

The Origin of Kiki 'to tell a story, yarn' in Police (now Hiri)
Motu

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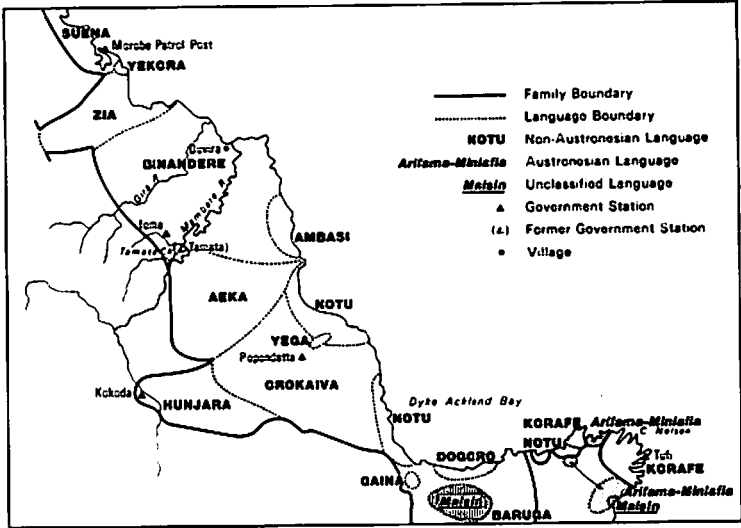
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INTRODUCTION¹

Kiki is one of two generally recognized non-Austronesian or Papuan words in Police (now Hiri) Motu², one of the two major lingue franche and unofficial national languages of Papua New Guinea today (Dutton 1986).³ This word is popularly believed (Chatterton 1970) to have come from the Tufi or Cape Nelson area of the north-east coast of the mainland "tail" of the country -- see map -- where the non-Austronesian language, Korafe, is spoken. However, given that men from this area were only recruited into the police force after this force had been established for over a decade⁴ and after Police Motu, the language of the force, had likewise been in use for over a decade, this popular tradition would seem to be at odds with historical facts so far as these are known. In fact because speakers of another non-Austronesian language, Binandere, which is related to Korafe and has the same form kiki with the same meaning in it, were in contact with Police Motu some five years earlier than those of Korafe, and were also policemen in the Tufi area when the first recruits from that area were drawn into the force, it is likely that the source of this word is more complicated than the popular tradition suggests. Consequently it is the purpose of this paper to look more closely at various aspects of this tradition and the history of the police force to see if the two can be reconciled or if some other, more satisfactory, explanation can be proposed for the origin of kiki in

Police Motu. The description and discussion are based on historical and other data obtained from present-day speakers of relevant languages in Papua New Guinea and from published and unpublished sources.

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The Binanderean Language Family

LINGUISTIC BACKGROUND

The geographic areas with which this paper is concerned are those occupied by speakers of the Korafe and Binandere languages of the north-east coast of the mainland "tail" of Papua New Guinea. The former area is that surrounding Cape Nelson in the east and the latter that around the Mambare River in the west. The Cape Nelson area is linguistically fragmented as speakers of an Austronesian language, Arifama-Miniafia, are interspersed with those of Korafe -- see map. However, it is the speakers of Korafe who inhabit the area immediately surrounding the government station at Tufi and with whom the first and closest contact was made. Today these speakers number about 2000 and those of Binandere about 3000.⁵

Binandere and Korafe are closely related languages. Both belong to the large Binanderean Family which includes some fourteen languages. Speakers of these languages occupy most of the coastal plains area between Morobe Patrol Post in the west and Cape Nelson in the east -- see map. Kiki occurs indigenously in both these languages. That is, it is descended from an earlier form whose reflexes in the present-day languages of the family manifest a k:h sound correspondence. This correspondence is a regular one, in the normal comparative linguistic sense, in Binanderean languages⁶ and is part of the evidence that has been used to establish the family. Thus kiki has the following form in the following selection of Binanderean languages:

Language	Form	Meaning	Source
Binandere	<u>kiki</u>	story	Waiko 1981:12
Orokaiva	<u>hihi</u>	legend fairy-tale	Williams: 245, 276 ibid: 282
	<u>ohihi ta hihi</u> ⁷	ancestor stories	Larsen: pers.com.
Hunjara	<u>hihi</u>	story	Waiko: pers.com.
Notu	<u>kiki</u>	story	Parrington:pers.com.
Korafe	<u>kiki</u>	story	Farr: pers.com.

Given then that kiki is an inherited word in these languages it is clear that kiki in Police Motu could have been borrowed from any one of a number of Binanderean languages which have the word in the right form and meaning.⁸ These languages include both Korafe and Binandere. However, it is not possible on purely linguistic grounds to decide which of these two suspicious sources in particular is the more likely. To do this one has to take sociolinguistic aspects

of the contact between speakers of these languages and Police Motu into consideration. These aspects are sketched in the next section.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Intensive contact with Binanderean languages may be said to have begun when, following a report by the then Governor of British New Guinea (as Papua was called then), Governor MacGregor, that "two of his officers had found colours [of gold]" on the Mambare River (Nelson 1976:91), miners flocked to the area. These miners were immediately attacked by the Binandere and both sides suffered loss of lives. The Government was then bound to act and in September, 1895, stepped in to pacify the area. As a result between six and eight Eruwatutu villages were shot -- the exact number has never been established -- and six men taken prisoner. These prisoners included Bousimai "chief of the area" (Nelson 1976: 97), Debera (ibid: 105) and Dumai (ibid: 100). They were taken to Samarai at the eastern end of the mainland to serve their sentences (AR 1895/6: 75). It is not known how long these men were kept in goal but one of them, Dumai, "became a prison warder and then a constable in the Armed Native Constabulary" (AR 1896/7:27) as the police force was called then.

Soon after these events had taken place and as the next step in the pacification programme John Green, a European Government Agent, was sent to open up a police camp on the Upper Mambare some thirty-five miles from its mouth in October, 1895. This camp was located at the point where Tamata Creek joins the main stream and just upstream from the last Binandere village. Green was chosen for this particular task because he was regarded as one of MacGregor's best field officers (AR 1896/7:28). He had first come to British New Guinea in 1892 as a plantation manager in the Central District but soon showed himself to be sympathetic to, and understanding of,

local villagers. In a short time he had acquired a speaking knowledge of Motu and Roro and some Toaripi, indigenous languages of the area. To help him in his task at Tamata Creek he was given a band of six prisoners from Samarai and a detachment of nine constables of the Armed Native Constabulary. Most of these latter were from the "Kiwai" area of the western end of the colony. A few weeks later Dumai, one of the first prisoners taken from the Mambare and referred to above was taken back by Green as one of his constables (AR 1896/7:28). Dumai was an important inclusion in Green's detachment because it was hoped that having been to Port Moresby and become a prison warder and then a constable he would be useful in helping to explain Government intentions to his fellow Binandere thereby helping to pacify them.

Meanwhile Green himself had found that he could not communicate with the Binandere and so had set about trying to learn some of their language (AR 1896/7:77). Another problem that Green and his prisoners and policemen soon encountered was that the selected site for the station was subject to flooding during the wet season on the Mambare. Consequently, in December, 1896, he selected, and set about preparing, a new site. This was on Tamata Creek itself a few kilometres upstream from the first site.

Soon afterwards in January, 1897, during the preparation of this site Green and his men were suddenly ambushed by a group of Binandere tribesmen and Green, his personal servant, Gemaruya, from Fergusson Island, and six of his policemen and prisoners were killed. Subsequent investigations have revealed that the Binandere policeman Dumai, who was not killed, was implicated in these murders. It appears that he had not acted as the Government had hoped but had helped his kinsmen organize the attack by liasing with them and by getting Green and his policemen to work unarmed (Waiko 1982:174).

As a result of this attack Bousimai, the "chief" referred to above as having been arrested in 1895, and six others (Awunia, Barago, Daudi, Gorobe, Tenge and Warari) were arrested in June and sent to Port Moresby. There they were put to work with other prisoners, but led by Bousimai, escaped soon afterwards from their Brown River camp and worked their way back home across the Owen Stanley mountains through unknown, and at that time, hostile country (Waiko 1982:179-180). Meanwhile Debera, one of those captured and imprisoned in 1895 had joined the Armed Native Constabulary in Port Moresby (Nelson 1976:105) and Amburo and Dumai had been captured (Waiko 1982:190). Soon afterwards Bousimai and the other surviving Port Moresby escapees -- two (Gorobe and Warari) had died of exposure on the trek home -- and two men from the Gira River (Topi and Yoyo) were arrested (Waiko 1982: 180-181). They were all sent to Samarai to serve prison sentences of from one to five years, except Bousimai, who was released almost immediately and made a Village Constable (Nelson 1976: 106). By this time a number of other Binandere had been recruited into the police force. They included Awada, Benumba, Tananabae, Woridabae and Nongori (Waiko 1982: 192-193). Soon afterwards Poruta and Oia, sons of Bousimai, also joined the force and appear in the story again later.

Meanwhile it was not long before Bousimai was in trouble again. This time he used his special position of trust as a government Village Constable to effect a payback murder in another part of Binandere territory (Nelson 1976: 107). Arrested and goaled at Tamata he persuaded his guards to set him free. His son Poruta "newly recruited into the police force, negotiated his surrender" (ibid). Arrested again he was sent with his wife to the newly opened government station at Tufi on Cape Nelson in the east where his two sons Poruta and Oia were serving in the police force. There, because the Lieutenant Governor of the time, George Le

Hunte, was impressed with his bearing, "the privileges of high birth [were] extended to him as a chief" and he was put on open arrest (ibid:107). Bousimai soon made himself at home and dominated the station as the Resident Magistrate Monckton, colourfully describes:

on his first day at the station, [Bousimai] began by sitting on the steps of my house; on the second day, he had oiled himself into my office, where he sat upon the floor, whilst I did my work or heard native [court] cases, throwing in a little advice at intervals; on the third day, he had made up his bed in my room; and on the fourth day, he had picked up the largest axe on the Station, and was acting as general overseer and adviser.

On patrol he likewise acted as unofficial government spokesman (ibid). After his return from Tufi he served as Village Constable again in Duriva, a new village near the mouth of the Mambare (ibid).

By this time warfare had ceased on the Mambare and the area had been totally pacified, such that some of the Binandere's old enemies were taking advantage of the situation to attack them. Even so it is reported that:

within a few years of the attack on Tamata station most of the police serving in the Northern Division had been recruited locally, and in many villages the leading men were ex-policemen. (Nelson 1976: 106).

By 1908 Binandere men formed the cream of the Armed Native Constabulary (ibid).

Meanwhile, as has already been indicated, the Cape Nelson area had begun to come under intensive government contact. A new government station was opened there in April, 1900 (AR 1899/1900: x-xi) and "four men, the first recruits ever obtained in the area" joined the police force (AR 1900/01: 63). At about the same time a number of Village Constables were appointed

in "Kaili Kaili, Mokoruru, Tewari and Arifama tribes around the station."

Thus it can be seen that Binandere speakers were in contact with Police Motu as the language of the police force and the prisons⁹ for a significantly long period before Korafe ones entered the picture. Consequently, and on these grounds alone, it is more likely that Binandere is the source of kiki in Police Motu than Korafe. However, it is well known that for borrowing (and language change generally)¹⁰ to take place something other than mere contact has to be involved. Someone has to imitate someone else for some reason (but generally for prestige reasons) to begin the process, and then, in turn, to be imitated by others.¹¹ In the present case I submit that the stimulus to the first step -- the initial imitation step -- was provided by Bousimai and that to the second -- the mechanism of spread -- by a combination of three other factors, notably:

a) the increasing numbers of Binandere entering the police force after 1895. Although there are no figures available it has already been pointed out that by 1908 "Binandere men formed the cream of the Armed Native Constabulary",

b) the reputation they brought with them as fierce and daring warriors and the reputation they developed in the force before any Korafe were recruited into it. Thus in 1900, the time when Tufi station was opened, the Commandant of the Armed Native Constabulary was already writing:

the good potential shown by men recruited in the Mambare district...has been amply born out. They are brave to a fault, yet never get out of hand. (AR 1899/1900:87)

c) the occurrence of kiki in Korafe, the language surrounding Tufi station.

Thus it seems to me very likely that because Bousimai was a very dominant character, a "chief" in his own right, and a demonstrated leader he was automatically respected, especially at Tufi where, as noted above, he took charge of the station. In addition he was probably also an engaging and dramatic story teller -- he certainly must have had a fund stories or kiki to tell judging by the varied and exciting experiences he had been through -- as many are in Papua New Guinea. As a result he probably exerted a temendous influence on those who came in contact with him, an influence probably exaggerated by the presence of two of his own sons in the police force and on the station at Tufi at the same time. For these reasons it would seem highly likely that he became known as the great story teller, the great kiki man, and been imitated in certain respects. As a result kiki most probably not only entered Police Motu in association with him but also became associated with Tufi.

CONCLUSION

In review then it seems to me that one does not need to go beyond the received tradition and the early history of the police force in British New Guinea/Papua to find a satisfactory explanation for the origin of kiki in Police Motu. Thus it seems to me highly likely, given the particular history of contact of the north-east coast and the particular sociolinguistic circumstances operating on Tufi station at the time that:

a) although kiki occurs in Korafe, the non-Austronesian language spoken around Tufi, it probably did not enter Police Motu directly from that source as the tradition claims, but is more likely to have entered it from the related non-Austronesian language Binandere;

b) although kiki was originally borrowed as a Binandere word it probably became popular at Tufi and can be said to have entered Police Motu at that location as the tradition claims.

In other words the traditional claim that kiki is a non-Austronesian word from the Tufi area can be seen to be partly correct, a half truth: Tufi was the geographic locus of the borrowing but not the linguistic one -- that was from Binandere, a related language spoken at the opposite end of the family chain.

NOTES

1) This is a revised version of a paper presented to the annual conference of the Australian Linguistic Society, Brisbane, August, 1985. I should like to thank Dr. John Waiko of the Department of History, the University of Papua New Guinea, and Messrs Doug Parrington, Bud Larsen, and James Farr, members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics working in the Notu, Orokaiva and Korafe languages respectively, for supplying some of the linguistic and other information on which this paper is based.

2) The other word is nakimi which comes from Koriki in the Gulf of Papua (Dutton 1978).

3) Police Motu is a pidgin language whose origin is unknown. For a long time it was popularly believed to have developed out of contact language used by the Motu on annual trading expeditions or hiri to the Gulf of Papua. This popular belief has recently been shown to be false and that the language most probably developed out of a simplified form of Motu used by the Motu as a Foreigner Talk in the Port Moresby area before the arrival of Europeans (Dutton 1986). In any case most of the basic vocabulary of Police

Motu comes from Motu, the Austronesian language spoken around Port Moresby, with a significant, and not normally considered section coming from "broken" and other varieties of English (e.g., halusia, kesikesi, plaimasin, rais, traim, mikisim etc) that have been spoken in British New Guinea/Papua throughout history. Smaller amounts also come from other languages in this area as well as from the languages spoken by many of the early polynesian pastor-teachers that were brought to Papua by the London Missionary Society from 1872 onwards (ibid).

4) The first official police force was established in British New Guinea by Sir William MacGregor, the first governor of the colony. This force was called the Armed Native Constabulary and was more like a paramilitary force than a real police force although it was popularly known as such. For further details see Dutton 1986.

5) These figures are based on government census figures of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The exact numbers are not important to the present paper, however.

6) Consider, for example, the following words for 'above' and 'new' respectively, in these languages: Binandere: ikane; Orokaiva: i; Hunjara: ihare; Notu: i; Korafe: ika, and Binandere: teka; Orokaiva: eha; Hunjara: eha; Notu: seka; Korafe: seka (Farr and Larsen 1979).

7) Lit. 'ancestor possessive story'.

8) Note, here, that although kiki may have originally been a Binandere or Korafe word it does not mean that it cannot and has not been borrowed back into those and/or other languages of the Binanderean family, for it has. Thus, in those languages which originally had hihi as their form of kiki the Police Motu form kiki

may now be heard in appropriate contexts. This borrowing unfortunately clouds the origin issue for some Papua New Guineans I have spoken to but linguists should have no trouble keeping the two separate.

9) There is ample documentary evidence to support this claim. Indeed these two institutions were regarded as the main "education" agencies of the Government at the time. Because those who passed through them (often "graduating" from prison to police force) learned Police Motu they provided the Government with handy representatives and interpreters in an increasing number of villages throughout the colony from 1890 onwards (Dutton 1986).

10) This has been known for a long time and has been reinforced more recently by such studies as Labov's of New York r and Trudgill's of Norwich ng.

11) Unfortunately it is not known how well Bousimai spoke Police Motu but judging by Monckton's description of him quoted above "throwing in a little advice at intervals" during the hearing of native court cases it would seem that he did so quite well. There is ample documentary evidence that prisoners and police recruits "picked up" Police Motu quickly.

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