

philippine studies

Ateneo de Manila University • Loyola Heights, Quezon City • 1108 Philippines

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John S. Carroll

Philippine Studies vol. 23, no. 1-2 (1975): 30–35

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Fri June 27 13:30:20 2008

Trans-Pacific Distribution of the Honorific *apu*

JOHN S. CARROLL

The Malayo-Polynesian or Austronesian family of languages has two principal subfamilies: Malay and Polynesian. Malay languages abound from Madagascar on the west, Indonesia on the south, the Marianas on the east, and Taiwan on the north. Polynesian languages extend across the Pacific Ocean in a triangle marked by Hawaii, Easter Island, and New Zealand.

In the Quechua language of Perú — the language of the Inca empire — the honorific *apu* means "lord, high dignitary."¹

The dialects of Polynesia are not identical, but they are so close as to be mutually intelligible. A Hawaiian can communicate in Hawaiian with a Maori in New Zealand or with an Easter Islander. Because dictionaries of all the myriad Polynesian dialects are not readily available, I have chosen five Polynesian tongues that are representative: Hawaiian,² Easter Island,³ Samoan,⁴ Tahitian,⁵ and Maori.⁶ The honorific *apu* is in none of these dialects and therefore a reasonable conclusion is that it exists nowhere in Polynesia.⁷

1. Jesús Lara, *Diccionario Qhëshwa-Castellano Castellano-Qhëshwa*, Editorial Los Amigos del Libro, La Paz (1971).

2. Mary Kawena Pukui and Samuel H. Elbert, *Hawaiian-English Dictionary*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu (1957).

3. Jordi Fuentes, *Diccionario y gramática de la lengua de la isla de Pascua*, Editorial Universitaria, Santiago de Chile (1960).

4. G. R. Milner, *Samoan Dictionary*, Oxford University Press, London (1966).

5. Edmund Andrews and Irene D. Andrews, *A Comparative Dictionary of the Tahitian Language*, The Chicago Academy of Sciences, Chicago (1944).

6. A. W. Reed, *Maori Dictionary*, George Allen & Unwin, London (1956).

7. In Maori, one meaning of *pu* is "wise person," but it apparently is a

Melanesian dictionaries are more difficult to acquire; but three of them show no honorific even remotely similar to *apu*.⁸

Strangely, however, *apu* is ubiquitous in the Philippine Archipelago, where the languages are Malay-type, and exists on Java but is absent in the Malay Peninsula.

The Ilocano tongue, spoken on the northwestern coast of Luzon, has *apo* meaning "lord" or "sir."⁹ Among the Kalingas in the central highlands of northern Luzon, "*apo* refers to grandparent, grandchild, or any lateral kin of their generations" and "is a term of greatest respect as well, so that a distinguished stranger is addressed by that title, even by people of his own age."¹⁰ An adjacent group, the Igorots, use *apó* to signify "leader, sir; ancestors before grandparents' generation, grandson or grandson's descendants," with the verbs *men-apó* and *apoén* being "to lead."¹¹ Tagalog, which is the language of Manila and the surrounding provinces, retains *apó* as a "term used as a sign of respect and reverence for the aged; idolize; worship; boss" or "headman, grandfather" and *pó* as a "particle used in respectful address, more or less equivalent to English 'sir' or 'madam.'" ¹² In the Bikol language on the southern tip of Luzon, *apo* and *po*

short form of *pukenga*, "teacher" or "wise person." In Hawaiian, *kupuna*, shortened to *puna*, means "grandparent, ancestor, relative of the grandparents' generation, grandaunt, granduncle."

8. A. Capell, *A New Fijian Dictionary*, Australasian Medical Publishing Co., Sydney (1941); Walter G. Ivens, *Grammar and Vocabulary of the Lau Language, Solomon Islands*, Carnegie Institution, Washington (1921); Walter G. Ivens, *Dictionary and Grammar of the Language of Sa'a and Ulawa, Solomon Islands*, Carnegie Institution, Washington (1968).

9. P. Jacobo Enriquez and J. Ben Quimba, *English-Tagalog-Ilocano Vocabulary*, Philippine Book Company, Manila (1949).

10. Elman R. Service, *A Profile of Primitive Culture*, Harper & Brothers, New York (1958) p. 272.

11. William Henry Scott, *A Vocabulary of the Sagada Igorot Dialect*, Philippine Studies Program, Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago (1957).

12. Jaime C. de Veyra, *A National Language-English Vocabulary*, Bureau of Printing, Manila (1950); P. Jacobo Enriquez and Maria Odulio Guzman, *English-Tagalog Tagalog-English Vocabulary*, Philippine Book Company, Manila (1949).

have the same meanings as *apò* and *pô* in Tagalog.¹³ On the island of Mindanao in the southern Philippines, the Bagobos use the word *apo* to mean "grandfather";¹⁴ these people live on the flanks of a mountain called Apo. And in *bahasa* Sug, spoken in the Sulu Archipelago between Mindanao and Borneo and in Sabah (North Borneo), *apoh* is "sir."¹⁵

In the peninsular Malay language, which prevails in southern Thailand, south throughout the Malay Peninsula, and in some parts of Sumatra, Borneo, and the Moluccas and which is substantially the same as *bahasa* Indonesia, the honorific meaning "lord," "sir," or "master" is *tuan*, and the word signifying "grandfather" or "chief" is *dato*.¹⁶ *Apu* is not in peninsular Malay.¹⁷ Likewise, the Sea Dayaks (Ibans) of Sarawak use *tuan*

13. J. V. Panganiban, *Lexical Check List: National Language-Bikol (Naga)-English*, ms., Manila (1956).

14. Mateo Gisbert, *Diccionario Español-Bagobo*, Establecimiento Tipográfico de J. Marty, Manila (1892).

15. René Copet, *Taosug Dictionary*, Notre Dame of Jolo Press, Jolo (1957).

16. Richard Winstedt, *Malay-English Dictionary*, Marican & Sons, Singapore (1957); Richard Winstedt, *English-Malay Dictionary*, Marican & Sons, Singapore (1957); Vernon E. Hendershot and W. G. Shellabear, *A Dictionary of Standard Malay*, Pacific Press Publishing Association, Mountain View, California (1945); Lee Yu-k'ai, *Cathay's New Concise Malay-English Dictionary*, Cathay Press, Singapore (1960); R. R. Dykstra and Johanna C. Riedhorst, *A Malay Dictionary*, United States Armed Forces in the Far East, Sydney (1944); S. Wojowasito, W. J. S. Poerwadarminta, S. A. M. Gaastra, and J. C. Tan, *Kamus Umum Inggeris Indonesia*, W. Versluys N. V., Djakarta (1959); S. Wojowasito, W. J. S. Poerwadarminta, and S. A. M. Gaastra, *Kamus Indonesia Inggeris*, W. Versluys N. V., Djakarta (1959). However, *puan* is the feminine form of *tuan*.

17. *Ibid.* However, two Chinese sources say that before the Yüan Dynasty the honorific *pu* was current in San-bo-tsai or San-fo-ts'i, believed to be Palembang in a Malay-speaking region on Sumatra. The *Sung Shih* (History of the Sung Dynasty) records: "The king [of San-bo-tsai] is styled Chan-p'i, and in his country there are many people whose family name is P'u." See To To *et al.*, *Sung Shih*, Book 489, translated in W. P. Groenveltdt, "Notes on the Malay Archipelago and Malacca," *Miscellaneous Papers Relating to Indo-China and the Indian Archipelago*, Trübner & Co., London (1887) vol. I p. 188. The dates of the Sung Dynasty are 912-1279 A.D., but the authors of the *Sung Shih* compiled it in 1343 or 1367. Chau Ju-kua in his *Chu Fan Shih* (Records of Barbarous Nations) wrote in 1225 A.D.: "A large proportion of the people of this country [San-fo-ts'i]

to mean "master, lord" and *datu* to mean "nobleman, chief" but not *apu*.¹⁸ The Kadazans in Sabah employ *tuan* as "lord, sir, master, priest" and *datu* as "native chief, especially one who is wealthy" but lack *apu*.¹⁹ *Datu* has a similar meaning in the Maranao and Maguindanao languages of Mindanao. *Dato'* perhaps is an old peninsular Malay word, for it appears as *atô* signifying "grandfather" among the aboriginal Sakais.²⁰ Perhaps *dato'* or *atô* in peninsular Malay became *apo* in the Philippines, but a t-p correspondence is not common.

In fourteenth century Javanese, *pu* meant "sir."²¹

The honorific *apu* is not in the Malagasy language of Madagascar,²² the western-most Malay-type language.

The Philippine Archipelago has some 156 languages, and Indonesia has more than 200. Perú had many, but all except Quechua and Aymara are extinct or virtually extinct. I have been able to compare only a few of these many vocabularies. Within this limitation, the indications are:

- (1) That the honorific *apu* exists in the Quechua language of Perú.
- (2) That the honorific *apu* is absent in Polynesia and Melanesia.
- (3) That the honorific *apu* extends throughout the Philippine Archipelago, the *bahasa* Sug-speaking part of Sabah, and Java but not in the Malay Peninsula or Madagascar.

are surnamed P'u." See Friedrich Hirth and W. W. Rockhill, *Chau Ju-Kua: His Work on the Chinese and Arab Trade in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries, Entitled Chu-fan-chi*, Imperial Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg (1911) p. 60. In Chinese, the family name comes first; hence, a Chinese would assume that a Javanese called Pu Wiramandalike would be surnamed "P'u" whereas the "Pu" actually means "sir" and is not a patronym. Either the honorific *pu* faded from the Malay language after the thirteenth century, or the people called *pu* were Javanese.

18. N. C. Scott, *A Dictionary of Sea Dayak*, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, London (1956).

19. A. Antonissen, *Kadazan-English and English-Kadazan Dictionary*, Government Printing Office, Canberra (1958).

20. R. J. Wilkinson, *A Vocabulary of Central Sakai*, Papers on Malay Subjects, Federated Malay States Government Press, Kuala Lumpur (1915).

21. Rakawi Prapañca, *Nagara-Kêrtagama* (1365 A.D.), in Theodore G. Th. Pigeaud, *Java in the 14th Century*, Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde, Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague (1963) vol. v p. 328.

22. V. Malzac, *Dictionnaire Français-Malgache*, Société d'Éditions Géographiques, Maritimes et Coloniales, Paris (1953).

If it is not sheer coincidence, this trans-Pacific distribution of the honorific *apu* suggests the possibility of contacts in the past between the Quechuas of Perú and the peoples of the Philippines and Java. One word, however, is not enough to prove either migration, trade, or conquest.

History offers one parallel for consideration: the Arawak word *cacique* from Cuba and the Caribbean, meaning "chief," exists not only in the Castilian of Spain but also in the Tagalog of the Philippines. The Spaniards borrowed the word from the Arawaks when Spanish adventurers conquered the Caribbean islands, carried it to Spain, and introduced it in the Philippines a half century later. Yet no Arawaks were ever in the Philippines, and no Arawaks were ever in Spain except a few captives. *Apu*, however, antedated the Europeans not only in Perú but also in Southeast Asia.²³

The mountain-dwelling Quechuas in Perú were not sailors, but the Yungas who lived on the coast did venture onto the Pacific Ocean.²⁴ Even so, the known fragments of the Yunga language contain no mention of *apu* or any similar honorific.²⁵

23. Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa, *Historia de los Incas*, Emecé Editores, Buenos Aires (1941) pp. 123-125.

24. *Ibid.*; Miguel Cabello Valboa, *Miscelánea antártica*, Instituto de Etnología, Facultad de Letras, Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Lima (1951) pp. 322-325. The Spaniards and Quechuas called all lowland dwellers Yungas. The Tallanes of Tumbes, who were Yungas, were excellent sailors.

25. Fernando de la Carrera, *Arte de la lengua yunga*, Instituto de Antropología, Tucuman (1939). This edition of Fernando de la Carrera's text, originally written in 1644 and re-edited by Radames A. Altieri in 1939, contains not only de la Carrera's Yunga vocabulary but also Yunga word lists compiled by Adolfo Bastian in 1878, Federico Villareal in 1920, and Rafael Larco Hoyle in 1939. This Yunga language is the coastal Yunga, which had four dialects: (1) a fishermen's tongue called Pescadora by the Spaniards, (2) Sec spoken by the Tallanes of Tumbéz, (3) Muchic spoken by the Mochica, and (4) Chimú or Quingnam used from the Moche Valley 200 miles south to the Rimac River near Lima. The Yunga language is virtually extinct, even though it was the language of the great Chimú civilization conquered by the Incas, and now exists only in the village of Iten and possibly in the village of Monsefú. These published remnants of the coastal Yunga dialects are so scanty that no one can be sure whether these people had the honorific *apu*. Federico Villareal, *La lengua yunga o*

No people in the Philippine and Indonesian Archipelagoes has any recorded history or legend about a voyage across the Pacific Ocean. In Perú, the Spaniards heard tales that the merchants of Tumbéz and Tupac Inca Yupanqui, who was the tenth Inca, sailed west onto the sea in the fifteenth century²⁶ and that the god Tici-Viracocha left by way of the sea centuries earlier.²⁷ But no archaeologist has found any South American artifacts in Southeast Asia or any Southeast Asian artifacts in South America. In the absence of artifacts, scholars should not hasten to postulate trans-Pacific voyages between South America and Southeast Asia before Magellan even though the trans-Pacific distribution of the honorific *apu* is provocative evidence.

mochica, Imprenta Peruana de E. Z. Casanova, Lima (1921) listed *çieç*, *çieqn.eio*, and *çieçen* as meaning señor (lord, sir) and *çiequich* as *gran señor* (great lord).

26. Pedro Sarmiento de Gamboa, *ibid.*; Miguel Cabello Valboa, *ibid.*

27. Pedro de Cieza de León, *La Crónica del Perú*, translated by Harriet de Onis and edited by Victor Wolfgang von Hagen, *The Incas of Pedro Cieza de León*, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman (1969) pp. 27–30.