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ANCIENT TAHITI

by
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TERMINOLOGY AND MANNER OF RECKONING

INTRODUCTION

The Tahitian methods of reckoning time and space were recorded at the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth centuries.

The extent of the knowledge of Tahitians of numbers, time and seasons, and of geographical relation of places at a period when the people had little need of mental exertion and when they had no written form of keeping records have surprised early foreign observers, and seem to point back with certainty to an age and a race far advanced in civilization.

NUMBERS

Numbers¹ went as high as the *'i*, or million, and the knowledge of them was maintained by the pastime of counting, of which the Tahitians were very fond. For this amusement two or three players took small sticks, generally the rib of the coconut leaf, and broke them into short lengths. After placing them in a central heap, the players would take them off one by one, mentioning the number as they reached the tens, the hundreds, and the thousands, respectively, each of which was represented by a special length of stick; and the aim was to try to reach the million first.

There are two forms of counting: first, with the prefix *a*, signifying that the number is just completed; second, with the prefix *e*, signifying that the number has already been completed, or will be. For example:

A hia ta'ata, a hia 'tura ta'ata?
A piti ta'ata, a piti atura ta'ata.

How many persons are there now?
There are now two persons.

and,

E hia ta'ata i tae mai?
E piti ta'ata i tae mai.
E hia ta'ata e haere mai?
E piti ta'ata e haere mai.

How many persons came?
Two persons came.
How many persons are coming?
Two persons are coming.

Several of the old words expressing numbers have been changed for new ones, some of which have been taken from the English.

In the following list the words printed in italics are obsolete in Tahiti but still extant in some other groups².

¹ Numbers were given by King Pomare II in 1818; the appropriation of the higher numbers and the four fundamental rules of arithmetic in the Tahitian language were taught by the English missionaries. Records of the system of money and the weights and measures came from various sources.

² In Ellis, Fornander, and others, the numerals are to be found intact, or with slight deviations in some dialects, throughout Polynesia and westward, even to Madagascar.

A tahi, ho'e.	One.
A piti, a <i>rua</i> .	Two.
A toru.	Three.
A maha, a <i>hà</i> .	Four.
A pae, a <i>rima</i> .	Five.
A ono, a <i>fene</i> .	Six.
A hitu.	Seven.
A va'u, a <i>varu</i> .	Eight.
A iva.	Nine.
A tahi 'ahuru, a tahi <i>tini</i> , ³ ho'e ahuru, ho'e <i>tini</i> .	Ten.
A tahi ahuru-ma-ho'e, a tahi <i>tini</i> - ma-ho'e.	Eleven.
A tahi 'ahuru-ma-piti, a tahi <i>tini</i> - <i>ma</i> - <i>rua</i> .	Twelve.
A tahi 'ahuru-ma-toru, a tahi- <i>tini</i> - <i>ma</i> - toru.	Thirteen.
A tahi 'ahuru-ma-maha, a tahi <i>tini</i> - <i>ma</i> - <i>ha</i> .	Fourteen.
A tahi 'ahuru-ma-pae, a tahi <i>tini</i> - <i>ma</i> - <i>rima</i> .	Fifteen.
A tahi 'ahuru-ma-ono, a tahi <i>tini</i> - <i>ma</i> - <i>fene</i> .	Sixteen.
A tahi 'ahuru-ma-hitu, a tahi <i>tini</i> - <i>ma</i> - <i>hitu</i> .	Seventeen.
A tahi 'ahuru-ma-va'u, a tahi <i>tini</i> - <i>ma</i> - <i>varu</i> .	Eighteen.
A tahi 'ahuru-ma-iva, a tahi <i>tini</i> - <i>ma</i> - iva.	Nineteen.

All the units are united with the following tens as in the above teens.

A piti 'ahuru, a <i>rua tini</i> .	Twenty.
A piti 'ahuru ma ho'e.	Twenty-one.
A toru 'ahuru, a toru <i>tini</i> .	Thirty.
A maha 'ahuru, a <i>há tini</i> .	Forty.
A pae 'ahuru, a <i>rima tini</i> .	Fifty.
A ono 'ahuru, a <i>fene tini</i> .	Sixty.
A hitu 'ahuru, a hitu <i>tini</i> .	Seventy.
A va'u 'ahuru, a <i>varu tini</i> .	Eighty.
A iva 'ahuru, a iva <i>tini</i> .	Ninety.
A tahi hanere, a tahi <i>rau</i> , ho'e hanere, ho'e <i>rau</i> .	One hundred.
A tahi hanere-ma-ho'e, a tahi <i>rau</i> - ma-ho'e, ho'e hanere-ma-ho'e, or ho'e <i>rau</i> -ma-ho'e.	One hundred and one.

The units are added to the hundreds and to all the higher numbers in the same manner as in the tens.

A piti hanere, a <i>rua rau</i> .	Two hundred.
A toru hanere, a toru <i>rau</i> .	Three hundred.
A maha hanere, a <i>há rau</i> .	Four hundred.
A pae hanere, a <i>rima rau</i> .	Five hundred.
A ono hanere, a <i>fene rau</i> .	Six hundred.
A hitu hanere.	Seven hundred.
A va'u, a varu hanere.	Eight hundred.
A iva hanere.	Nine hundred.

³ In every instance *tini* is employed like 'ahuru, and ho'e is used without a when used instead of a tahi or e tahi.

A tahi tauatini (thousand), a tahi <i>mano</i> .	One thousand.
A piti tauatini, a <i>rua mano</i> .	Two thousand.
A tahi <i>mano tini</i> , ho'e <i>mano tini</i> , a tahi 'ahuru tauatini, ho'e 'ahuru tauatini.	Ten thousand.
A <i>rua mano tini</i> , a piti ahuru tauatini.	Twenty thousand.
A tahi <i>rehu</i> , a tahi hanere tauatini.	One hundred thousand.
A tahi 'iu, ho'e 'iu, a tahi mirioni.	One million.
A <i>tini 'iu</i> , ho'e 'iu <i>tini</i> , a tahi 'ahuru mirioni.	Ten million.
A tahi <i>rau 'iu</i> , ho'e <i>rau 'iu</i> , a <i>rau iu</i> , a tahi hanere mirioni.	One hundred million.
A <i>mano 'iu</i> , a tahi pirioni, ho'e pirioni.	One billion.
A <i>mano tini te 'iu</i> , a tahi 'ahuru pirioni, ho'e 'ahuru pirioni.	Ten billion.
A tahi tirioni, ho'e tirioni.	One trillion.

The higher denominations, seldom used, are also Tahitianized at pleasure. The words *tini* and *rau* are also used to express "many", *rau* is the commoner form. The expression for "repeat" is *ta rua* or *ta piti* (make two).

In making nouns of numeral adjectives the second form is always employed, and the article *te* (the) is used before the number one: *te ho'e* or *te tahi*.

Ordinal numbers are formed by applying the article *te* to all the numerals except the first, when *matamua* stands for one, *te matamua*, *te piti*, *te toru* (the first, the second, the third), etc. *Te 'ahuru ma ho'e* (the eleventh), *te piti 'ahuru ma ho'e* (the twenty-first), or *te toru 'ahuru ma ho'e* (the thirty-first), is the manner of expressing first when connected with the tens.

Matamua is also applicable to unity of plural numbers, thus: *te hanere matamua* (the first hundred), *te tauatini matamua* (the first thousand).

By adding the prefix *tai* the assorting numbers are formed:

Ta'i tahi or ta'i ho'e.	One at a time.
Ta'i piti or ta'i rua.	Two at a time.
Ta'i toru.	A triplet.
Ta'i maha, ta'i hà.	A quadruple.

There is also a dual form of counting in which *taau* (score) is the unity: *a tahi ta'au*, *a piti ta'au* (one score, two score). The higher numbers are thus doubled, *a tahi hanere*, *a tahi tauatini* (one hundred, one thousand) becoming two hundred, two thousand. In this way they count bonitos in fishing, and house thatch, which is set on long reeds when prepared for covering, breadfruit, and coconuts in great quantities.

In counting oranges for shipping purposes, two men will take up five oranges, respectively, thus making ten, and place them together in a heap,

saying as they do so: "*A tahi, a piti* (one, two) and so on, counting them as units, until they get to ten, when instead of saying ten tens, or a hundred, they say "*Tàrê!*" from the word "tally." Each time that this is done the person keeping tally of the oranges marks down a stroke and so the counting is repeated, and soon the thousands are checked off. This tallying is done in a long shed by several groups at a time, and is considered exciting, pleasant work.

The four rules of arithmetic are expressed as follows: *amuira'a*, addition; *iritira'a*, subtraction; *fa'arahira'a*, multiplication; *tuhara'a*, division.

MONEY

The unity of money (*moni*) in the Society Islands is the *tàrà* (dollar), applied to the American dollar, the French five-franc piece, and the Spanish piaster. The French franc, the American quarter, and the English shilling are called *toata* (quarter). Ten-cent coins of any nationality are called *raera*, from the Spanish *real*. Five-cent coins are called *tirini*, a misapplication of shilling; and copper money of any kind is *pene* (penny).

Moni pirû signifies gold coin of any kind, the word *Pirû* meaning Peru misapplied. *Auro* (ancient British *aur*) commonly means gold.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

Foreign systems of weights and measures were adopted from traders and teachers. Formerly weights were merely estimated by the Tahitians by comparing the weight of one thing with another. They have readily adopted the French kilo, which is called *tiro*, and the English pound, which is called *paunu*. *Toe'a* is the word for remainder, and they have adopted the word *afa* for half. Liquids are measured by their containers, the French liter being the standard measure, which they call *ritira*. The barrel is called *paero*.

In linear measure the *etaeta* (fathom) is the unity, ten of which make the *umi*, a measurement used in making ropes, hat braids, etc., and in building large houses and making fences. Anything less than a fathom is called a *tape* (remnant). In olden times short lengths were measured by the span, also called '*eta'eta*, with its corresponding *tape* or remnants. But they have extensively adopted the French metrical system and the English yard measure, finding these more exact in fractions for practical purposes.

Distance they commonly estimate according to the time that it takes to travel from one place to another, making allowances for the rapidity of the means of conveyance. But they easily learn to reckon it by the kilometer (*tirometa*) and the mile (*maire*).

RECKONING TIME*

At six o'clock in the morning and at six in the evening, the tide in the Society Islands is lowest, and at midday and midnight it is highest. As this happens regularly all the year round, it serves as an index to time. The following expressions are used:

Pananura'a o te tai, influx of the tide; *t'amahara'a o te tai*, low tide, revealing the coral reef; *tai manina*, smooth, calm sea; *miti ha'apo'opo'o*, high sea undulating; *miti arepurepu* [*rapu*] rough sea.

In former times the Tahitians spoke of the day as *ru'i* (night), thus: *ho'e ru'i*, a *rua ru'i*, e *toru ru'i* (one night, two nights, three nights); or reversed, with the same meaning, *ru'i ho'e*, *ru'i rua*, *ru'i toru*. But they have long since adopted the word *mahana*, literally meaning "sun," for day, in conformity to the European manner of speaking, thus: *ho'e mahana*, e *piti mahana*, e *toru mahana*. And they now ask for the date of the month in this form: "*Eaha te tai'o no te ava'e?*" (What is the number in the month?).

The first day, the second day, the third day, are thus expressed: *Te mahana matamua*, *te piti o te mahana*, *te toru o te mahana*, all but the first of which are frequently shortened by dropping the latter part, "*o te mahana*"; *te piti*, *te toru*, etc.

They carefully observed the lunar months throughout the year, which they called *ava'e* (moons), and for each of which they had a name. To this form fishermen still more or less adhere as a guide in looking for the seasons of certain kinds of fish, and also for the days and nights when the fish come in most plentifully. The calendar month is also called *ava'e* (moon).

The year (*matahiti*) was observed, but as the language had no written form, no period of years had been established by which to record events, so the Tahitians soon forgot the ages of their children; no adult could tell how old he was, but judged his age approximately by circumstances that transpired. Being good genealogists, they reckoned long periods by the *u'i* or generation. The names of their kings and queens vaguely marked the succession of those *u'i*.

The time of day was computed as follows:

E tu'ira'a ru'i or pō.	Midnight.
E uera'a rui or pō.	Midnight.
E vehera'a pō.	Night evenly divided.
Pananura'a tai.	High tide.
Ua nano te tai.	The tide has reached its highest.

*Received in 1836 from the lips of King Pomare II and from Tamera, a high priest. In 1891 additions were made, through the help of Mrs. Walker, by Mrs. Arii-taimai Salmon, high chiefess of Papara; and by Umarea, son of a high chief of Mo'orea. European forms were introduced by the English missionaries.

Ua pabe'e te tai.	The sea is receding.
Ua fana'e te tai ao.	The sea is ebbing towards day.
Ua tai ao.	It is the tide of dayspring.
Ua 'a'aoa te moa matamua.	It is the first cockcrow.
Ua 'a'aoa te moa mataroto.	It is the second cockerow.
Ua 'a'aoa te moa matamuri.	It is the last cockcrow.
Ua oviriviri te 'oma'oma'o.	The thrush is singing (near day-light).
Tei ni'a te fetu nui, ua po'ipo'i.	The great star has risen, it is morning.
O Ta'urua horo 'a'ahiata tei ni'a.	The morning star has risen.
Ua a'ehaehae te ata.	The clouds are parting asunder.
Tei ni'a te ata 'ura'ura.	The red clouds have risen.
Ua pû te ata, ua fei pû te ata.	The masses of dense clouds precede the sun.
Te apura'a ata.	The dispersion of the clouds.
Te 'aura'a o te ata 'ura'ura.	Drifting off of the red clouds.
Te tamaumau ra te 'a'ooara'a moa.	Cockcrowing is general (twilight).
Ua maru oa.	It is the shadow of morning.
Ua oa roa.	It is the dawn of day.
Ua fera'orao.	Flies are beginning to stir.
Ua itea te mata ta'ata.	The face of man can be distinguished.
E hiti mahana.	Bordering sun rays.
Ua opu a'era te mahana.	The sun is inflated (appearing great in the horizon).
Ua ofao a'era te mahana.	The sun is mostly revealed.
Ua faura te mahana.	The sun is revealed (just above the horizon).
Ua poipoi roa.	It is early morning.
Ua matitititi te mahana.	The sun's rays are spreading.
Ua itea pa'ato'a te mahana.	The whole of the sun is visible.
Te vero ra te hiti mahana.	The sun's rays are shooting forth.
Te maoaoa ra te ata o te mahana	The sun's reflection is glary upon the sea.
i ni'a i te tai.	The sun's rays sparkle upon the sea.
Ua purapura a'era te mahana i te miti.	
Tei ni'a té mahana.	The sun has quite risen.
Ua teitei ta'ato'a te mahana.	The sun has quite risen.
Ua ta'ue'ue roa te mahana i ni'a.	The sun is quite suspended.
Ua turua te mahana.	The sun's warmth is spreading.
Te hû mahana maira.	(About half an hour high).
Ua hihî pû mahana te râ.	The sun is reflected (in the sea).
Ua peretia te ra.	(About 7 a.m.)
Ua pa'are te râ.	The sun's rays come from its disk.
Ua matua te râ.	(About 8 a.m.)
Ua noho tara te râ.	The sun is spreading its rays everywhere. (About 9 a.m.)
Ua ta nini upo'o te râ.	The sun is producing waves. (The tide)
Vehera'a ao.	The sun has waxed strong (About 10 a.m.)
Ua tohu ti'a te râ.	The sun sits at an angle. (About 11 a.m.)
Ua avatea roa.	The sun is over the crown of the head.
Ua ha'atiati te ra.	Day evenly divided.
Ua pananu te tai.	The sun points its rays evenly.
	It is quite noon.
	The sun shines with no shadows.
	It is high tide.

Ua nano te tai.	The tide has reached its highest.
Ua umata tea te tiare.	The <i>Gardenia tahitensis</i> flowers are fully open.
Ua ta'a te râ.	The sun has passed (the meridian).
Ua taha te râ.	The sun is slanting.
Te tapa o te râ, or te tahara'a o te râ.	The declining of the sun.
Ua pahe'e te miti.	The sea is receding.
Te pahe'era'a o te tai.	The ebbing of the sea.
Ua tape te râ, ua tapetape te râ.	The sun is shortening its course.
Ua horohoro te râ.	The sun is taking its departure.
Ua taupeupe te râ.	The sun is descending.
Ua fatata te ahiahi.	The evening approaches.
Ua pe'e te maru.	The shadows are extending.
Ua a'a fara te râ.	The sun's rays are as the fara roots.
Te 'oi'oi ra te râ i raro.	The sun is speedily going down.
Te ua'ara te tiare.	The <i>Gardenia tahitensis</i> flowers are opening.
Marua a râ.	The setting of the sun.
Ua tape ha'a te râ, ua tûmû te râ.	The sun's course is shortened.
Ua pâtô te râ i te 'iri o te tai.	The sun has burst the surface of the sea.
Ua haere ari'i te râ i to'a reva.	The sun is going majestically to the rocks of the deep.
Ua he'e hua nui te râ i maire ri'i.	The great disk of the sun has deserted the fleecy clouds.
Ua ma'iri te râ i te 'iri a tai.	The sun has sunk below the surface of the sea.
Ua toihoiho ra te râ.	The sun darts his rays upwards.
Ua rurumi te râ, ua 'u'umi te râ.	The sun has dropped.
Ua topa roa te râ.	The sun has quite gone down.
Te vai marehurehu râ.	Twilight remains.
Ta vai aroaroa râ.	It is twilight.
Ua poiri roa.	It is quite dark. (After 8 p.m.)
Ua tû-rua te pô.	Night is equally balanced.
Ua tu'i te pô.	It is advanced night.
	(After 10 p.m.)
Ru'i or Pô.	Night time.
Ti'a nua te ru'i.	Approaching midnight.
Tu'ira'a pô.	Midnight.
Maru ao.	Dayspring, after the darkest hours.
'A'aoara'a moa.	Cockcrow.
Tatahiata mara'ora'o, 'a'hiata.	Dawn of day, when flies appear; daybreak.
Arehurehura'a o te po'ipo'i.	Morning twilight.
Hitira'a o te mahana.	Sunrise.
Po'ipo'i.	Morning.
Matitititira'a o te râ.	Spreading out of the sun's rays. (About 6 a.m.)
Tohepû te râ.	The sun's disk is in view. (About 7 a.m.)
Pereti'a te râ.	The sun's rays are equally spreading. (About 8 a.m.)
Pa'are te râ.	The sun is producing waves (the tide). (About 9 a.m.)
Ua metua te râ.	The sun has waxed vigorous. (10 or 11 a.m.)
Avatea.	Noon time.
Taupera'a o te râ.	Afternoon.
Tapetapera'a o te râ.	Declining of the sun.

Tahatahara'a o te râ.
 Mairira'a, Topara'a o te râ.
 Ahiahi.
 Arehurehura'a o te ahiahi.

Slanting of the sun.
 Sunset.
 Evening.
 Evening twilight.

The Latin words *hora* and *minutus* are adopted for hour and minute, pronounced *hora* and *miniti*, in Tahitian. The hours are designated by the use of *hora* with a number, as: *hora ho'e* (one o'clock), *hora piti* (two o'clock), *hora 'ahuru-ma-piti* or *hora tuero* (meaning twelve) (twelve o'clock), *e pae miniti i ma'iri i te hora ho'e* (five minutes past one o'clock); *ho'e 'ahuru-ma-pae miniti i ma'iri i te hora ho'e* (fifteen minutes past one o'clock); *ho'e afa hora i ma'iri i te hora ho'e* (half past one o'clock); *e pae miniti e tac atu ai i te hora piti* (five minutes to two o'clock). Such definitions are applied to all the other hours, and any number of minutes before and after the hour are expressed in like manner.

In the following list of the Tahitian days of the week it is evident that only the words Sabbath, Monday, and Friday have been Tahitianized and that Tahitian names have been applied to the other days of the week: *Mahana Tapati* (Sabbath day), Sunday; *Monirê*, Monday; *Mahana-piti* (second day), Tuesday; *Mahana-toru* (third day), Wednesday; *Mahana-maha* (fourth day), Thursday; *Mahana-pae* or *Farairê* (fifth day), Friday; *Mahana-mà'a* (food day), Saturday. Saturday is called Food-day, because the natives were taught by the English missionaries to make provision of cooked food on that day for Sunday, a rule which was kept strictly throughout the islands.

THE NIGHTS OF THE MOON

E tai'o no te mau pô o te ava'e, mai te tû-hiti-ra'a mai e tae noa 'tu i te pohera'a: Tiroo. Hiro-hiti.	E manini te i'a i te tai, e upa'i to uta i tereira pô. E ū te i'a, e i'a tahe i tereira pô. E pô maitatai ana'e ia no te tai'a. Fa'aoti-Hamiama. 'Ore'ore-mua. 'Ore'ore-muri.	The order of the nights of the moon from its first appearance until it disappears: Breaking-forth. Twisted-border. <i>Manini</i> are the fishes in the sea, and crabs come out along the shore on that night. Jester-of-the-two-bodies ⁵ . Swarms of fishes not fat ⁶ appear that night. First-Emergence. All those are good fishing nights. Last-Emergence. Equally divided. First-unyielding. Next-unyielding.
Ho'ata-tino-rua. Mua-Hamiama. Roto Hamiama. Fa'aoti-Hamiama. 'Ore'ore-mua. 'Ore'ore-muri.	Tama-tea. Huna. Rapu or 'Ari Ma-haru 'Ohua Mai-tû-fei-roa Hotu.	Fair-child. Hiding. Conflux. Clear-seizing. Becoming-circular. From-standing-for-long-prayer. Fishes are becoming plentiful then. Fruitfulness. It is a night of fish. It is the time for planting gourds in the month of October. Clear-sky, the time of full moon. Commotion, land crabs are in motion on those clear nights. First-plant. Inner-plant. Last-plant. First-unyielding. Inner-unyielding. Last-unyielding. First-severing.
Ma-ra'i. Turu, ua turu te tupa po maramarama. Roto-ra'au. Fa'aoti-ra'au. 'Ore'ore-tahi. 'Ore'ore-rotu. 'Ore'ore-ia-aoti. Ta'arua-tahi.	Ua huma ana'e te i'a i tereira tau pô, a pô vero ana'e ia. Te rahi maira ia te i'a. E pô i'a. E ru'i tanu ra'i hue i te ava'e i Atopa. Marama ati ia. e te u'a i te Na pô oriori ra'a tupapa'u tereira. E to'erau te matai i tereira tau pô. E ru'i fanau ra'a rahi ia no te tama ri'i. E ū ia te to'a i te ia, e rahi te i'ih.	Bonitos are the fishes at sea on that night. The fishes hide away on those nights; they are squally nights. The north wind blows on those nights. The rocks then are full of fish, the red fish are very plentiful. That is a night when many children are born. The north wind blows on those nights. Those are the nights when ghosts are roaming about. The north wind blows on those nights. That is a night when many children are born. The rocks then are full of fish, the red fish are very plentiful. Fish become scarce.
Roto-Ta'arua. Fa'aoti-Ta'arua. Tane-roa-i-te-ao. Ro'o-nui-te-ao. Ro'o-mauri. Motu, ua motu te tau.	Ua 'ore te i'a.	Tane-overtaken-by-day. Overtaken-by-broad-daylight. Overtaken by oblivion. Severed, the period is ended.

Following are the calendar months Tahitianized:

Tenuare,	January.	Tiurai,	July.
Fepuare,	February.	Atete,	August.
Mâti,	March.	Tetepa,	September.
Eperera,	April.	Atopa,	October.
Mê,	May.	Novema,	November.
Tiunu,	June.	Titema,	December.

There are two ways of dividing the year for the seasons;⁷ first, by observing the rising and setting of the Pleiades, second by the lunar months. Captain Cook and other early navigators, as well as the missionaries, have recorded that the Tahitians could tell to a nicety the nights and periods of the rising and setting of the stars and constellations, which Polynesians generally have been able to do from time immemorial, as their chants everywhere record.

Teie te tau ari'i ma te tai'o na to Tahiti nei, 'oia o Matari'i-i-ni'a e o Matari'i-i-raro. O Mata-ri'i e pura na i te ata i te pae ra'i o na Hui-tarava ia Mere ra i te arehurehura'a o te ahiahi, i te Ava'e o Temâ ra, 'oia ia Novema 20, o te avei'a ia o te tau 'ahune O Matari'i-i-ni'a ia tau, e topa noa 'tu ia fetu ri'i i raro a'e i te pae ra'i i te arehurehura'a o te ahiahi, i te ava'e o Au-unuunu ra, 'oia ia te 20 no Mê. O te upo'o ia o te tau 'ahune.

O Matari'i-i-raro te tau i ha'amata i te ava'e o Au-unuunu ra (ia Mê) ia mo'e ae ia fetu ri'i i raro i te pae ra'i i te arehurehura'a o te ahiahi ra, e tae noa 'tu i te pura fa'ahou ra' mai ni'a i te pae ra'i i te arehurehura'a i te ava'e o Tema ra (ia Novema). O te tau ia o te o'e.

A tahi matahiti, e rua tau i teie tai'o.

Teie te piti o te tai'o i te tau; e na ni'a i te ava'e:

These are the kingly periods observed by Tahitians. They are Matari'i-i-ni'a (Pleiades-above) and Matari'i-i-raro (Pleiades-below). When the Pleiades first sparkles in the horizon towards the constellation of Orion's belt⁸ in the twilight of the evening, in the month of Temâ (The-clearing), on November 20th, they are the forerunners of the season for plenty. Matari'i-i-ni'a is then the season, until these little stars descend below the horizon in the twilight of the evening, in the month of Au-unuunu (Suspension), on the 20th of May. That is the ending of the season of plenty.

Matari'i-i-raro is the season beginning in the month of Au-unuunu (Suspension) in May, when those little stars disappear below the horizon in the twilight of evening, until they sparkle again above the horizon, in the twilight of the month of Temâ in November. This is the season of scarcity.

One year has two seasons according to this reckoning.

Here is the second way of counting the seasons; it is by the moons:

⁵ The dark and bright sides of the new moon are called two bodies and "emergence" means that the moon is coming out of the dark side.

⁶ Fishes are fat when the moon is full and thin when it is out; shellfish are included in this rule.

⁷ This account was given in 1818 by King Pomare.

⁸ The three great stars of Orion's Belt are regarded as a constellation in themselves, expressed in the word Mere (Parental-and-filial-regret-at-parting), and the word Te-uru-o-Mere (The-Forest-of-Mere) implies the whole constellation of Orion. (See p. 362.)

YEAR OF THIRTEEN MOONS

1. O Rehu (Varchu, Archu), te haere mai nei te 'ahune; ia Titema e Tenuare ia tau. I te tua o Rehu, o

2. Fa'ahu-nui, te tamoe no te 'ahune; ia Tenuare e Fepuare. I te tua o Fa'ahu, o

3. Pipiri, te 'ore ra te ma'a; ia Fepuare e Mâti. I te tua o Pipiri, o

4. Ta'a-'oa, te 'ore ra te 'uru; ia Mâti e Eperera. O te tua o Ta'a-'oa, o

5. Au-unuunu, ua unuunu ia te hōe o te rava'ai, e anotau vero; ia Eperera e Mê. I te tua o Au-unuunu, o

6. 'Apa'apa, te pou no te tau o'e, te parara'a o te ra'o'ere ra'au e ma'iri atu ai; ia Mê e Tiunu. I te tua o 'Apa'apa, o

7. Paroro-mua, pohera'a o te re'a ia Tiunu e Tiurai. I te tua o Paroro-mua, o

8. Paroro-muri, e tau o'e; ia Tiurai e Atete. I te tua o Paroro-muri, o

9. Muri-'aha; ia Atete e Tetepa. I te tua o Muri-'aha, o

10. Hia'ia, te pou ra'a 'tu i raro roa i te o'e; ia Tetepa e Atopa. I te tua o Hia'ia, o

11. Te-mâ, o te mâ rea 'tu ia o te ma'a tahito, e tupura'a o te ma'a api, o te tau ia e tanu ai i te ma'a; ei Atopa e Novema. I te tua o Te-mâ, o

12. Te-'eri, ia Novema. Ei reira e 'oteo mai ai te 'uru api. I te tua o Te-'eri, o

13. Te-ta'i, Te-ta-ai-nui-ia-tuma, ia Titema. Te tupu ra te uru; te ta ai ra ia i te hui ma'a o te taevao i tai.

Rehu (Levelling) is when harvest is coming in; this period arrives between December and January. On the back of Rehu comes

Fa'ahu-nui (Great-repose), the sound sleep of plenty; between January and February. On the back of Fa'ahu comes

Pipiri (Parsimony), the time when scarcity begins; between February and March. On the back of Pipiri comes

Ta'a-'oa (Departing-joy); breadfruit is scarce. On the back of Ta'a-'oa comes

Au-unuunu (Suspension); the fisherman's paddles are then put away, it is a stormy period; between April and May. On the back of Au-unuunu comes

'Apa'apa (Severed-in-twain), descent into the time of scarcity of food; the leaves of plants then yellow and fall off; between May and June. On the back of 'Apa'apa comes

Paroro-mua (First-fall). Turmeric and wild ginger then die out; between June and July. On the back of Paroro-mua comes

Paroro-muri (After-fall), the last of the fruit season; between July and August. On the back of Paroro-muri comes

Muri-'aha (Prayer-behind); between August and September. On the back of Muri-'aha comes

Hia'ia (Cravings), descent into the greatest scarcity of food; between September and October. On the back of Hia'ia comes

Te-ma (The-clearing), when the old crops are clean gone and new crops are developing, which is the season for planting food; between October and November. On the back of Te-ma comes

Te-'eri (Scarcity), most of November. Then the inflorescence of the breadfruit begins. On the back of Te-'eri comes

Te-ta'i (The-cry), Te-ta-ai-nui-ia-tuma (The epicure's-great-forage for food), in December. The breadfruit is developing; then wild foods⁹ of all kinds are brought out to eat.

On different islands and in different districts, the seasons vary in their time of coming, according to the wet and dry weather, and in this way

⁹ The wild foods are arums, plantains, edible ferns, ti, yams and other roots.

the people had an irregular method of reckoning the year, each little kingdom following its own course. But they were all agreed in the length of time that the year lasted, being guided by the lunar month. Sometimes when there were only twelve complete developments of the moon's phases in the rotation of the seasons, whatever month did not agree in the conjuncture would be skipped:

YEAR OF TWELVE MOONS¹⁰

Teie te i'oa o te mau ava'e o te matahiti e ta ratou mau vahine:

1. Paroro-mua, ei Eperera; o Mara'amū te vahine.

2. Paroro-muri, o Mē; o To'erau te vahine.

3. Muri'aha, ia Tiunu; e parara'a no te ra'au, o Te'ura te vahine.

4. Hia'ia, ia Tiura'i; ua pohe te re'a; o Tura'i-re'a te vahine.

5. Ta'a'oa, ia Atete, o Te-rere-'oa'oa te vahine. Ofaara'a o te honu e te upoa.

6. Huri-ama, ia Tetepa, o Te-mata-tau-roroa te vahine. Ua vehe te tau, o te roroara'a ia o te mahana.

7. Te'eri, ia Atopa, o Te-ha'amoc-'apa'apa te vahine. Ava'e ua.

8. Te-ta'i, ia Novema, o Te-hei-fa'ataha te vahine. Te uara'a ia o te pua, o te rave hia ma te ha'apae i te hei 'i'ino.

9. Varehu, ia Titema, o Oteatea te vahine.

10. Faahu, ia Tenuare, o Pahu-nui-atōi-tere-i-te-ta-moc te vahine. E ava'e 'ahune ia.

11. Pipiri, ia Fepuare o Pipiri-ma'a-i-fenua te vahine. "E'ai atu te hoa i te tara fare, e 'ore e 'ite mai e, o te hoa here 'oe", e parau tahito ia. Utautara'a o honu ri'i e te upoa i tua.

12. A-unuunu, ia Mati, Ua-unuunu-ma-te-tai te vahine. E anotau vero.

These are the names of the months of the year and of their wives:

Paroro-mua (First-fall), in April; Mara'amū (Trade-wind) is the wife.

Paroro-muri (After-fall), in May; To'erau (North-wind) is the wife.

Muri'aha (Prayer-behind), in June; leaves turn yellow; Te'ura (Gorgeousness) is the wife.

Hia'ia (Longings), in July; wild ginger and Turmeric die out; Tura'i-re'a (Battering-down-of-re'a) is the wife.

Ta'a'oa (Departed-joy), in August; Te-rere-'oa'oa (Flight-of-joy) is the wife. The turtle and the upoa bird then lay their eggs.

Huri-ama (Turned-outrigger), in September; Te-mata-tau-roroa (Face-long-standing) is the wife. Time is balancing, the days are lengthening.

Te'eri (Development of spring) in October; Te-ha'amoc-'apa'apa (Persistence) is the wife. It is a rainy month.

Te-ta'i (The-cry) in November; Te-hei-fa'ataha (Wreaths-worn-jauntily) is the wife. It is the season for the *Besleria laurifolia* flower, which is preferred to common wreaths.

Varehu (Spring-advanced), in December; Oteatea (Inflorescence-of-bananas) is the wife.

Faahu (Restfulness), in January; Pahu-nui-atōi-tere-i-te-ta-moc (Great-drum - extending - ripeness - with - sound-sleep) is the wife.

Pipiri (Parsimony), in February; Pipiri-ma'a-i-fenua (Stinginess-of-food-in-the-land) is the wife. "The friend will eat then in the house corner, and ignore thee as a dear friend," is an old saying. The turtle and the upoa bird take their young out to sea at that time.

A-unuunu (Withdrawal), in March; Ua-unuunu-ma-te-tai (Withdrawal-from-the-sea) is the wife. It is a stormy period.

¹⁰ This account was given through the help of Mrs. Walker in 1891 by Mrs. Ari'itaimai Salmon, high chiefess of Papara, and also by Umarea, son of a high chief of Mo'orea.

COLORS AND PATTERNS

Tahitians are keen discerners of colors and display much taste in their choice of them in dress and decorations; they designate them in the following manner:

'Tea, teatea, 'uo, 'uo'uo.

'Ere'ere, uri, uriuri.

Pa'opa'o.

'Ere'ere moana.

Hiri.

Ninamu-matie.

Ninamu-moana.

'Ura, 'ura'ura, 'ute'ute.

'Ute'ute mahe'ahe'a, or 'ura-mea.

Vare'au.

Re'a, re'are'a.

Mare'are'a.

Hinahina, ohinahina.

'O'opu.

Uma'e.

Ravarava.

Tafetafeta.

'Opata, 'opatapata, purepure.

Nifanifa, patoro.

Porota'a.

Tore, toretore.

White, clear, or light-colored.

Black, dark shades.

Sooty-colored.

Navy-blue, or indigo.

Brown.

Green (literally grass-green); formerly *ninamu* meant "sooty."

Sea-green and light-blue.

Red of every shade.

Pink (literally, light-red).

Violet, purple and lavender.

Yellow of all shades.

Tinged with yellow, paleness of the face.

Gray.

Black, in speaking of animals only.

Carrot color, of animals only.

Brunette persons.

Stained or shaded.

Spotted.

Checkered, check.

Large spots or diagrams.

Striped.