Mvskoke[1] Personal Names

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A description of the traditional structure of Creek and Seminole formal names (appellations) and nicknames illuminates the forms and frequencies of names appearing on historical censuses since the seventeenth century. Personal names were permuted within the Mvskoke cultural system and were transformed into English names primarily by literation, translation and homophonization in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In addition to being intrinsically interesting, the study of personal names is also useful for scientific purposes. Although demography has been the discipline most attentive to issues of names and naming, analyses of names are also useful for ethnohistory and political anthropology, wherever it is necessary to achieve *nominal linkage*; that is, the identification of an individual with possible variant names across multiple documents, or to trace descendants through multiple documents across many generations (Lasker 1985; Lavender 1992). My own purpose in analyzing Mvskoke names is to link persons across various administrative censuses from 1780 to the present, and thereby investigate patterns of fission and fusion which have occurred historically among Mvskoke towns and villages.[2]

The first Mvskoke censuses are among the oldest in the world for a tribal society, and are close enough temporally to permit linkage and longitudinal analysis, in this case the construction of continuous genealogies covering more than 200 years. But the fact that the documents encompass such a long span of time, through periods of warfare, intracultural conflict, acculturation and a transition to English names, requires that we pay close attention to radical changes in the manner that names were bestowed, both within the

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native culture and during the transition to English. In this article I will present a general outline of two native systems of naming and their transformations to English usage. Since the combined censuses include more than 50,000 persons, I cannot hope to provide a comprehensive description of all the details of naming and name transformation in each family, but I will provide examples of each kind of name, and each kind of transformation known to me at this stage in the research.

Investigations such as this are ethnonymic in nature (Goddard 1984). The names are considered part of a cultural system, imbedded in a social system, which requires an explanation of why certain words have been chosen to use as personal names within a particular society from the universe of language which is available.[3] Knowing the native language and the native naming system is of great assistance in identifying alternative forms of the same name and in identifying legitimate additional names which might have been applied to the same person.

Among Native American societies, a number of different naming systems have been used. They vary considerably from tribe to tribe and from language to language.[4] Previously I have described the naming practices of the Cheyenne, where traditional formal names are drawn from an elaborate and sexually polarized religious cosmology, and where nicknames usually represent the unique physical characteristics or quirks of behavior of the name-bearers or their ancestors. I have used this Cheyenne ethnonymic analysis to create nominal linkages and generate data used in a series of publications on Cheyenne demography and ethnohistory.[5] Here I will describe the very different naming system of the Mvskokes, who constitute the majority of Indian people enrolled by the U. S. government as "Creeks" or "Seminoles," most of whom presently live in Oklahoma and Florida. In addition to Mvskokes, the Creek and Seminole nations also comprise the descendants of a large number of ethnic groups who are linguistically and culturally quite different, including Yuchis (Euchees), Hitchitis, Miccosukis (variously spelled), Shawnees, Alabamas, Natchez, Coushattas, Choctaws, Cherokees, and African-American Freedmen, who do not necessarily use the naming systems described here.

With the Mvskokes, as with the Cheyennes, I have proceeded by working intensively with Indian elders, in this case from 1982 to 1989, learning how traditional names have been assigned currently and recently, and then extrapolating backwards. Especially, I have shown my consultants historical censuses from the 19th century and solicited their comments. In addition, I have collected family anecdotes about particular name usages and name transformations.

I conducted two rounds of formal interviews: a preliminary round of general questions in 1982, and a round of interviews centered on specific questions in 1988-89. After the first round, people became aware that I was interested in personal names and they frequently volunteered explanations although I was not conducting formal interviews about names from 1983 to 1988. For the final round of interviews, I was assisted by three Creek traditionalists who share my interest in Creek personal names. They are James Wesley, the Mekko of Kialegee Tribal Town; Linda Alexander, the Knife Woman and dance leader of Greenleaf Tribal Town; and Margaret Mauldin, a professional language consultant.[6] All of these people are fluent and literate in the Mvskoke language. Mr. Wesley took as his responsibility the translation and explication of the appellations on the 1832 Creek removal list, consulting with other elders of his acquaintance around the domino tables at the Wetumka Elders Center. Mrs. Alexander took a special interest in the orphan list of 1832, a particularly useful document since it contains the pre-puberty nicknames of 497 boys and girls. Consulting with elders of her family, Ms. Mauldin translated both lists.

To get a sense of the problems involved in analyzing Mvskoke ethnonymy, we will begin by looking through the very early lists of personal names collected by John Juricek (1989). Here one notices immediately the possibility that early Creek leaders are represented by personal names which may incorporate the name of their town as the first word and their rank within the town as the second word. For example, on Juricek's Document 21 we find Talshee Mico listed as "head man of Talshees." We also learn that the regular translation of "Mico" (Mekko) is 'king'. Finding political alliances for ethnohistorical purposes, then, would superficially seem to be merely a matter of seeing who signed what document, and determining the town they represented from the first word of their name. The first

names of the signers and the grouping of names on a document should show which towns were in alliance at what time. A more thorough examination of these documents, however, shows that the situation is not as simple as that; the first names of the signers do not necessarily indicate the towns they represented. In fact, on Graham's Deed, *only* Talshee Mico is listed as representing the town indicated in his first name. Among the others, Fanne Mico is "head King of the Oakfusskees" while Covetaw Mico is "head Man of Ekanhatkee." One is puzzled, then, about whether these entries constitute personal names used in everyday life or whether they are official titles used for formal purposes such as signing treaties. To help describe the nymic status of these names, the terms *appellation* or *name-title* are probably more appropriate, since these terms carry no implications about the particular use or derivation of the names.[7] Thus, I will use *appellation* to mean any formal personal name which consists of a town name followed by a title.

Other signatures listed in Juricek's volume are of a different pattern entirely. Some of the Creek leaders were represented by names apparently translated from Mvskoke into English, such as *The Wolf King* or *The White Ground King* (Document 23). Some, such as *Gun Merchant* and *Half Breed,* had names which referred to English culture (Document 22). Others bore names which, by Anglo standards, sound like children's nicknames, e.g., *Stump Finger* (Document 20) and *Big Chatter* (Document 22). So there is clearly much more going on with early Creek names than simply a two-word appellation with town first and title showing rank or status second.

Later in Creek history formal appellations became the dominant design of Creek names as they appeared on successive censuses. For example, on the first comprehensive census of the Creeks (the removal list of 1832, a roster of Creeks sent forcibly to Indian Territory) nearly all heads of family except the African-American Freedmen were entered in the familiar appellative form.[8] But it is also clear, confirming the suggestions from the earlier treaties, that there is little connection between the actual town of residence, noted on the removal list, and the initial word of the appellation for each family head. In fact, of the 66 towns and settlements listed on the census, only 12 comprise any appellation which begins with the name of that town. These 12 towns include only 29 such appellations, from a total of 6,443 family heads on the census rolls.

Concerning the Freedmen on the 1832 census, some of their names precociously exhibit a naming pattern that later became more general. This new form consists of either an English-style surname and given name, an English given name only, or less commonly an English surname only. The tendency toward such names for Mvskoke Creeks continued through the nineteenth century so that, by the time of the 1882 census, taken in Indian Territory, nearly 40% of Indian family heads had acquired English names in some form.[9]

The names of women and children began to appear on the censuses with some regularity in the middle of the nineteenth century. But it is clear that these names, initially presented in the native language, were of a different order than those which had appeared earlier. Most often they were formed from a single word in the native language, rather than two words as in the appellations, and these one-word names were most often verbs referring to actions or (occasionally) nouns pertaining to the birds, animals and cosmological entities of the natural world. Some men, too, began to exhibit these kinds of native names as the century progressed. And some of the men in this period appeared with a different kind of appellation, with a title attached to a natural entity instead of to a town name, for example:

Hutalgi Miko 'wind chief', 'king'

Tsala Imat'la 'trout/bass/fish warrior' (alternately *Emarthla* 'war leader')

Chiti Yahola 'serpent halloer', 'crier'

Katsa Harjo 'tiger warrior' ("tiger" is the conventional translation for panther or cougar, *Felis concolor*; *harjo*, literally 'crazy', as a name is best glossed 'crazy-brave').

The tendency to transform all kinds of native names into English-style personal names, with a separate given name and surname, culminated in the 1907 Dawes Roll, in which all persons were assigned a patronymic surname by the Bureau of Indian Affairs.[10] Beginning then, the official administrative or "office name" of Creek and Seminole people has been bestowed in the manner of Anglo-Americans, with a child inheriting the father's surname but receiving an English given name upon enrollment. Personal names from the Dawes roster have been carried on in this manner to the present, at least as far as official records are concerned.

An initial inspection of the Dawes rosters indicates that at least four kinds of surnames had been created for Creeks and Seminoles by the turn of the century. First, there are appellations or parts of appellations carried over as surnames, most prominently civil, war or religious titles like *Harjo*, *Fixico* 'heartless', *Mico* and *Emarthla*, but also a few town names like *Coosa*, *Hillabi* and *Arbeka*. Second, there are translations of native nouns from the natural world, such as *Wind, Bear* and *Deer*. Third, there are English given names carried as surnames, like *Billy, Jimmy* and *George*. Fourth, and most prominently, the majority of the people on the Dawes roll carry familiar English surnames like *Mitchell, Anderson* and *Long*. The frequency and rank of the twenty most common surnames are shown in table 1.

Table 1. Most common Creek surnames on the Dawes roll (7,341 names).

Rank	Name	N	Rank	Name	N
1.	Harjo	343	11.	Berryhill	108
2.	Tiger	258	12.	Davis	107
3.	Scott	156	13.	Deer	107
4.	Barnett	154	14.	Johnson	98
5.	Bruner	153	15.	Fixico	88
6.	Brown	131	16.	Perryman	79
7.	Smith	123	17.	Childers	75
8.	McIntosh	119	18.	Thompson	69
9.	Grayson	111	19.	Hill	66
10.	Yahola	109	20.	Canard	65

At first glance, one might assume that the presence of so many English surnames on the Dawes roster implies widespread intermarriage between Creeks and Anglos in the late nineteenth century. However, there are two reasons why this cannot be a proper conclusion. First, on the Dawes and other rosters which are divided by town, it is clear that there are as many English surnames among the secluded Upper Creek towns whose citizens settled in Okfuskee and McIntosh counties in Oklahoma, as among the more acculturated and much more intermarried (as shown by official records) Lower Creek towns north of Okmulgee. Second, the frequency distribution found in table 1 shows some peculiar patterns. English surnames which are fairly unusual among Anglos are common among Creeks. Table 2 compares the frequency ranking of the Creek surnames of table 1 with a frequency ranking for the United States as a whole in 1910 (Smith 1969, 301-25). While the differences in frequency rank can be explained, in some cases, by referring to historically-known intermarriages, such as the McIntoshes and the Perrymans, how does one explain the relatively high frequency of names which are not known to have been inherited from white people, names such as *Canard, Larney, Kinney* and *Childers*?

Table 2. Frequency rank of selected English surnames on the Dawes roll and among American English surnames generally.

Name	Dawes	General	Name	Dawes	General
Scott	1	30	Davis	9	7
Barnett	2	244	Johnson	10	2
Bruner	3	*	Perryman	11	**
Brown	4	4	Childers	12	*
Smith	5	1	Thompson	13	14
McIntosh	6	739	Hill	14	29
Grayson	7	*	Canard	15	**
Berryhill	8	**			

* = rank between 1000 and 2000

** = rank lower than 2000

The general task facing the ethnohistorian who wishes to link names across the acculturative barrier, then, is to discover the patterns by which English surnames were taken by individual Creeks and families, which have resulted in the name frequencies shown in table 1. This general task is, in reality, two smaller projects. First, one must understand the traditional native naming system or systems, and second, one must understand the particular permutations of the native systems as they were reorganized to create English names. The second task cannot be undertaken unless the first is completed.

There have been two comprehensive attempts to describe the native naming system, one published by Noxon Toomey in 1917, the other by John Swanton in 1928; both were based upon fieldwork conducted about 1915. Toomey's description of the naming system is so confused that it is difficult even to summarize his major points. He apparently saw no system in the names since he presents fragments of unrelated generalizations. Perhaps it is best to quote Toomey's own summary to show what the problems are in applying his system to the actual lists and censuses which concern us. Although Toomey's analysis was unsuccessful, he at least acquaints us with the range of personal names being used, and with the problems of interpreting them. He describes the Mvskoke and Seminole practice as follows:

> Among the Muskokis and Seminoles most men have had a series of "names," each name approximately indicating the male's age and social status. These names are of the following kinds: secret birth names; names of infancy and early childhood; nick-names of later childhood; busk or puberty names; busk titles; civil titles, usually of later manhood; and war titles properly so called. Adult men eventually come to be known chiefly by one of their titles. Formerly young men were known by their highest war title, or lacking one, by their highest busk title. Those men not of the warrior class were invariably given only a male pubert [sic] name.... Each of the three types of titles had several varieties — not true grades — but of late a few varieties are no longer used. Civil titles were conferred by electing a man for life to one of the town councils. However, up to recently, each town had its ruling gens and only males of that gens could be elected to a seat in its town council. During the centuries just passed, civil titles could be held by those not of the warrior class in both the peace and war towns, but warriors could hold civil titles only in the war towns. Only the war titles

> implied authority, as the busk titles only indicated social status. Those with civil titles could exercise influence only by council and persuasion....
>
> Women had secret birth names, infancy and girlhood names, nick-names, and female puberty names. An adult woman was known by her puberty name, unless it was not commonly known, wherefor she was spoken of by her husband's name. Among the Muskokis the women were usually known by the name of their eldest brother. History tells of a few women who were called chiefs.... (24)

The fact that Toomey listed only five busk titles as extant in 1917 shows the shallowness of his fieldwork. Working at about the same time, Swanton discovered scores of appellations still in daily use. Even today, the fourteen active stomp grounds[11] all maintain fairly complete rosters of officers, and the several thousand male members of the grounds all have personal appellations. The best that can be said of Toomey's analysis is that he did differentiate several categories of personal names, although he did not provide many examples of each category or provide any etymological or ethnonymic principles for constructing the different kinds of names, except to say (erroneously as it turns out) that women were named after flowers. But he apparently was unaware of the specific social contexts in which the different appellations were used and he did not describe specifically how new appellations were taken or whether old ones were discarded when this happened. He stated erroneously that new appellations of higher rank were a matter of seniority, and he used analytic terms like "warrior class" and "social status" very carelessly, without defining them.

Swanton also was unclear about how new appellations were bestowed, although he seemed to think, like Toomey, that a Creek man automatically passed through a series of names of progressively higher rank as he grew older. In his analysis of the social and political structure of towns, Swanton apparently did not understand that there were sometimes separate sets of appellations for civil and religious officials in a town, nor did he understand the nymic consequences of the historical difference between "white" or "peace" towns and "red" or "war" towns, nor did he realize the consequences for names of the considerable fusion among the towns that had already occurred. Some of the towns he visited maintained as many

as four sets of appellations: for civil leaders, for war leaders, for busk names bestowed at puberty, and for religious leaders, as well as titles resulting from fusion. In his explanation of personal names, Swanton confounded these and tried to extricate a single set of principles by which appellations were constructed. In addition, he did not understand that each town created its own rules regarding titles, which were somewhat different from town to town. Swanton's attempt to create simple order out of all this is no less confusing than the explanation of Toomey:

> These titles usually contained two words, of which the second was commonly hadjo, fiksiko, yahola, imała, tåstånågi, or miko. The last three belonged properly to certain classes of functionaries to be described elsewhere, but in some towns they seem to have become hereditary in the clans; at least this is definitely affirmed for the term tåstånågi. It has frequently been reported that these titles were bestowed in a certain order. Thus one of my own informants said that a man would probably be given first a name containing hadjo, next one with imała, and finally one with tåstånågi. Another gave the order as hadjo, tåstånågi, and miko. Most of this is explained, however, by the fact that the names imała, tåstånågi, and miko were applied to officials. Nevertheless there seems to have been some tendency to use a name containing hadjo first and one with yahola later on. These two, together with fiksiko, are called "common names," which here means merely that they did not carry official positions with them.... The tendency of these names to become "common" in course of time explains why Speck [an earlier investigator] was told that hadjo, fiksiko, imała, and yahola were all of equal rank. (1928, 101)

As I began to examine Mvskoke censuses, it became clear that these explanations of naming were not at all satisfactory for achieving nominal linkage. They were, first of all, contradictory, and second, they were not comprehensive. I was encouraged to undertake additional fieldwork to illuminate issues of naming because I knew that the system of traditional names was still in use, despite the fact that nearly everyone had an English or "office" name. However, concerning these office names, I was surprised to learn, early in my fieldwork, that many Creeks did not know the English office names of their friends and family. Sometimes they didn't even know their own office name. For example, at the monthly meetings of the Creek Confederacy, the Mvskokullke Etvlwa Etelaketa, which I attended for

eleven years, we normally passed around an attendance sheet on which people were supposed to sign their office names. This was frequently a matter of good-natured teasing when some wit would read the list and ask loudly, for example, "Willie Mitchell, who's that? Say, cousin, I didn't know your father was a white man." Even when jokes were not made, the meetings were frequently interrupted when allusion was made to someone by an English name and someone else at the meeting wanted to know who was being referred to. It was clear that, among themselves, traditional Creeks did not use office names, but had another system.

Another factor which encouraged me to make inquiries into naming was the relative recency of the full transition to English surnames. Even for those Creek people outside the traditional communities, the final transition to English names was as recent as the Dawes Roll of 1907. Consequently, it seemed likely that I would be able to find — even among the acculturated families — some anecdotes concerning name changes at the turn of the century. As it turned out, these oral histories were quite informative regarding the ways in which particular English surnames were selected.

I had not read either Toomey's or Swanton's explanations of appellations very carefully until after I had conducted my 1988 fieldwork. I thought it was better to remain naive, and I suspected that their oblique and inconsistent explanations would only lead me down blind alleys and confound my consultants. As an experienced fieldworker, I was familiar with the phenomenon whereby a native consultant, after trying several times to explain some complex cultural matter to an outsider who has some wrong ideas, finally despairs of explaining it and agrees with whatever explanation is suggested by the inquirer, even if it is awkward or incorrect. Mvskoke etiquette, in fact, requires that a host agree with a guest. Upon a casual reading, it seemed to me that Toomey's and Swanton's explanations were of this sort, grudging confirmation by informants of some incorrect ideas. So in my own fieldwork I was very passive from 1982 to 1988, but all the while listening intently whenever names and naming were discussed, and becoming more familiar with the Mvskoke language.

Beginning with the formal appellations, perhaps the best way to explain the Mvskoke Creek system is to refer to an ideal tribal town,

to which we might arbitrarily assign the name of Talsa. We will say that it is a white town, or peace town, because the appellations of the red, or war towns are said to be permuted from those of white towns. For simplicity's sake, we will say that Talsa town comprises only four clans, for which I will use the English names: bear, deer, tiger and alligator. Let us say that traditionally in this town, the bear clan has supplied the highest ranking person, the king or Mekko, and the deer clan has supplied his assistant, the Heniha or speaker. We will further assume that the Tiger clan supplies the head warrior, or Tustenuggi, and the Alligator clan supplies the assistant warrior, or Fixico. All of these have specific official duties in the town. We should remember, however, that Creek Tribal Towns were emphatically autonomous, and each had somewhat different traditional titles and duties for civil, military and religious functionaries. Also in each town, different clans supplied men for the different town offices (Swanton 1928, 97-107).

In our Talsa town, then, we have four town officers, all of whom, in representing the town or stomp grounds formally to outsiders, use appellations for themselves which have Talsa for the first word and their title for the second word: Talsa Mekko, Talsa Heniha, Talsa Tustenuggi and Talsa Fixico. In our ideal town, these offices are not only political but religious as well. Thus, in contrast to the situation which Swanton found in 1915, the Mekko of Talsa represents the town in its relations with other towns, and also leads the busk ceremonies at the stomp grounds. There is only one set of town officers.[12]

These town appellations, however, are only used in the context of inter-town or inter-tribal relations. In other contexts, especially in some aspects of their participation in busk ceremonies, these four officers use different titles, derived from their position in the local clan. Ideally, each of the town officers is also the leader or Mekko of the clan he represents. In the context of the town's busk activities, for example, Talsa Mekko is known as Bear Mekko, Talsa Heniha as Deer Mekko, Talsa Tustenuggi as Tiger Mekko and Talsa Fixico as Alligator Mekko. Even now, when men are called to the council fire to conduct their part of the ceremonies, they are called by their clan titles, not their town titles.

In addition to a Mekko, each local clan of a town also has other officers, sometimes patterned after the town officers. In our simplified Talsa town, the bear clan has a Bear Mekko who serves as Talsa Mekko, and also a Bear Heniha, a Bear Tustenuggi and a Bear Fixico, each with specific duties. The other clans have parallel offices and appellations. Sometimes these other clan titles are connected to titles and duties for the whole town, such as building the arbor, making the fire, or serving as crier. For those men with two appellations, one from the clan and another from the town, the social context determines which appellation is used. For instance, when a visiting member of the bear clan from another town is looking for hospitality, he will be referred to the Bear Mekko for food and bed. But in the context of civil affairs, Bear Mekko is referred to by the more important appellation, Talsa Mekko.

Many men in a town, however, do not have a title which implies a function in the town, but they do nonetheless have personal appellations of the same form given to them. They get these appellations, called "busk names" or ceremonial names, from their father's clan, not their own (mother's) clan, and it can be the former title of any relative in the father's clan. For example, if a young man's father came from a different town, let's say Arbeka, and if his father's brother had been Tustenuggi of that town, then the young man can be given the name Arbeka Tustenuggi, even though he is living in Talsa town. In fact, a young man is eligible to receive any appellation held by one of his father's clansmen, whether the clansman was an active officer or whether he, too, held the appellation only as a busk name. In this case, the appellation is and remains a personal or busk name only, and does not imply any civil, military or religious duties.

Let us suppose that Arbeka Tustenuggi is a member of the deer clan and as a young man has no clan title, only a personal appellation. But the Deer Mekko dies. Then Arbeka Tustenuggi might become Deer Mekko and thereby also become Talsa Heniha, since this is a town office that goes with the clan office. So here we have a man with three appellations. He is Arbeka Tustenuggi by virtue of having a father's clansman who performed those duties at some time in the past. He has been selected by his clan as Deer Mekko, and because his clan is responsible for supplying the Heniha of the town, he has thereby become Talsa Heniha.

At the risk of confusing matters, I must point out that a man ordinarily has yet another name, not an appellation but an informal name. In his ordinary discourse with family and friends, our man with three appellations does not use any of them. Instead, he is known in this context either by a kinship term or by his childhood nickname. Some of these nicknames can be confused with clan appellations because they sometimes include the names of birds, animals and plants. (Swanton, judging from the responses of my consultants, has included some nicknames among his appellations). However, nicknames do not include the second component of an appellation, the title, and can be differentiated from appellations on that basis. In addition, people did not choose nicknames which reflected the entities of the natural world respected by the other clans in their town, to avoid criticism from members of those clans. That is, ideally one would not expect to find the nickname *Little Bear* in a town where the bear clan was prominent. As my consultant James Wesley put it, "If someone from the bear clan found out that you had a nickname that made fun of bears, they would steal your hat and you would have to pay to get it back."

It also appears that within a town, men avoided taking appellations which had as a first word the name of the town they lived in, unless they were actually officers of the town. On the 1832 census, for example, for which nearly all male family heads listed an appellation for their personal name, only 29 out of 6,443 people listed an appellation which included their town of residence. Of these, nearly half appear at the beginning of the list for their town, implying that they were in fact listing their title in the town rather than their busk name.

In contrast with that used for men, the naming system for Mvskoke Creek women has been relatively simple. Girls usually received a nickname early in life which they carried to adulthood as their only name. Table 3 shows some of the nicknames (both male and female) from the 1832 list of orphans, translated by Linda Alexander.[13] Many of these names are still in use among Creek traditionalists. Notice that most of the nicknames represent actions, not entities from the natural world. The folk explanation for this is that Creek people in old times were very energetic, and therefore named children after activities. It is also interesting to note that the

activity commemorated in the name is not that of the child, but that of the namer, usually a grandparent. A man known for "turning around," perhaps as a stickball player, might name his grandchild "Turning Around."

Table 3. Some Common Nicknames from the Orphans' List of 1832 (spelled as they appear on the original list).

Boys		Girls	
Cheparnee	Doing Opposite*	Oharye	Walking About
Fotubbee	Tree	Sokheyeithle	Dead Limping
Thlarsfulke	Old Backward	Charteke	Meeting
Connesar	Being Bought	Fulhoke	Turning Back
Leetkar	Running	Chonohoke	Bending Over
Sarparke	Joining Together	Fihuiche	Dog Tail
Suckinnihe	Taking Away	Karharlarte	Pulling Hair

* Merged with *Cepane* 'boy'

It is clear that the basis for creating these names is quite different from that used for creating appellations. In the entire list, very few nouns are represented and clan animals are mostly avoided. The reason that nicknames are of this form, according to James Wesley, is to avoid offending the members of any clan. I would further note that a large portion of the natural world is included in the cosmology of clans, thereby severely limiting the kinds of nicknames that might be given.

Mvskoke names are, furthermore, often permuted. Looking first at the formal appellations, the most important permutation in our ideal system is from white town to red town, either when a peace town was put temporarily on a war footing in the eighteenth century, or when a peace town was permanently transformed into a war town, as happened prominently in the early nineteenth century. Generally speaking, and as Swanton noted (1928, 97-107), the red towns historically have drawn their civil officers from the clans who supplied war leaders.

In the case of our ideal Talsa town, there were two civil or peace offices, Talsa Mekko, chosen from the bear clan, and Talsa Heniha,

chosen from the deer clan. There were also two positons in the white town for war leaders, Talsa Tustenuggi, chosen from the tiger clan, and Talsa Fixico, chosen from the Alligator clan. According to my consultants, to go on a war footing Talsa Mekko would step back and allow Talsa Tustenuggi temporarily to take the title Talsa Mekko. Talsa Fixico similarly would became Talsa Heniha, the spokesman for Talsa Mekko. Often, the temporary Mekko and Heniha would adopt a martial modifier to their temporary title to show that the title was a temporary war title. In this manner Talsa Mekko, the former Talsa Tustenuggi, might call himself Talsa Mekko Emarthla, to differentiate himself from the civil or "white" Mekko, who would stay in the background during war time.

When white towns were permanently transformed into red towns, the former civil leaders took the modifying titles, not the war leaders. In our example, the war leader Talsa Mekko Emarthla, formerly Talsa Tustenuggi, would drop the Emarthla, and become simply Talsa Mekko, like his "white" civil predecessor. Since everyone would presumably know that Talsa had become a red town, they would assume that Talsa Mekko was now a war appellation, not a civil title. So what happened to the former Talsa Mekko, now an unemployed civil officer in a red or war town? According to modern Mekkos, Talsa Mekko might adopt a modifier, such as Talsa Mekko Yahola, or simply drop the Mekko to inaugurate a new appellation, Talsa Yahola. Another option was to drop the town name and become Mekko Yahola. A new title would imply that the bearer continued to take a role in ceremonies, but had no civil or military authority, unless assigned such a role by the red Mekko. It was in this manner, according to some modern Mekkos, that religious offices became separate from civil offices.[14]

Historically, another reason for permuting the ideal system has been the fusion of towns, necessitated by such factors as the diminution of some towns (such as when the Red Sticks migrated to join the Seminoles in Florida in the early nineteenth century) or because of casualties from the Creek Wars. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries a reason for fusion has been the acculturation of a portion of the population of a town, and the subsequent conversion of a substantial number of people to Christianity. In such cases the non-Christian citizens of a town have taken

their appellations with them as they closed their own stomp grounds and joined with another town at a neighboring grounds. In modern times, for example, Chiaha town comprises appellations from three other Seminole groups which have closed their own grounds and joined with Chiaha for ceremonies. Thus, the leaders of Chiaha can legitimately bestow town Mekko titles and Tustenuggi titles for three towns in addition to Chiaha. In this case, there are more titles available than there are active religionists. Some appellations are adopted by people just to keep the appellation alive. Consequently, a man might have several appellations beyond his busk name and his active official titles.

Another occasion for creating new appellations is provided by the periodic convening of the Creek Confederacy, the Mvskoke Etvlwa Etelaketa. For their roles in the Confederacy, representatives from different towns are given unique titles which usually merge existing titles or add a flattering adjective. Two modern examples, from the present Confederacy organization, are *Mekko Mekkoe*, literally 'King of Kings', and *Mekko Chupke* 'Tall King'. Historical documents contain the Confederacy appellations *Etvlwa Mico* 'Mico of the Towns', *Huli Mico* 'Leader of Micos', and *Tlukko Mico* 'Great King'.

Thus, a Mvskoke Creek man in the nineteenth century might reasonably be expected to have at least two names: his nickname, carried from childhood, and his busk name, given at puberty. In addition he might have a clan title, a town title and/or a permuted title as well. Of these, only the town title on the early documents is truly useful in determining a political role, since it was the town which was the polity. Unfortunately, and for whatever reasons, a review of the documents shows that Creek political leaders frequently signed treaties and other documents with one of their other names. Whether these other appellations can be used to discover political alliances is problematic, but it is clear that they can be used to achieve nominal linkage among documents.

Having now gained some notion of the traditional systems of appellations and nicknames, we can approach the second part of our task and attempt to determine how Mvskoke names and appellations were transformed into English surnames and given names. At this point, we have achieved more certainty about the range of possible

names in Mvskoke which might be available for conversion. Also, we have discovered that women's names have much greater potential for linkage across the language barrier than men's names, since women normally carried only one name each. It is disappointing to note, however, that the earliest documents with Creek names normally contain only men's names as "family heads;" therefore, men's names were more often transformed into English surnames.

My fieldwork suggests that there are several discrete processes by which Mvskoke names were transformed into English names, some of them straightforward if not transparent, others unique and unexpected.[15] We will consider the Dawes Roll of 1907 as a comprehensive compilation of names illustrating the different kinds of transformations which have occurred historically. The transformations we see there use one or a combination of the processes of literation, homophony and translation.

One of the straightforward processes found on the Dawes roster is where the second word of an appellation has been literated into a surname and spelled by the English colloquial orthography of the time. The most frequent examples of these surnames appear in table 1. A longer list of literated surnames which can be linked to the second word of appellations is given in table 4.

Table 4. Probable literated titles and frequencies (greater than 10) from the Dawes roll.

Title	N	Gloss
Harjo	343	crazy-brave
Yahola	109	crier, halloer
Fixico	88	heartless
Micco	31	king
Chupko	23	long, tall
Hinneha	16	speaker
Emarthla	14	war leader
Holahta	11	(lesser) chief

We should note that while in Mvskoke these titles were originally specific as to clan or town, in English they have been stripped of the first word, or so it would at first appear. But upon closer inspection of Mvskoke names since 1907, we find that a more esoteric process is going on in the transformation of Mvskoke appellations; we see that there are some cases in which both words of the appellation have been transformed simultaneously onto the Dawes roster, one as a surname and the other as a given name. In other cases the title of the appellation has been literated and the town name transformed by another process, often homophonization, as in the following examples:

Artusse Harjo	Otis Harjo
Millits Yahola	Mitchell Yahola
Cintee Emarthla	Sandy Emarthla
Chuche Harjo	George Harjo
Nehar Thlocco	Nathan Thlocco
Pinay Micco	Barney Micco

The process of using homophony in selecting a personal name from another language has been reported regularly in other instances of acculturation.[16] In the examples above, the given name has been selected by homophony to replace the Mvskoke town name, but there are other examples of Mvskoke names in which the entire native name has been transformed by homophony into a standard Anglo-American given name and surname. In most cases, the name being homophonized in this manner is a nickname, rather than an appellation, as in the following examples:

Chonoparye	Jonas Parker
Artsarharke	Arthur Harkey
Hoyechiche	Hiram George
Poyartunnar	Paul Turner
Kullarney	K. L. Larney
Ethlalinnay	Ethel Linney
Chaleestar	Charley Starr
Summacarnee	Sumnar Carney

Another aspect of these invented names is that they have tended to be inherited as a package by traditional people. With the traditional busk name, a man was only entitled to inherit an appellation held previously by a patrilateral clansman who actually had held a certain office. Consequently, a man might be entitled to the name Talsa Micco because a father's clansman was Micco of Talsa town, but not Artusse Micco, which implies kingship in a different town, Artusse. Following the same practice, but with transformed names, a descendant of Otis Harjo might legitimately be named Otis Harjo, but not Mickey Harjo, which would imply that a relative had been Harjo of Miccasukee town.

Although the United States government preserved the patrilineal inheritance of surnames in its official Creek and Seminole records, traditional Mvskoke people did not, especially in the first decades after the Dawes Roll was created. It is common to find, for people named in these years, that full brothers have names which are entirely different. Meanwhile, however, the government was using patronymy even when the named individual refused to do so. Consequently, a man who called himself Barney Micco might be known to the government as Barney Starr, with the government clerk trying to preserve the father's surname along with the correct given name. In traditional usage, however, this is not proper. While a man might legitimately assume the busk names *Barney Micco* or *Otis Harjo*, he could not mix and match the names to get *Barney Harjo* or *Otis Micco*. In the traditional system of male names, the surname and given name constitute a unity; they are bound or "linked" to one another.

Homophonized nicknames are also bound together, but for different linguistic and cognitive reasons. Here the two English names were originally one Mvskoke word which only made sense as an entity. Even now, Mvskoke speakers resist separating *Arthur* from *Harkey,* or *Jonas* from *Parker,* because the result "doesn't make any sense." Mvskoke people who are not speakers of the language, however, don't have a problem with separating the names and are thus willing to take the *Jonas* from grandfather Jonas Parker and give it to the grandson, naming him *Jonas Harkey*, or *Arthur Parker.* Speakers of Mvskoke see this practice as creating cacophony.

Translation, the third method of transforming Mvskoke names into English names, is straightforward, although some confusion arises when translated names are mixed with literated or homophonized names. For example, a modern religious leader of the Creeks is Barney Leader, the *Barney* homophonized from *Pinay* and the *Leader* translated from *Huli.* There are many other examples of this kind of mixture. Table 5 shows the frequencies of translated surnames from the Dawes Roll for which Mvskoke versions of the names can be easily identified. For hundreds of Creeks, these surnames are accompanied by an originally homophonized given name, such as *Cindy* or *Sandy* or *Mickey* or *Otis* or *Mitchell*, or a common English given name taken from the dominant Anglo-American culture.

Table 5. Probable translated names from the Dawes roll.

Name	N	Name	N	Name	N
Tiger	258	Fox	33	Spaniard	14
Deer	107	Bigpond	30	Cane	13
Beaver	60	Coon	20	Sugar	13
Long	58	Buck	17	Goat	12
Bird	53	Pigeon	17	Leader	12
Bear	52	Cloud	15	Littlehead	11
King	50	Island	15	Partridge	11
Fish	49	Bighead	14	Wildcat	11
Wolf	38	Bullet	14	Crow	10

The practices of translation and homophonization, then, largely account for the differences in frequency of certain surnames between Mvskoke practice and general American practice. Names like *Harkey, George* and *Linney* occur more frequently among Mvskoke surnames because they represent homophonization from Mvskoke names. Names like *King* and *Deer* are more frequent among Creeks and Seminoles because they are translations of common clan names and titles. The truly unique Mvskoke names like *Harjo* and *Fixico* are merely English literations of Mvskoke titles.

One rather exotic aspect of the homophonic selection of names is that some names selected in the early nineteenth century have now gone back into the Mvskoke language as Mvskokeized English names. *Milletsi* and *Muchusse* converged into the English name *Mitchell* by homophonization in the middle of the nineteenth century. But in the late nineteenth century and among modern Creeks we find some families who use the Mvskoke name *Micheli* and say that it is the Mvskoke version of *Mitchell*. So the name has gone from *Milletsi* or *Muchusse* to *Mitchell* and back to Mvskoke as *Micheli*.

Of the remaining surnames on the Dawes roster, a sizeable number do in fact represent intermarriages with Anglos. In many cases, the Anglos involved were notable figures such as McIntosh, Perryman and Bruner. Other more recent intermarriages, especially in the late nineteenth century, were between ordinary Creeks and ordinary Anglos and it is difficult to determine in many cases whether a name carried by only a few people is a homophone of an unusual name in Mvskoke, whose referent has been lost, or whether it represents an unremembered intermarriage between a Creek woman and an Anglo man. To determine the status of these kinds of names, we would have to refer to official government censuses in the nineteenth century since these listed all non-Creeks who were married to Creeks and living on the reservation in Indian Territory.[17] This, however, goes beyond the scope of this article.

At this point in our research we have achieved some understanding of the different kinds of transformations which have occurred historically as Creek people permuted their own Mvskoke names and created English names.[18] We have, therefore, some qualitative control of the data which will enable us to achieve nominal linkage. After this is achieved, the next step is to analyze the different documents and censuses quantitatively in order to discover the relative frequencies of the different kinds of name changes and the significance of these frequencies. This will enable us not only to trace migrations of families from town to town, but to determine the rates of acculturation among the various towns and to determine the role of each town in the history of the Mvskoke people.

Notes

1. The tribal and ethnic name is also written *Muscogee* or Muskogee. In the native alphabet, devised in 1853, which I will use here and which is still in use among literate Mvskoke people, *v* represents schwa and *k* represents the phoneme which includes the phones [g] and [k]. For purposes of presentation, I have devised a standard spelling for some names, but chosen not to present them in IPA. For the most part, I have preserved archaic and variant spellings from the original documents where the names are found. At this point it is still not clear which spellings preserve real dialectal differences and which are merely alternative literations of the same utterance. For example, the differences among *Harjo, Hadjo*, and *Hargee* may be phonetically significant, so I will preserve these differences until the phonetic issues are settled. See Loughridge 1914.

2. Much of this work was accomplished under NSF #9496130.

3. For general discussions, see Akinnaso 1981, Alford 1988, Bean 1980 and Nuessel 1992.

4. In this regard, it is amusing to read the names selected for Indian heroes and heroines by unknowledgeable writers of modern pulp fiction, who, (for a particular tribe) use men's names for women, violate taboos against the use of particular birds and animals for personal names, and in blissful ignorance interchange the names used by one tribe with those used by another. Often they invent colorful names which are meaningful in the Anglo-American system of natural symbols (*Brave Eagle, Little Flower, Bright Star*), but puzzling or even insulting to Native Americans, depending on their cultural naming practices. Conversely, the authors of modern "bodice-rippers" tend to avoid completely valid and respectable Native American names which might have negative connotations in English (*Wolf Droppings, Broken Back Woman*). For comparative descriptions, see Barnes 1980, Bright 1958, Goddard 1984, Kroeber 1906, Moore 1984, Parsons 1923, Voegelin and Voegelin 1935, and Weslager 1971.

5. See Moore 1988 and 1990, and Moore and Campbell 1989.

6. I also wish to thank Toney Hill, Joe Smith, Sam Cooper, the late Martin Givens, the late Hulli and Pauline Solomon, John White, John and Lucinda Tiger, Nathan and Cindy Long, and especially my dear and recently departed friend, Otis Harjo, whom I miss every day.

7. Dalberg (1985) has used the term *appellative*; French and French (forthcoming) use *name-title.*

8. 1832 Census of Creek Indians, prepared by Benjamin S. Parsons and Thomas J. Abbot. National Archives Publication T275, Washington, DC.

9. Creek Census of 1882. Record Group 75. Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Microfilm Roll 7RA-43. Federal Archives and Records Center, Ft. Worth, Texas.

10. Enrollment Cards of the Five Civilized Tribes, 1898-1914. National Archives Publication M1186. Rolls 77-91 (Creek) and 92-93 (Seminoles). Washington, DC.

11. The social dances of the Mvskokes have been known colloquially in English as "stomp dances," and hence the ceremonial sites of the Mvskokes have been called "stomp grounds," even though many of the dances and ceremonies held there are not merely social but of a very serious nature. The term "busk grounds" has also developed in English to describe these sites, derived from the Mvskoke word *posketv* 'to fast', because fasting often accompanied the serious ceremonies. Busk names, then, are those formal appellations which are bestowed at the busk grounds.

12. Consultants differ about whether the town officers originally brewed their own medicine for ceremonies. Some say that there has always been a specialized religious practitioner who made medicine.

13. 1868 Creek Orphans. Cate Collection, Western History Library, University of Oklahoma. Norman, Oklahoma.

14. The late George Cosar, Sr. of Okmulgee, Oklahoma, was a proponent of this view, which was not endorsed by everyone. As might be expected, Mekkos of particular towns tend to generalize from the experience of their own towns.

15. An overview of bureaucratic and colloquial attempts to transform Native American names into English is provided in Crissey 1906, Littlefield and Underhill 1971, and Underhill 1968. The experiences of specific tribes and ethnic groups are described in Bodine 1968, Casagrande 1955, Mooney 1889, Moore 1984, Rogers and Rogers 1978, Ritzenthaler 1945 and Weslager 1971.

16. See Dalberg 1985, Rogers and Rogers 1978, Weslager 1959, Mooney 1889, and Ritzenthaler 1945.

17. Population Schedules of the 8th Census of the U. S., 1860. Arkansas. National Archives Pub. M653. Microfilm Rolls 52 and 54. Washington, DC.

18. It is interesting that the names *Mouse* and *Squirrel*, representing animals of low status in English, were more often literated into English as *Chissoe* and *Escoe*, respectively, rather than translated.

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