme types thus:

Limited Stock Type
names in natal order
necronymy
names based on physical characteristics
names taken after the place or the time of birth
names of friends, acquaintances, or persons to whom parents owe a debt
teknonymy
ironic names
names made out of meaningless sounds
unique names for each individual
Limitless Type

We can easily locate the naming practices of civilized societies on the same continuum. For example, naming in most Islamic and Hindu societies as well as in most of Europe, as exemplified by France, is closer to the Limited Stock Type. The only two major exceptions are England and the United States, and, to some extent, Japan, which are closer to the Limitless Type.

In societies that have writing systems, names are carefully registered. This not only permits identification of an individual but also makes it possible for names to identify individual possessions in financial, legal or more general social situations (e.g. signing a bond, naming a new star after an astronomer). These functions are so important in such a multitude of situations that no modern society allows its members to change names on a whim or without registering the change.

In illiterate societies, on the other hand, the act of acknowledging an individual is a matter of memory and presumably often creates confusion in legal or financial matters. In Ilongot society, for instance, a person who committs an illegal act and

is pursued by government officers changes his name without hesitation to hide himself [ROSALDO 1984: 14].   Assuming an alias is effective only in the absence of written records that reinforce the association of an individual and a name or of people who carry that memory.

The need to memorize names in illiterate societies perhaps explains their frequent reliance on patronymics and matronymics.   This method of augmenting and individual names with an identification of a parent was actually quite common in both Europe and Japan before the advent of family names; many names of this type also survive in Islamic societies.   To illustrate with an example from Japanese, the sons of Tarō will be called Tarō Ichirō, Tarō Jirō, Tarō Saburo, etc.   While this can be seen in Lévi-Strauss's terms as hierarchical structuring (as opposed to the "double-naming" he associates with plants and animals), a functional explanation is more appropriate for our purposes: it is easier to recall a young child's name by first remembering the already familiar name of its parent.

As names in civilized societies have gained importance as identificational markers, the amount of information they carry has decreased.   People are more interested in knowing that Ogawa (literally 'small river') is *different from* Ōkawa ('large river') or Nakagawa ('middling river') than with the etymology of Ogawa.   Some names indicate the order of birth or hint at where or roughly when a person was born, but that is about all the extra information they convey in modern society.   In illiterate societies, names may recall not only order of birth, birthplace, and incidents that took place around the time of birth but also parental feelings toward family or society.   A name continues to serve as a piece of social information as long as its owner lives.   Even in Bali, where names are not even words, the teknonyms provide important information about the persons named.

Inasmuch as names serve as a kind of record in illiterate societies, we might even wonder whether they are the forerunners of writing [KAWADA 1979].   For naming one's children in an oral society is perhaps analogous to writing books in a literate one.

Up to this point, I have stressed differences between the role names play in illiterate and literate societies, but we should not overlook the similarities that also exist.

Consider the primitive association of oneself with one's name.   In civilized societies, the same notion is seen in the fact that nobody likes to be called by the wrong name.[5]   Many Japanese today, for example, prefer to use traditional rather than new, simplified *kanji* (Chinese characters) when writing their names—it's almost like a superstition.   Indeed, onomacy is popular in Japan.   It is believed that someone's misfortunes are caused by his name, and to advise people on how to improve their lucks by changing their names is considered a legitimate profession.

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5)   Since *kanji* have *on'yomi* (Sino-Japanese readings) and *kun'yomi* (native Japanese readings), Japanese people tend to be rather tolerant of mispronunciation of their names.   Europeans tend, on the contrary, to be considerably bothered when someone does not pronounce their names correctly.

Likewise, there are professionals who tell people whether or not their personal seals are good.

I've already mentioned the technique of combining the father's and the son's name: this is another common practice of both oral and literate societies. Carrying on the same name from father to son by attaching "Junior," "the Third," and so on, emphasizes lineage. In Japan, the same effect is achieved by using one or more kanji in a parent's name for the child's. The situation in France from the 17th century through the beginning of the 20th century, was somewhat more complex because naming of the child was done by a godfather or godmother. If the child's parents died, the godparents were the ones who were supposed to look after the child. Normally, the grandparents became the godparents for the first child, and from the second child on, an uncle, aunt, or cousin was selected as appropriate. What is important here, however, is that godchild was given the same name as his/her godparent. Parents were careful about selecting the godparents equally from both the father's and mother's side of the family [BESNARD & DESPLANQUES 1986: 23–24] because names were inherited horizontally as well as vertically, strengthening the both lineal and lateral relationships.[6]

A third similarity between naming in oral and literate societies is that names in both can be made out of any part of speech. For example, in Islamic societies, many names are made out of adjectives or adverbs [QAZI 1974]. If we include last names, there are numerous occasions in which an adjective, such as White, is called into service as a proper noun. In Japanese, Tōru comes from a verb and Satoshi from an adjective. Names made out of a whole sentence will naturally be limited in number—one thinks of the famous *rakugo* story *Jugemu, Jugemu* in the case of Japan.

Finally, I would like mention a potential similarity between oral and literate societies. I already mentioned that Tiwi of Australia use unique names for each individual. This is possible because the entire population there is a mere 1,100. Governments of large, literate societies might envy the Tiwi, but the only way for them to provide a unique name for every citizen is by assigning numbers. (Actually, the United States has come close to doing this with social security numbers!) The trend toward numeralization runs head long into superstitions about names and human unwillingness to accept names as mere symbols. Perhaps a compromise will result in which numbers are used as names for the maintenance of civilization while imaginative names hold sway in the domain of culture.

In sum, the only truly fundamental difference in naming in oral and literate societies is that people change their names freely and often in the former.

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6) Naming a child can be a difficult task for many parents when they have complete freedom of choice. This has never been the case in France, however. In both the Christian and Islamic worlds, tradition has played a more important role in the choosing of names than creativity.

5. THE PROBLEM OF NAMING IN JAPAN

That the Japanese language abounds in names is well known. Last names alone number over 110,000. This diversity is a natural reflection of Japan's long and complicated history [ARAKI 1982 (1929); YANAGITA 1962; JUGAKU 1979, etc.], of which I will touch upon only a few points.

The Registration (*Jinshin no Koseki*) Bill of 1872 required that all Japanese have one family name and one personal name. As common people did not then have surnames, they simply made up whatever names they pleased and reported them at the registrar. At present, *kana* and a little more than 2,000 kanji are approved for use in personal names under the new Registeration Bill of 1947.

There are limits on which kanji may be used in names but not how they may be read. Thus 正, though simple in appearance, can be read Akira, Kami, Sada, Taka, Tadashi, Tsura, Nao, Nobu, or Masa [YOSHIDA 1974: 96]. The same problem arises in trying to figure out how to read the recently approved kanji 昴; without asking, there is no way to know if it is to be read *Kō* or *Subaru*. Conversely, it often happens that one does not know how to write a name of given pronunciation. For example, Ogawa can be written 小川, 尾川, or 小河. In Japan, when two people meet for the first time, they exchange business cards. This custom often baffles foreigners, but for Japanese, it is a ritual with a practical purpose: Japanese do not feel at ease until they see how a name is spelled out in kanji.

On the other hand, the very complexity of reading and writing Japanese names is an advantage for the purposes of identification.[7] Perhaps this is why government administrators approve more kanji for use in personal names every year. Romanized Japanese names certainly offer less distinctiveness.

Some Japanese have taken to creating names out of foreign words such as Noi from German *Neu* or Tomorō from English *tomorrow*. An article in *Asahi Shinbun* of 5 May 1988 characterized this phenomenon as "internationalization," but I think that Japanese, with their unique mixture of scripts, are simply enjoying "playing on words" in the same way that headlines of the sports papers "play" with kanji.[8] In any case, "internationalization" of Japanese names has been going on for quite some time. People have been taking names from Chinese for centuries; names like Rui, Anri, or Emi, derived from Western sources (Louis, Henri, and Amy, respectively), are no longer rarities. One gets the impression that Japanese naming practices are strictly controlled yet at the same time without any rules at all.

Occasionally there are lawsuits over the use of kanji in names. This should make us mindful of how deeply the Chinese writing system has become rooted in

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7) Although the general trend in Korea has been to reduce the use of Chinese characters and to use more *hangul*, people continue to use kanji in personal and place names. Use of hangul can create confusion.

8) For instance, an American baseball player named Thompson who works in Japan might be referred to as "Toma son" ト マ損 if he was recruited with a big bonus and isn't performing very well.

Japanese culture; as far as personal names are concerned, I think kanji will hold their own. This raises the delicate question of how the names of the foreigners should be treated when they acquire Japanese citizenship. The Japanese Law of Nationality does not deal with this problem definitively. Those who apply for naturalization are given a handbook at the Ministry of Justice upon submitting an application form. It advises them to select a name that is "proper" but fails to clarify what this means—creating some anxiety because approval of naturalization is up to the Ministry. If the applicant comes from Korea or Taiwan, last names like 趙, 崔, or 鄭, for example, are not accepted because of the regulations of the Registration Bill. In such cases, the applicant has no choice but to write his name in kana or to make up a totally new last name.

Under Article 107 of the Registration Bill, a former Vietnamese national, naturalized in Japan, filed an application to change his name back to his Vietnamese name (written in *katakana*). The Family Court of Kōbe approved this claim in November 1982 saying, "In view of the extreme fluidity of modern international society, a preference for a katakana name should be accepted" [YASUE 1984: 210–212]. This is an important decision because non-Japanese names, such as Rui or Anri, had hitherto been allowed only if they could be written with kanji. Nevertheless, I strongly doubt that names like Arekusandā (Alexander) or Furansowāzu (Françoise) will be adopted in Japan anytime soon; what constitutes a proper Japanese name is, after all, a matter of conventional knowledge.[9] But now that there is a Japanese bank named *Tomato* (English 'tomato'), perhaps controversy over names is just around the corner.

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9) Following the symposium, there was a news report of a Japanese woman wishing to use a Korean name. Her father is a Korean national resident in Japan; her mother is Japanese. The woman has said, "I am proud of Korea's culture and its history. I wish to take a Korean name without changing my nationality." The Kawasaki District Court approved her claim on 5 May 1989, saying that, "Although, in Japan, a Korean name is difficult to read, that is no hindrance to this claim." This is the first time such a decision has been rendered.

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