



# Why should everyone have a different name?

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## Chapter 8

### WHY SHOULD EVERYONE HAVE A DIFFERENT NAME?

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#### *Clan and gender identity among the Ankave-Anga of Papua New Guinea*

*Pascale Bonnemère*

Aside from a few well-known pioneering studies,<sup>1</sup> it has been only in the last fifteen years that there has been a research boom in the anthropology of personhood, attesting new interest in the ideas members of all societies have about individual identity. This area of anthropology is concerned with the ways each culture goes about defining the person, its primary object of study being the discourses and practices surrounding the personal attributes recognised by the society: body, name(s), spirit(s), emotions, personality, physical features and so on.

Alongside its principal aim, such research has also added to our knowledge of the systems of representations and ritual practices societies have built up around individuals and the important events of their life cycles, and has led to theoretical advances in the analysis of kinship systems and of the sociocultural constructions of gender difference.<sup>2</sup>

Research on representations of the individual and the person in New Guinea has focused on those in which the body occupies a prominent place. For the time being, there is little need to ask ourselves whether this is a theoretical a priori or an ethnographic reality; rather, we must note that, in spite of the predominance of analyses of what the men and women in this part of the world have to say about the conception, constitution, growth, care and decline of the human body, there is no lack of researcher on other, less physical components of the person.<sup>3</sup> Having appeared in isolation and over a long period, these articles have had less impact; nevertheless, today they are still regarded as fundamental, and some predict (at least in their titles) that interest in the mere body is on the verge of disappearing.<sup>4</sup>

In the 1970s and 1980s, personal names attracted the interest of few Melanesianists, although they were studied by many European specialists. The latter were attempting to alter

a tradition of anthroponymic research which, in Europe, was rooted in philosophy and history, and based on the classification of names rather than individuals, and on the history of these names.<sup>5</sup> From the outset, the New Guinea studies, on the other hand, adopted an anthropological approach aimed at ‘identifying the rules of name bestowal followed by a society, the principles determining how one classifies individuals by naming them ... and the laws governing the naming *system*’.<sup>6</sup> Working on the hypothesis that ‘anthroponyms are never simply conventional terms that are interchangeable or meaningless’,<sup>7</sup> anthropological analysis aims to discover how the society enrolls its individual members in socially defined groups, how these individuals are classified and ‘allotted a position’.<sup>8</sup>

In the following, I will analyse how name forms are typically constructed and used by the Ankave-Anga of Papua New Guinea. I further hope to show that the study of personal names provides a means of understanding some of the rules governing social organisation as well as an access to the principles underlying the construction of sexual identity.

### *The Ankave*

The Ankave occupy three densely forested valleys to the southwest of a mountain chain running the width of the island of New Guinea from east to west. Some one thousand in number, they belong to a set of twelve Anga linguistic groups which speak related languages, share certain cultural features (absence of Big Men, male initiations, asymmetry between the sexes, absence of inequality among the men), and have an oral history that attests a common origin.<sup>9</sup>

As primarily horticulturalists, the Ankave grow taros, bananas, sugar cane and sweet potatoes in gardens cleared in the forest. They also raise a few pigs, hunt, trap eels for ceremonial needs and gather a wide variety of leaves and fruits in the forest. For this purpose, each family regularly builds a temporary shelter several hours’ walk from the hamlet containing their main house. There some gather and prepare the fruits of the *Pangium edule* and the breadfruit tree, both of which grow in the lowest-lying parts of the territory; others make barkcloth capes from the *Ficus*; and others yet manufacture eel traps. As a result, Ankave hamlets are occupied only intermittently throughout the year. To this mobility orchestrated by the appearance of the various forest fruits and the need for clothing and game, must be added frequent changes of residence. Thus, even though settlements may be permanent, there is a periodical rotation of their occupants.

The Ankave are divided into exogamous patrilineal clans,<sup>10</sup> and residence is usually patrilocal. That being said, affinal relations provide the possibility of access to additional lands and enable the Ankave to satisfy their penchant for mobility. A man who takes a wife must pay monetary compensation to her family. The woman is chosen, insofar as this is possible (see note 10), outside the husband’s own clan, among the categories of women who are not forbidden to him. For the marriage rules are expressed in the form of taboos, the most strict being the prohibition on marriage between two individuals related in the maternal line, by virtue of the belief that blood is transmitted exclusively by the mother.

Relations between men and women are marked by complementarity. This can be seen in the majority of ritual and subsistence activities as well as in the representations of the

person. Thus the theories of human conception and growth, like the steps of the male initiations, all reveal the conjunction of substances and of the male and female agents needed to make individuals and to bring their body to maturity. Generally speaking, the body is the primary material that must be acted on so as to ensure that every person grows and stays in good health.

Seen in this context, the person's name does not seem to be an essential attribute of individual identity;<sup>11</sup> and the fact that several people can have the same name merely confirms this impression. Furthermore, when addressing someone, the Ankave much prefer to use kin terms, or what I call *petits noms* — an expression that has been translated here by J. Mimica's term, 'names of endearment' — which everyone shares with other members of the society (see below). Ultimately, then, we will see that an Ankave's name has less to do with personal identity than with the position he or she occupies in certain social groups and within a set of siblings.

### *Bestowing a name and contexts of usage*

The Ankave do not look on the moment of birth as a fitting time to name children; they do not receive a name until they begin to crawl, or even after they have taken their first steps.<sup>12</sup> This applies only to the firstborn, however; the younger children are given the name of their same-sex elder sibling to which is simply added a suffix indicating their birth order.<sup>13</sup> Thus, even though a baby is not given a personal name until it is several months old — since its spirit (dɔŋgɔ') must first manifest itself —<sup>14</sup> the community knows the baby's future name as soon as it is born. The qualifiers indicating the order of birth within a set of same-sex siblings are also the names of the fingers of the hand, and are placed after the principal component.

Personal names are usually given once and for all; normally people do not change names over their lifetime; in fact, name changes are very rare among the Ankave,<sup>15</sup> whereas in three other societies of the same Anga set — the Baruya, Sambia and Menye — initiation means a new name.<sup>16</sup> Once a person has children, he or she can be called by a teknonym, which means literally 'so and so's father or mother', in this case therefore related with an identity arising from filiation.<sup>17</sup> The teknonym never completely replaces the personal name acquired in childhood, but it can be used as a term of reference as well as address.

A child's parents talk over and choose the name together, taking into account their own clans but sometimes also reaching back to those of their matrilineal or patrilineal ancestors. Among the Baruya, on the other hand, 'a name is never inherited through the maternal line'.<sup>18</sup> Other members of the Ankave child's family may also give their opinion when the name is being chosen. For instance, one man of around fifty expressed the wish that his nephew's name include his own, which was the clan name of an ancestor (FFM), and that his niece be named after a river located on the territory of a valley their father had left to go and live with his wife's family in another valley. It is clear that, in asking that his younger brother's children be given these names, he was seeking to perpetuate the memory of their original valley. In this specific case, the individual becomes the depository of the memory of

a group with which he is connected, and the name becomes much more than a simple individual identity marker.

In rare cases, the choice is made by only one of the child's parents. Some, usually female, names refer to an event that occurred either during the birth (birth of the child deep in the forest, a birdcall heard just after the birth), or during the marsupial hunt organised by the men in the days immediately following the birth. The mother, in the first case, or the father, in the second, relates what happened and suggests naming the little girl after the event in question.

When addressing each other, the Ankave prefer to use kin terms rather than personal names.<sup>19</sup> Personal names are really used as terms of address only between people who have no kinship ties, not even classificatory ones.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand, they are often used in addressing children, even though there are specific terms, but which are *de facto* rarely used: *ngéwə* is used for infants, irrespective of their sex; *iwe*, for little boys and *miéj* for little girls;<sup>21</sup> *i'pa'nd* can be used to address a young boy who has completed the first-stage of initiation (notably piercing of the septum). The equivalent term for girls who have reached puberty but are not married is *a'pijə*, but I have never heard it used as a term of address. Later, women are called by their name, by a kin term, or by the teknonym, 'so and so's mother'. The terms designating second- and third-stage initiates — *Səmazind* and *Səwangə* respectively — are used only in reference. An old man, or simply a third-stage (which is the last) initiate is called *xwojangə*. In all events, personal names are normally employed when two people are talking about a third person.

### *How are Ankave names constructed?*

There are several rules for constructing Ankave personal names. In general, it can be said that they are composed of one or two what I call 'principal' components. These refer to a clan, a toponym, some natural element or to an event connected with the child's birth. Usually in second position come components referring to birth order, skin pigmentation, a 'name of endearment' or a physical or social trait. The fact that personal names can draw on so many registers has as an almost inevitable corollary: the unlimited number of second components. This phenomenon, common in New Guinea, is also found among the Palawan of the Philippines, but is completely alien to the Jivaro of Amazonia, for example.<sup>22</sup>

One of the general characteristics of the Ankave naming system is that men's and women's personal names are constructed on different patterns.

### *Men's names*

The prevailing rule for composing the personal names given to male infants could be described as 'bilateral'. This 'bilaterality principle' operates on several levels. The vast majority of all male names (94.4 per cent)<sup>23</sup> have two principal components. Within this set, 90.7 per cent refer to clan names and of these, the majority (55 per cent) mention both the father's and the mother's clan. In this case, the name of the father's clan usually comes first (78 per cent of the time). Note that, when speaking of the members of the Idzadze clan, who sometimes intermarry,<sup>24</sup> the synonym Erauje is often used. Someone whose parents both belong to this clan can therefore be called Idzadze Erauje or Erauje Idzadze.<sup>25</sup>

Analysis shows that, when a person's name does not make reference to both parents' clans, the Ankave try to mention in a relatively well-balanced manner ancestral clans in both the maternal and paternal lines. For example, when the first component of a man's name is the name of the maternal clan of a agnatic male ancestor, the second refers in over half the cases (51.7 per cent) to the mother's clan. Conversely, when the first component is the clan name of a maternal female ancestor, the second always mentions the father's clan. But several names follow a more complex logic: when the first component is the name of a cross-line male ancestor (MFM, MFFM, or FMFM), the second part of the name refers either to the father's clan (68.7 per cent) or to the maternal clan of a male agnate. It is therefore difficult to affirm that in this case too there has been an effort to balance the references to the patrilineal and matrilineal clans.

To give an idea of the variety encountered in the composition of male names, here are a few examples: In the case of Oti dzadze (Otɔ Idzadze), the father is an Idzadze and the mother's father's mother is a clan Otɔ woman.<sup>26</sup> Witɔ Toradze received the name of his mother's father's mother's clan (Witɔ) followed by that of his father's mother (Toradze). Jaderotɔ bears the name of his paternal great grandfather's mother's clan. Omɔrɔ Erauje's father was a clan Omɔrɔ man and his maternal grandmother an Idzadze.

In all events, there is a principle operating at the different levels of analysis which tends to emphasise in a complementary manner both of a male individual's affiliations; this concern for bilaterality appears in the structure of the names — usually two juxtaposed principal components — as well as in the clan affiliations chosen for mention. The only potential limit on the latter is the Ankave's knowledge of the genealogy of the individual receiving the name. Indeed it seems that any ancestral clan can be chosen to feature in the name given, which means that it is impossible to deduce with absolute certainty a man's own clan by looking at his name.

In fact there is even a fair risk of error, since, first of all, only 55 per cent of the names composed of two components refer to either parent's clan and, second, the order of the two components cannot be regarded as immutable, even if the name of the father's clan usually comes first (78 per cent of cases). In this respect, it must be said that, when both of a man's parents belong to the same clan and his name is comprised of two components referring to this clan, informants invariably affirm that the first component corresponds to the father's clan name. Likewise, when a man in the same situation bears a name containing only one clan term, the second being of another type, informants always say that the first name designates the father's clan.

I would like to end this analysis of men's names by attempting to see which configurations are not represented by concrete cases. Given the wide choice available to the Ankave for constructing personal names, it is my guess that the systematic omissions mean something. For example, in single-component names, the mother's clan is never explicitly mentioned; it appears only indirectly in the form of 'names of endearment'.

To sum up: men's personal names are constructed on a bilateral pattern with a patrilineal bias, but which nevertheless tends to strike a balance between the two lineages linking an individual with a set of ancestors. This in turn suggests that, for the Ankave culture, this sort of equilibrium is crucial in defining the identity of the male individual.

## Women's names

Contrary to men's names, those bestowed on little girls plainly follow a principle of unilaterality, which can also be found on several levels. The majority of female personal names<sup>27</sup> have only one component (66.7 per cent), and the remaining third are not constructed on the dominant male pattern of two clan references. This unilaterality is clearly skewed towards the father's clan: when a woman's name contains a descriptive term making indirect reference to a clan (toponyms and endearment names), in 99 per cent of the cases it is to the paternal clan.<sup>28</sup>

Analysis of the configurations not retained confirms the patrilineally biased unilateral model, since no woman's name mentions two clans or contains two indirect clan references. Likewise, there is no personal female name in which a clan name is juxtaposed with an indirect reference to a clan. All these omissions indicate that female-name structure is governed by a strong unilateral bias. Furthermore, in single-component names, the mother's clan never appears and even indirect references to her clan are rare, which again confirms that women's names place the emphasis on patrilineal descent reckoning.

When attempting to assess the possible significance of the position of the terms in two-component female names, it appears first position is always occupied by the component more strongly marked by clan membership: for instance, in order of frequency, we find a clan name followed by a toponym or a name of endearment, or one of the latter followed by what I call a 'neutral' qualifier (see below). These configurations show that position is important in the construction of personal names; this can be seen in the fact that the two components of a name are not interchangeable and that the first always conveys more information about the person's genealogy than the second. Furthermore, there is no reason *a priori* that the same should not be true for men's names. In this case, the first component might thus correspond to the more important affiliation; which would explain the fact that the father's clan is usually mentioned first and that, when both parents come from the same clan, informants always maintain that the first component refers to the paternal clan.

In all personal names, whether male or female, the qualifiers I call 'neutral' are those that contain no clan reference whatsoever. These can be divided into six categories. The first contains a component referring to skin colour (*wə 'a' / wiej* or *bəri*); it always appears in second position and can in no case be the only component of a personal name.<sup>29</sup> This qualifier is used in men's names as well as in women's. The second category refers to the person's size, and appears uniquely in women's names, whether they are comprised of one or two components. Note that these two categories refer to the physical appearance of the person, a practice encountered elsewhere in New Guinea.<sup>30</sup>

The third category contains those names referring to an event that occurred at the time of birth or during the marsupial hunt immediately afterwards. This practice is also attested for the Daribi and the Wiru of Papua New Guinea, as well as in the Fiji Islands.<sup>31</sup> Such references are usually found in single-component names. The fourth category contains components that refer to the individual's personal history: being an only child, for instance, or having lost her father just before birth.<sup>32</sup>



Reference to a plant or an animal in the natural environment is a fifth type of 'neutral' qualifier, found only in female names. Such references to the natural world are restricted, *de facto* and for reasons unknown, to a bird (*ingð' obe*) and two species of areca palm (*nðngijð' wondi* and *wamondi*). The sixth and final category is an arbitrary collection of terms that did not fit into any of the preceding groups, but which always occur in second position, notably following the name of a bird and usually concerning some detail of its behaviour.

In sum, none of the 'neutral' qualifiers makes explicit or implicit reference to a clan, but this does not make them a homogeneous group. Some evoke a social fact (something that happened at the time of birth or during the hunt that provides the marsupials presented to every woman who has just given birth, or a family trait), others mention more personal realities (a physical trait, skin colour).<sup>33</sup>

Of the components containing an indirect clan reference, almost all (35 out of 36) are toponyms referring to rivers, settlements, or mountains located on the girl's father's clan territory. Since 83.7 per cent of female personal names contain a clan reference in one form or another, and 99 per cent of these are to the father's clan, it is usually possible to guess the woman's clan from her name, providing one knows the location of each clan's territories, and every Ankave does.

Therefore, however paradoxical this statement may seem, it is as though the Ankave regarded women's names as one of the privileged vehicles of patrilineal descent reckoning. One can imagine this as a way of referring to patrilineal descent where the physical constitution of the person says nothing about such a rule, since it is women alone who ensure the sharing and continuity of a vital bodily substance generation after generation, which is their blood.<sup>34</sup>

### *Symmetry and asymmetry in male and female personal names*

We have seen that Ankave men's and women's names are constructed according to fundamentally different rules. The first follow in the majority a bilateral pattern, while two thirds of the second have only one component. Next, male names refer more often to clans, while female names use a great variety of qualifiers, including neutral terms, as the principal component. Another important difference has to do with the nature of the references. Men's names favour the genealogical, temporal dimension, with many references to the clans of remote ancestors. In women's names, the spatial dimension predominates, together with a different form of temporality focusing on events.

What conclusions can be drawn from these differences? As a hypothesis, I would make a connection between the Ankave's apparent desire to use men's names to mark the continuity between an individual and certain often remote paternal or maternal ancestors and the historical place of the alliances the two now-dominant clans had to conclude with the autochthonous clans in order to settle on the territories that are now theirs. It was in effect by intermarriage with the local clans (*Toradze*, *Angðrð*) that the members of the immigrant *Ngudze* and *Idzadze* clans were able to take up definitive residence on the territories of these local clans. In this case, the men's names would in a way testify to a time when women were of



capital importance for the establishment — and the survival — of these refugee clans. If we accept this postulate, we could go on to reason that the balanced use of the names of matrilineal and patrilineal ancestors in the construction of male names could be traced to the same desire to acknowledge the crucial role of the allied clans in the very life of the group. We would still need to explain the absence of this same balance in the composition of female names, however. All I can say at present is that, unlike men, women usually leave their natal group when they marry. Embedding their clan affiliation in the woman's name is a way of recalling who is to receive the marriage payments and part of the gifts in kind that accompany her transfer to another group.<sup>35</sup> By doing this, patrilineal descent is once again expressed, since the identity of those receiving the bulk (70 per cent) of the various gifts — all members of the bride's father's clan — is one of the elements that allows us to define the Ankave kinship system as patrilineal.<sup>36</sup>

Nevertheless, the important differences between the structures of male and female names should not be allowed to overshadow their many formal similarities. In both cases the indication of birth order is treated as a suffix and placed after the principal component(s). Likewise, single-component names never contain a direct reference to the mother's clan, and in two-component names, two indirect clan references or the name of the mother's clan plus a 'neutral' qualifier are never found side by side in either men's or women's names.

To end this short comparison of male and female personal names, let us take another look at the system used in naming siblings. The set consisting of the brothers' names and that of the sisters' are usually treated separately. To take an example: the oldest child of Ngudze Idzadze and Tɔmnɔkɔ wie'j', a boy, is called Idze Erauje; the second child, a girl, is Sawi; the third, a boy, Idze Erauje Akwiye (Idze Erauje 'second'); the fourth, a boy, is called Idze Erauje Padzɔrwa ('third'); and the fifth, a girl, Sawi Akwaej (Sawi 'second'). Generally speaking, the two naming systems are unconnected, as though each set of same-sex siblings formed an uninterrupted series.

Half-siblings, or children born of the same woman and different men who are brothers or cousins (as often happens under levirate), are considered to be one continuous series of siblings, and the birth-order qualifiers in their names follow, even though they do not have the same father.<sup>37</sup> Consequently it appears that, in the naming system, real cross-siblings are treated as being separated by a greater distance than classificatory same-sex siblings; a bit as though shared gender entailed a greater degree of sameness than shared filiation. In other words, in this naming system, a set of boys — or girls — having the same mother and fathers from the same lineage, or having the same father and mothers from different clans is a unified set, while the set of the names of the boys and the girls born to the same parents is a mixed set. This implies that, for the Ankave, the distance between the sexes is greater than that between persons of the same sex belonging to only partially linked genealogical groups.

If we now look at the construction of gender identity using what we have learned about personal names, we cannot help seeing that the logic behind boys' and that behind girls' names follow distinctly different lines of reasoning. These differences suggest that Ankave representations of men's and women's social identity, as embodied in the name, are radically disjoined. Thus, just as the theories of procreation and the continuity of generations establish the respective functions of each gender in the process of human reproduction, so

too the components of a person's name are chosen as a function of the representations of the principles supposed to govern men's and women's incorporation into a social set of genealogically linked individuals as well as their inscription in a geographical setting appropriated by the clans into which the population is divided. Zonabend formulated this reality nicely when she wrote: 'In names are embedded the many facets of social reality.'<sup>38</sup>

It also seems that there is no connection between an Ankave individual's physical appearance and his or her social attributes: in the event, personal names do not reflect representations of the individual's bodily composition.<sup>39</sup> Nevertheless, it is the women who bind individuals together through the transmission of blood, and it is in their names that patrilineal descent reckoning appears most clearly.

### *Names of endearment*

When the Ankave are eating together, giving each other areca nuts or sharing the latest news around a fire, and a younger close relation joins them, it would be altogether unfitting to address him or her by his or her personal name. The proper term of address in these circumstances is what I call in French the *petit nom*, or 'name of endearment'. Endearment names are affectionate expressions whose forms and use contexts obey strict rules. They are invariably the names of wild or cultivated plants: for instance a member of the ginger or the balsam family or a cultivar of sweet potato, banana or pandanus. All the men whose mothers belong to the same clan are addressed by the same term(s).<sup>40</sup> Likewise, women whose mothers are from the same clan answer to one (or more) term(s) corresponding to other plants. Names of endearment are constructed according to two criteria, then: mother's clan and gender.

The contexts in which these terms of address are used are characterised by good humour, friendliness,<sup>41</sup> affection, all of which cannot be experienced in certain relations with kin or neighbours. Roughly speaking, the marital relationship is excluded, as is that between affines of different generations. More generally, the person using the endearment name is always older than or the same age as the person addressed. But the latter is obliged to reply in the same vein, therefore using the endearment name of the other person, whatever his or her age.

Both the construction of these endearment names and the circumstances of their use indicate that they are one of the manifestations of the relationship linking each individual with his or her mother, characterised by affection, the sharing of food and protection. These are terms of address that every individual has in common with many others of the same sex. Like the personal name, but even more obviously, the endearment name cannot be regarded as a means of expressing and conveying a strictly individual identity.

### *When the winds of change rise ...*

Although they are still very isolated due both to the nature of their environment and to administrative factors, the Ankave are increasingly subjected to contact with missionary groups. The Lutheran Church, whose services are two days' walk away, periodically sends an

evangelist to teach those who so wish the rudiments of reading and writing using the New Testament published in Tok Pisin (Melanesian Pidgin). His role is also to baptise these 'converts', a ritual whose simultaneous consequences are the risk of catching cold from being plunged into the icy waters of the nearest stream and the acquisition of a new name. Naturally these names are taken from the only book they have ever held. And needless to say, the names are immediately altered to fit the specificities of the Ankave language so that the name of the Biblical figure is sometimes hard to deduce from the local pronunciation.

The adoption and use of such a name in everyday life is far from established practice; nevertheless, when we first visited the Ankave in 1987, no one would ever call someone by their Christian name; when we went back in 1994, this had become possible, though infrequent. Such changes notwithstanding, there is no child who has not been given a name constructed according to the rules described in this article on the pretext that the evangelist of the moment had already given them a Christian name. Today kin terms and endearment names still hold sway.

It seems highly likely that, when the Ankave anthroponymic system does begin to change, one of the specificities of this system, homonymy, will play a prominent role.<sup>42</sup> It is clear that this basic principle does not prevent taking a Christian name. The fact that several people may be called John, Rebecca or Abraham in no way disrupts the naming habits the Ankave inherited from their ancestors, since many villages often have two *Idzadze Ngudze* or two *Ikundi wie'*. That being said, recent experience shows that these habits run little risk of being abandoned for Biblical names, if only because the latter do not easily lend themselves to application of the rules for naming siblings, which is the second major feature of the Ankave anthroponymic system.

## Footnotes

- 1 See Mauss (1938), Lévi-Strauss (1962).
- 2 Bromberger (1982: 113).
- 3 See Glasse (1987), Ryan (1958), Strathern (1970), Harrison (1985), Wagner (1972).
- 4 See, e.g. Martin (1992).
- 5 For more details, see Bromberger (1982: 104), Brutti (1993: 3–7), Zonabend (1980: 9).
- 6 Bromberger (1982: 103; see also note 3).
- 7 Zonabend (1980: 18).
- 8 Lévi-Strauss (1962: 248; English translation, p. 187).
- 9 See Pierre Lemonnier's article, this volume.
- 10 Certain demographic phenomena nevertheless make it difficult to respect exogamy in every clan. Some members of the Idzadze clan, notably, which accounts for 50 per cent of the total population, find it hard to avoid intermarriage.
- 11 The same is true among the Orokaiva (Iteanu 1990: 38). On the other hand, among the Manambu, studied by Simon Harrison, 'the basic elements of a person's social identity at Atavip are, first of all, his name, and secondly his paternity and matrification' (Harrison 1990: 57). Likewise, the German missionary, Hermann Strauss, fascinated with the culture and language of the people now known as the Melpa, with whom he lived for many years both before and after the Second World War, writes: 'The name of a person, or of any object ... encapsulates his being and soul — indeed the name *is* the person or thing' (Strauss 1990: 168).
- 12 See also Blackwood (1978: 116).
- 13 The same practice — giving what Mimica calls 'names of endearment' — is found among the Iqwaye (Mimica 1981: 40).
- 14 The word *d̥ɔngd̥* is used in various but closely related contexts. It designates first of all the life-breath, the act of breathing, life, being alive; but in a less physical sense it also means spirit, mind, thought, consciousness, will, memory.
- 15 Recently two such cases arose: one young man changed his name because the one he had been given was not constructed properly; it referred to a clan with which neither his mother nor his father had any connection, even searching back through their respective genealogies. A small boy was also given a new name because the one he had 'would have kept him from growing'. This comment provides a rare glimpse of a link between a person's name and their physical integrity.
- 16 See respectively, Godelier (1992: 6), Herdt (1987: 157), Lemonnier, personal communication.
- 17 Something J. Turner wrote about a Fijian group applies here to the Ankave: 'While personal names in this culture identify persons in terms of their positions within a system of descent groups, teknonymy labels persons in terms of their relationship to other persons' (Turner 1991: 15).
- 18 Godelier (1992: 7).
- 19 In contrast, the Kaluli, who live near Mount Bosavi, 'usually address kinsmen ... by their personal names. Kaluli use kin terms mainly for formal greetings at ceremonial occasions or when one person wishes to stress his link to another in order to secure a request ('Brother, give me some tobacco.') (Schieffelin 1976: 58). We will see below that, in the same circumstances, an Ankave will almost invariably use the 'name of endearment'.
- 20 This situation rarely arises in small populations.
- 21 These two terms correspond to the kin terms for the category 'child'.
- 22 See respectively, Iteanu (1990: 38), Macdonald (1977: 93) and Taylor (1993: 659).
- 23 These percentages were calculated on the basis of the names of all people living in the Suowi valley in the summer of 1990. Of a total of 153 males, the names of only 125 could be analysed, as 15 were infants or very young boys who had not yet been named and the names of 13 others contained a term whose meaning was doubtful or unknown.
- 24 See note 10.
- 25 Although informants do not comment on this point, the sound of the name is often altered slightly, notably by elision, so as to distinguish individuals who would otherwise have identical names: Erau Madze for Erauje Omadze, Ngwi PatSe for Ngudze PatSe, Erwa Madze for Erwat̥ Omadze or Erwati dzadze for Erwat̥ Idzadze.

- 26 Today extinct, the Ot̄ clan was related to the Idzadze and located in the most isolated valley of the Ankave territory. As the child of two Idzadze, Oti dzadze had every chance of being named Idzadze Erauje or Erauje Idzadze, two extremely common names. The reference to the Ot̄ was probably brought in to avoid adding to the already large number of men bearing this name. (See also note 25.)
- 27 Here too percentages were calculated on the basis of the names of all people living in the Suowi valley in the summer of 1990. Out of a total of 155 female inhabitants, only 123 had names that could be analysed: 20 were infants or little girls who had not yet received a name, 10 names contained a term whose meaning was doubtful or unknown, and two women were from neighbouring tribes.
- 28 In a recent article, Mimica analyses the Iqwaye system of personal names, which turns out to be similar to the Ankave's, but much more standardized. In the Iqwaye system, the 'matri-name ... is only a component of male names. Women have only patri-names' (1991: 84).
- 29 But one can address or refer to a person simply as 'w̄d̄'a' ('the light-skinned one'), in particular when there is very little ambiguity as to the person's identity. Likewise, one can speak of 'nane b̄d̄ri'), the 'dark-skinned older sister'.
- 30 See Glasse (1987: 203), Wagner (1972: 87).
- 31 See Wagner (1972: 88) and Strathern (1970: 62). For Fiji, see Turner (1991: 11).
- 32 See also Wagner (1972: 89).
- 33 Some of these 'neutral' qualifiers seem to me closer to the nicknames analysed by F. Zonabend in the Burgundian village of Minot. In this case, 'the nickname evokes either a specific moral or physical behaviour, or a striking event in the person's life' (1977: 269).
- 34 Bonnemère (1996: 227–228).
- 35 R. Wagner says much the same about the Daribi's tendency — found among the Ankave as well — to name women after paternal rather than maternal kin (1972: 100–101).
- 36 Bonnemère (1996: 362–363).
- 37 But the rule of naming the set of brothers separately from the set of sisters applies here, too.
- 38 Zonabend (1980: 17).
- 39 J. Mimica is of a different opinion when it comes to the Iqwaye: 'The man's and woman's own patrilineal group name, the patri-name, refers to their bodily interiority, specifically the bones. The man's mother's patrilineal group name, his matri-name, refers to his bodily exteriority the flesh' (1991: 84). One wonders in passing why female names do not receive the same treatment.
- 40 For each clan there exists, in effect, a set of equivalent terms from which one can choose.
- 41 The friendly feelings surrounding the use of endearment names recall the Melpa practice of sharing a food and deciding to use the food-name as a term of address between the two persons involved (A. Strathern 1977: 504).
- 42 It is this particular feature of the Ankave naming system that I chose to evoke in the title of my article: the Ankave do not feel the need to give each person a different name. Interestingly enough, this practice is strictly avoided in other societies (see esp. Taylor 1993: 659).