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LAND TENURE AND HIERARCHIES IN EASTERN MELANESIA

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THE SOUTH PACIFIC ISLANDS HAVE BEEN A LABORATORY for social anthropologists for the best part of a century. Theoreticians have come and gone, but the field still yields rich data and continues to raise questions about the operation of island societies. However, too much description has been spoiled by giving greater weight to models stemming from Western culture than to observation of the way people actually live. With regard to land tenure and social hierarchies, the result ignores the flexibility that is so characteristic of island life.

On the other hand, islanders have never been sure of what could be safely entrusted to the hands of anthropologists. They have tended to resist our inquisitive curiosity. Although they have answered what questions were put to them, they did not volunteer answers to those that were not asked. Some relevant questions emerged only recently because of the dominance of Western models. Others were raised by earlier scholars but were not taken up until years later.[1]

Land tenure and social hierarchies have been shown to be linked since the earliest research in Polynesia and Fiji, but experience from Vanuatu, New Caledonia, and the Loyalty Islands points to some still underexplored research areas. I have had unique opportunities to follow the dynamics of contrasting systems in these islands, by virtue of my long stay there (since 1947) and the fact that my wife is linked by descent or marriage to most of the chiefly lines in the Loyalty Islands. These circumstances have brought a great deal of spontaneously given data my way, as well as providing the facilities to check this information over time.

Models

Following Radcliffe-Brown and later Lévi-Strauss, anthropologists have often been zealously seeking models, to extract the generalities and to illustrate the rules that we thought governed different cultures and societies.[2] Such things do exist, and islanders can be brilliant in their expression of them, having even created some quite satisfying mathematical models.[3] The unhappy fact is that they also spend as much time evading the consequences of the theoretical models as following their component rules.

For example, after having had explained to me marriage rules in northern Malekula, I was flabbergasted to observe no actual marriage. One year later, I was informed that the people had decided to stop all marriage preparations while I was present, because each of them would have been conducted contrary to the given rules. The very simple reason was that, according to those rules, there was no marriageable girl present because of a sex ratio of 140 males to 100 females in the area.[4] Other institutions have been influenced in parallel ways by a fluctuating population, as in the system of titles linked to land tenure and social control in central Vanuatu[5] or the survival of the traditional social structure in a New Caledonia continuously raked with rebellions and bloodied by military repressions.[6]

Models do express a certain reality. As long as there are islanders to outline such complexities, partly through relating them to foundation and other myths, models will be part of anthropology, if not the complete answer they were thought to be. They sometimes function at a more sophisticated level than was thought. For example, I have been able to show, on the basis of named titles controlling land tenure and social status extending from Efate to southeastern Epi in central Vanuatu, that the system was known to every single adult member of the population in such a way that the information drawn from each island, each village, and each family was found to be logically coherent all over the area. The computer analysis of the mass of data obtained was one of the very first attempted in anthropology.[7] The fact that any partial amount of data obtained from any of more than three thousand informants fitted in the whole without showing any logical fault has important theoretical consequences.

All formalized aspects of social and cultural life fit inside specialized systems (language, kinship, exchange of goods and artifacts, rites of all kinds). The problem is in envisaging a "system of systems." Thus, the functionalist idea that a cultural whole was so interconnected that it would crumble under the onslaught of the West has been proven wrong. Island societies have survived and adapted, which means the systems were flexible, never fixed. For example, rules for hypergamic marriages among chiefly lines in

Lifou were evaded in three generations of my wife's family, as her mother's brother's father, mothers brother and his eldest son, as well as her mother and mother's sister, thwarted parental will. The autonomy of individuals is always a factor even if the notion of a cultural whole remains a useful device for thinking about societies.

The Concept of "Variants"

Claude Lévi-Strauss started a brilliant career by noting what should have been discovered earlier. His well-made point was that, analytically, there is nowhere any "authentic tradition." Myths as well as institutions are only known by their local variants.[8] Each of these presents an identical interest for research. The existence of such variation, often justifying the original settlement of a local residential or kin group, has been extensively documented by social anthropologists since 1930, although the theoretical implications have not always been recognized. This fact, with the differing shades of behavior or expression by local groups, explains a recurrent problem in anthropology, when each published variant of a myth or of the workings of an institution finds determined opposition as each group claims that only its variant is the "correct" one.

Therefore, scientific practice points to the necessity of taking all variants into account. This means working in the field with every existing lineage or other local group, checking facts with all the neighboring groups, and, in each, finding out what every person--adult men and women of all ages, and even children--has to say, and continuing this work over a matter of years. An individual who makes a pretense of being ignorant one day can very well become a first-class informant some years later, when he is considered to be an adult in his own society (that is, has married and sired his first child).

Lévi-Strauss explains that all these variants, the theoretical number of which is indefinite, tend to coalesce in what he calls a "transformation system," which easily covers an area in which a number of languages are more or less understood by all.[9] For example, in the north-central islands of the former New Hebrides, earth-diving, from a specially built tower in Bunlap and the neighboring villages of South Raga, is linked to the yam firstfruits ritual. On the eastern coast of Malekula, at Onua Point, the dive is from the top of a banyan tree and is incorporated among the rites giving access to the higher level of the grade-taking hierarchy.[10]

Eastern Polynesia is by all means such a transformation system and eastern Melanesia, Fiji, Tonga, and Samoa can easily be analyzed as another one. In such a transformation system, one will find all the possible logical oppositions, each variant having its opposite or inverted example somewhere in the

area. It is with ideas of flexible systems, variants, and transformations described to this point that one can study land tenure and hierarchy from central Vanuatu to New Caledonia, the Loyalty Islands, Fiji, and parts of Polynesia.

Land Tenure

The length of time before social anthropology fully realized that there is a link between social structure and land tenure could be explained by the lack of specialized training for anthropologists in the field. Land tenure means survey work. Few of us have learned even part of this trade.[11]

However, another reason might be more fundamental. Land tenure seen through Western eyes has a legalistic dimension. The language is one of ownership as explained since Roman times by generations of lawyers and as applied by as many generations of magistrates. When there have been problems about land tenure in the colonies, local administrations have always had recourse to people lacking anthropological training but learned in law[12] and administration.[13] Anthropologists were not available or not interested. On the part of those trained by Radcliffe-Brown, this could be easily understood, but Malinowski's pupils should have been more open-minded and could have expanded beyond the spatial model of the Kiriwina village. Of course, in the colonial situation, matters of land were often investigated so as to take land away from the people and hand it to individual settlers or to the plantation system. Anthropologists were understandably loath to get caught in this unsavory game.

Real life shows that Pacific island societies and their component units are linked with land in every instance. Social anthropology has long recognized this fact through studies of residential patterns. Nevertheless, none of Malinowski's pupils has taken easily to his attempt to address the issue in **Coral Gardens and Their Magic.** Pioneering studies include those by Oliver in Bougainville, and Murdock and Goodenough on Truk.[14] Almost a decade passed before the work of Lawrence on the Garia, followed by that of Nayacakalou in Tonga, Samoa, and Fiji, and of Sahlins in Fiji.[15] Later the subject became somewhat more fashionable,[16] partly under pressure from geographers coming into the field.[17]

The consequences of mistaken directions plagued older attempts at dealing with the matter. Ownership was more or less consciously--anthropologists usually have no legal background--thought to be of the European type, that is, the fundamental right to "use and abuse land." This legal conceptualization did not really fit the picture, so authors chose not to dwell at length on land tenure. Anthropologists could not ignore the contradictions between

this legal conceptualization and the situation before them; the usual answer was that ownership of land was in every case deemed to be collective, as imagined at first by the French social theorists of the last century before the founders of Marxism took over the same idea.[18]

The problem then became one of determining which was the landowning group. It was always possible to obtain the assistance of kind informants, who had reasons of their own to be helpful, to decide which social unit assumed control over land. This method did not work so well that researchers could be satisfied with the results. Often they had to be contented with publishing a résumé; nothing in their training helped them to sift apparently contradictory statements.[19]

Any analysis citing landowning units is in contradiction with the everyday mechanics of land tenure itself.[20] Land is tilled by individuals and the members of their nuclear family,[21] who band together with others each time there is a material reason for doing things that way. No concept of collective ownership lies behind more than one man and woman working, for instance, on a yam or taro plot. Collective use of land goes with collective physical investments made in the same land, as in the case of the big Melanesian irrigation systems for taro cultivation or the complex drainage systems for sweet potato cultivation in the high-valley swamps of New Guinea.

Any quarrel over land always finishes by being discussed in public, at the successive levels offered by residence and descent groups. This practice gives an **appearance** of group ownership and control. If questions are asked in terms of such ownership and control, answers are invariably given in the same terms. (If the quarrel is over a pig, discussions are at the same levels, without anybody implying that ownership or control of the pig is vested in any of the interlocking groups.) The group scale of discussion is there to prevent quarrels from turning sour. Any residential or descent group will strive to prevent open rifts from provoking physical violence between its members. The control exercised is on the members, in the hope they can listen to reason, not on the object of the quarrel.

We have been carried away by our own implied cultural and philosophical certainties. The "landowning group" is a Western concept, superimposed upon the Pacific islands reality, in the same way as was the genealogical model introduced by W. H. R. Rivers.[22] Pacific islanders may manipulate genealogies in practice, but they respond well to questions phrased in the genealogical method. In the same way, they respond to the "landowning group" concept because it is convenient for them. They can talk back to the white man in terms he thinks he understands, thus ensuring that he does not interfere in the detail of their lives.

When the people want to reclaim land, as in New Guinea or New Cale-

donia, linking the claim to a residential group recognized by the colonial system (often under the name of "clan") has been quite a practical proposition In Vanuatu, people managed the same results by being content to speak only of villages, because they were confronted with minimal resistance on the part of the white plantation owners. What they really wanted back in each case was a block grant of land, leaving them free to let their own social practices operate internally without interference either by foreigners or by the governments of the newly independent countries.[23]

The idea of landowning social units had already been questioned in the analysis of Deacon, who, in 1924-1925 in southwestern Malekula, recognized that territorial ownership as such did not exist but was replaced by ownership of the well-worn path going through the land being used.[24] I later found such a situation on Lifou, where the path going to the gardens belonged to the owner of the said gardens. Where it is inconvenient, due to the ruggedness of the coral outcrops, to have as many paths as there are different plots, a single road exists, the limits of each landowner's domain being marked alongside, and only there.[25]

With two wrong preconceived ideas, one about the unquestioned existence of ownership as such,[26] the other about ownership by social units,[27] it took me ages to unravel the land-tenure situations I was confronted with. After thirty years it dawned on me, and was confirmed by the people themselves everywhere, that the real system--which they had never explained because they had never been asked the right question--was that *land accompanied social status and both came with the name given at birth.*

I was at the time doing genealogical coverage of part of inland Lösi, on Lifou, and linking every individual with his legitimate (that is, accepted by all) land-tenure claims.[28] In one case, I needed explanations: a young man bore a name that had nothing to do with the set of names belonging to his lineage of birth, and he possessed a domain outside that lineage's territory as I knew it. Then, what had evaded me for so many years was explained: that negotiations preceded birth and that the family meeting called for choosing a name could be enlarged by representative(s) of another lineage, offering to give one of the names it controlled to the newborn child, giving him at the same time the social status and land tenure going with the name.

Thus did I learn too the reason for my wife's being called Pawe. She had thereby taken over the name of an elderly, high-born lady called Pawe Wazizi, the last female representative of an extinct lineage. The lands of that lineage had been taken over since her death by the Hulicia chieftainship, which is in permanent prestige competition with the Wahnyamala chieftainship to which my wife belongs. The name given her was meant to allow one day for a claim to part of the Wazizi domain. This strategic information did

not come to me through a stroke of anthropological genius but by dealing with my Melanesian in-laws, who did not imagine they could hide from me such simple facts of life.[29]

This is one possible variant of a system we never thought of, or which got concealed as a form of adoption. The link between the name given at birth[30] and social status and land tenure offers an extraordinary advantage. It creates a flexible situation, with the capacity for all sorts of adaptations. It can fit equally well unilineal or nonunilineal descent systems. That may be why it has been so little noticed, except in the case of systems of titles, which have been observed since the very beginnings of Western contact. Although such titles have long been thought of as a Polynesian trait, the people of south-central Vanuatu also extracted the name as an individualized concept, theoretically separated from its living bearer, and created a system organized by titles, inherited or acquired, whereby access to land and to social status could be gained later in life, and even be changed more than once.

As in variations in the Pacific way of assuming positions of authority, access to land by individual name or title can also take different forms. The following examples are offered as illustration, not a model: at birth (for example, New Caledonia, Loyalty Islands, southern Vanuatu, northern Malekula, Fiji, south-central Vanuatu); more than once (south-central Vanuatu); acquired (Shepherd Islands) or inherited (Efate, southern and central Vanuatu); available to every member of the male population (Loyalty Islands, New Caledonia, southern and central Vanuatu); patrilineal and patrilocal (New Caledonia, Loyalty Islands, southern Vanuatu, Malekula, Fiji) or matrilineal and matrilocal (Efate, western Aoba, northern Pentecost, Banks Islands); differentiated according to the status of lineages (Loyalty Islands, Fiji); with a single dynastic title for specific lineages (New Caledonia, Loyalty Islands, Fiji); with alternating dynastic titles for specific lineages (New Caledonia), and so forth.

My judgment today is that the concept of the landowning unit is an unhappy legacy from Durkheim and Radcliffe-Brown and that there is no formal ownership of land in Western terms anywhere. Rather, we find in eastern Melanesia systems regulating access to land for each individual in each generation, the land being handed back at death to the person bearing anew the same name or title, by choice or inheritance, and not to any landowning social unit, This judgment, made on the basis of observations in areas with systems of titles to which the individual can have access according to specific rules with regard to lineage and individual strategies, is validated in principle at least from central Vanuatu to New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands, and beyond to Polynesia.

Control by the relevant social unit involves only those locations having

mythical implications for the entire group and where rites are practiced. Each such location has a "servant" or "master" or "priest" who acts in the name of the group and for its benefit. These locations together define a sort of global territory (but again not in Western terms) where the rites being enacted in the name of the group protect the individual's undisturbed control of his own land rights. The choice of the word ***maître*** (master) by Maurice Leenhardt was a good one.[31] The "master" is the one who controls specific locations by virtue of the name(s) he holds. There can easily be more than one name, some of which can be that of the principal location he holds or one or the other of those his ancestors held. It can be his residence or a former residence of the people of his lineage.

Two different systems dealing with land are thus superimposed and interlock with one another, neither of which is ownership in Western terms of reference.

Individual privileged access to land does not always mean that physical limits are placed around a plot or cluster of plots. Indicators of such access are placed along paths and are verified through the use of place names. Paths going through a tract of land belong to the beneficiary (unless the path crosses more than one tract) and no one can go through the path without permission. In the Shepherd Islands, south-central Vanuatu, plots linked to an elective title are never contained in a single cluster but systematically dispersed over an entire district, an island, or even more than one island. This effectively prevents any violent quarrel or war from erupting over land ownership.

The social role of the group involved, whatever the scope or size of membership, is to make the decision about who is the next rightholder, only interceding later if the designated person relinquishes those rights through a lengthy change of residence. Everywhere in this part of the Pacific a long absence means that individual rights are, provisionally at least, put in abeyance. Rights can be taken over by an elder brother or a lineage chief,[32] and their return negotiated later. There have been thousands of such cases since Western contact. The responsibility of the lineage chief or of a high-ranking individual is to organize the meeting where a decision will eventually be made, not to decide on his own. In the same way, higher-placed chiefs--not "village chiefs" since the extant villages are usually missionary or administrative creations--can be called upon to arbitrate land matters or to take over land in trust when a lineage has no male heir. These chiefs also determine not the final placement of a particular plot or set of plots but the day of the decisive meeting.

Thus, these persons of authority exercise the right to convene a meeting but not the right that so many white people have imagined, which is to

simply determine land rights on their own authority. Often outsiders are led to this mistaken notion by an interested party who knows the advantages that could be derived from being believed to be solely in charge. It is true that in the translation of the decision taken, the person of highest rank present is usually said to have made the decision, but this is only a formal recognition of rank, adding greater prestige to the outcome. Such niceties of formal language, into which islanders automatically fall when speaking of these subjects, have too often been taken at face value. Much of what the "informant" says can only be understood in more general conversation about these matters.

Another concept that has had a detrimental effect on our understanding of land tenure is "tribute." This term, stemming from classical civilizations or earlier, connotes a political system based on some form of taxation. There is no tribute of this kind given to anyone in eastern Melanesia. Rather, gifts of agricultural produce, fish, or artifacts go from people classified as junior brothers or headmen of junior lines to elder brothers or representatives of senior lines. These gifts call for two things: a countergift of lower value from the recipient, and the obligation of the recipient to feed the donor and host him overnight if he lives far away. The yams, for example, given by a man must never be given to him to eat. It is the responsibility of special ceremonial jobholders at the chief's court and of the chief's legitimate first wife (a firstborn daughter of high rank) to administer such a situation and to see to it that no visitor ever goes hungry.[33]

The importance of names--personal names obtained at birth, successive names indicating successive ranks, place names defining land rights, place names defining where the human society talks to the other world--is being more readily recognized today. As previously noted, Bateson's earlier work was not sufficiently attended at the time. He was talking of secret names, the knowledge of which gave rights over land. These could be lost if the holder became so provoked to fury in debate that he would blurt out the names in public, thus losing his rights. Transfer of these to the orator who had obtained this public revelation was an individual affair. The winner would immediately impose new secret names to insure he kept his prize. Here again, there was no landowning unit acting as such and no direct interference of the lineage in the verbal fight.

Because of the importance of public discussion, there are plots of land with no recognized rightholder since the meetings convened on the matter were unable to reach a consensus or the reponsible person of rank never (for reasons of his own) convened the necessary meeting.[34] Other plots are left unused because of a curse having been laid, threatening anybody who tries to work the land with, for example, death without a male heir.

When populations were in decline, the provisional answer was to put on one individual more than one name, more than one social status, and thus multiple land claims. In the presence of a belligerent European settler class, the use of Christian names helped to hide this particular adaptive process from inquisitive European eyes. Today, when population has been increasing for the past thirty years, parents have gleefully given their long-hoped-for children all the names inherited from earlier times, thus reviving one after the other claims on land taken over by planters and settlers. In most of the tens of cases where people told me in Vanuatu[35] and New Caledonia about their strategy to use new generations of children to create further pressure for return of former lands, they have won their cases. Often this was done with some help from me, as the acknowledged price for their talking freely.

Today we are approaching population numbers in most islands approximating those when whites came to the South Pacific two centuries ago. Cases of overpopulation, some severe, are evident; there is not sufficient land for adequate fallow, and the crops are smaller each year. This has happened in Méré Lava before the island exploded and had to be abandoned, it is happening now in the Poindimié and Cape Bayes "native reservations" in New Caledonia, and surely elsewhere. For a number of years, the Shepherd Islands people have quietly resorted to making two land-tenure titles out of one by adding to it a qualifying adjective. This is comparable to the multiplication of titles in Western Samoa, while in Tonga the constitutional right of each young couple to enough land to build a house and raise its own food is slowly becoming a dream of the past.

Hierarchies: The Loyalty Islands

It has long been accepted that Polynesian societies operate on a hierarchical model. However, Hocart showed us that a Fijian hierarchy could be a complex working system, with people established in all sorts of positions whereby their allegiance to the titular head was defined in all sorts of ways. This could be interpreted as creating many sets of conditions for the functioning of links between hierarchy members, without which the system would wane. The principal link is one between so-called chiefs and talking chiefs, which at least in Samoa looks suspiciously like a dual chieftainship. In a brilliant paper, Christina Toren shows how this duality works in the minds and the behavior of Fijians.[36]

I myself showed some twenty years ago for Melanesians in Ouvéa that the ***than*** did not exist without the members of his court who exercised special privileges within it. These were: the ***hingat in than,*** builders of houses

and canoes, advisers with the privilege of physically beating the chief for misconduct; the **hnyimen than,** the chief's mouthpieces who learned from their forefathers to speak on their own, without specific instructions from the chief; the **tang tangen than,** who keeps the chief's treasures at the latter's will; the **ahnyaba,** the only person who can sleep with the chief in the **hnyeule,** the hut containing the chief's yam provisions,[37] and can eat the fruit of the banana tree at the foot of which the chief relieves himself at night; and the **obotrkong,** "sacred basket," who concludes discussion at day's end in the chief's meetinghouse and voices the decision arrived at by consensus or the disagreement. The chief talks in a low voice during the meeting and cannot impose his views easily on those who are present, because they constitute among themselves the only visible structure of the chieftainship. As such, they dominate him as much as the reverse. Any of these privileged persons wanting to assert his autonomy will not be present at the meeting but will delegate in his place the head of a junior lineage. Such a delegation has at times become permanent.

Chieftainships are thus surrounded by lineages, the titular heads of which are striving to stay as independent as they can. One way is to formalize the relation with the chief in a yearly offering, **tang sahac,** brought when the lineage head decides to and consisting of what he has decided to give. In this way, the lineage head is not buried in the throng of **je ditr,** the lineages most closely related to the chief, bringing in the **fat,** the firstfruits of the crop to fill the chief's yam house.

The oral traditions belonging to each such chieftainship in eastern Melanesia bring out the differences between them. The Lifou **atresi** do not beat their chiefs but may kill them. At other times, murderers are threatened with a divine curse, stemming from the outer world, the one of the **haze.** One lineage descending from a murderer of one of the paramount chiefs of the Wetr district is to be found, under another name, in the nearby Gaica district. The curse had apparently fallen only on the name assumed before the murder. In the same way, one will find paramount lines having lost their status, living in the same or adjacent districts, under different names. Although Father Dubois described for Maré a society where the older lineages controlling land were victims of a wholesale murder--**"le massacre des élétok"**--descendants of these same lineages have been found living quietly at some distance from their former residence, under other names, having lost their former control of land.

Another aspect of these very flexible hierarchies is that they are paired; no chieftainship is self-contained, nor can it be isolated for description or analysis. Every chief has a paired rival, and their competition usually continues over centuries. In this competition, each chief seeks help from a sup-

porting lineage nearby. All decisions must be taken with the approval of the head of this supporting lineage. Although theoretically there are paramount chiefs in Ouvéa, the presence of other lineages and the need to seek their support constrain the power of any chief.

Colonial authorities and mission authorities have utilized what thus appeared as rivalries for their own ends, but the Melanesians have in turn pursued strategies that incorporated the administration and missions. For example, the Bahit chiefs were living close to the Imwene chiefly line in northern Ouvéa. The Bahit became Catholics and enlisted the Marist fathers on their side, waging war once more against the now mostly Protestant south and also against the Imwene, who had become Protestant so as not to fall under the Bahit's power. The war was won by the Catholic side. The Imwene had to flee to Fayawe, the seat of the Hwenegei chieftainship, then the Hwenegei and Imwene had to flee together to New Caledonia proper for some years. They were brought back to Ouvéa by the French troops who took possession in 1864.

The Imwene chief had to become Catholic to protect his peace. All the dependents of his lineage remained stoutly Protestant and went on to build a village and a London Missionary Society (LMS) church in the bush, on farmland. They called Gosana the place that had earlier been known as ***hnyebuba,*** "the yam fields.' In 1988, the reigning Bahit chief accused the Imwene people of being responsible for an attack on the Fayawe police post in which four gendarmes were killed. The village was occupied by the army and the people manhandled. A few years before, the Bahit had accused three young people from Gosana of having set fire to the hotel in Fayawe, but the court found no proof of the accusation. With twenty-four murders on its books, the administration finally awoke in the fall of 1988 to the plight of the Gosana people and gave belated official recognition to the Imwene chieftainship, releasing the people from the Bahit's effort to put them under his dominion. The Bahit chief died a few weeks later, from overindulgence, but it was rumored that his death was really the revenge of the dead, living from time immemorial in a cave that had been invaded by the army with guides supplied by the Bahit.

In Fayawe, where the bulk of Melanesian speakers of the island live, the paramount chiefs are two, Hwenegei and Draume. The Draume are the older residents, the Hwenegei having immigrated from New Caledonia where they were makers of shell money on the west coast, in the south of the Voh district. Draume never accepted Hwenegei's usurpation of paramountcy and has remained independent. The two groups have been fighting each other since, for more than four hundred years, though they live less than two hundred yards from each other. The Draume is considered in Lifou to be an offshoot from the principal landholding lineage around

Drueula, in the Gaica district. However, the chief insists on expressing that tradition in the reverse order and continues to call Hwenegei the foreigner.

In the Wetr district of Lifou, conversion to Christianity was led by the principal **atresi,** Upinu Waleweny, who had prophesied that a new faith and light would come from the east. The Ukeinesö lineage (as it was then called, or Sihaze since a murdered chief was replaced by a man chosen from a lineage in Ouvéa) then called for French Marist fathers to come in an effort to keep some of its independence from the growing power of LMS missionaries. The LMS missionaries were viewed as favoring the Bula chiefly line in the Lösi district and the Waehyna chiefs in their Xepenehe domain in Wetr. Similarly, the **isola,** mother of the young Zeula chief in the Gaica district, herself originating from the Xetriwaan chiefly line of Touaourou in New Caledonia, brought Catholicism to one part of her son's chiefly court. In this way, he kept some independence from the pressure of Lösi district and its paramount chief, Bula.

My wife's mother's brother was Noeja Wahnyamala, the principal chief of the Lifou village of Kejany in the Lösi district. His lineage had been in competition, over generations past, with the Hulicia line coming from the Wedrumel village in Gaica, where the Wahnyamala have a good third of their dependents. Noeja had been imprisoned before World War II for having refused to let his young men work on the roads for the government. A Hulicia had been put in as village chief in his stead. Some years ago, the old Hlonu, **ten adro,** "master of the land," became very angry at the young Hulicia chief, who had given permission for people of a nearby village to cut wood in Hlonu's domain, ignoring Hlonu himself. The old man went to see Noeja Wahnyamala, and told him: "Hulicia has betrayed me. I am coming now on your side, so that the Wahnyamala will finally have won the day." Noeja thanked him ceremoniously but spent the greater part of the year trying to bring the two back together, even preaching in his role as deacon on the subject of Christian reconciliation.

This incident and others have led me to understand that these rivalries were at the very core of the workings of the social structure. They cannot be suppressed; only our Western naivete leads us to try to ask people to forget their quarrels. In these cases, as with land tenure, essential information comes from observing real behavior over long periods of time, not simply asking questions about principles or models.

Hierarchies: New Caledonia

It took me forty years to make a survey of all positions, functions, and privileges among the Melanesians of New Caledonia proper, lineage by lineage. The data were those that the possessors were willing to give, which I have

checked over the years through both interviews and observations. Chieftain-
ships here have a knack of always changing shape. No one is identical to
another; they come in all sizes, large, medium, small. If one thinks of a pos-
sible logical variant of the model expressed in general terms, it can be found
in some corner, as well as those unheard of, nicely blending to the people's
satisfaction what might seem to be contradictory principles.

These chiefs are always competing among themselves, each trying to
maintain the greatest amount of autonomy possible for himself. Apparent
links of domination are often parts of larger strategies, for example, estab-
lishing links in two directions to play one competing chief against another.
Sometimes a ceremonial function will be conveniently translated into action
only once a year as it suits the strategy of competition. As in the Loyalties,
social and political unity is never the aim.

No chief exists without one or two rivals, each being the reason the others
are able to maintain independence. A few chiefs hold court in a wide, walled
enclosure, reigning over dignitaries following much the same model as in
the Loyalty Islands. Some appear to hold a fraction of power only insofar as
they belong to a system of horizontal relations permitting them to mobilize
the support of others dispersed over a wide area. What seem to be local de-
pendents operate largely independently, so long as they keep courteous rela-
tions with their nominal superiors, Nothing is more difficult to obtain from a
New Caledonia Melanesian than the admission that he follows anyone's bid-
ding. Nevertheless, hierarchical positions are all initially inherited, the flexi-
bility of the system allowing for changes in status through prowess in war or
political acumen.

One well-established institution is a web of formalized relations between
lineages that claim the same, far-off place of origin. If one goes to that place,
one learns that this single root in the soil is only apparent. For example,
Mount Souma, overlooking the valleys of Poya in the west and Houaïlou in
the east, is claimed as their place of origin by the larger part of the Paici-
speaking people. This is only a symbol. Their real origins stem from further
south through the Bourail and Kwawa valleys. At the bottom of the latter,
the local myth explains that the chieftainship there is identical with that on
the island of Muli, in the Ouvéa lagoon. If one were to go then to Muli, he
would be sent back to New Caledonia.

There are at least two, and most probably three, webs of relationships
recognized widely that cover the Loyalty Islands as well as New Caledonia.
The movements along these webs have been so numerous over thousands of
years that each is found to be extraordinarily complex. One practical rule is
nevertheless rather simple: if a particular place of origin is claimed, relations
operate both ways between the two points in space. This is most clear

between the north of Ouvéa and the Wetr district in Lifou. In both places, lineages claim the other side of the channel as their place of origin. New Caledonians tend to be more coherent in their presentation of such things, but traditional routes showing only one direction between A and B are only a literary device. Men and women ply these routes both ways, which is the important point.

One way of checking on this is through sifting the events of colonial history. For instance, who became Catholic or Protestant and for what reason (that is, in opposition to whom)? Where did the LMS and the French Protestant missions recruit their helpers, pastors **(nata, hnamiatr, nahibat),** and deacons **(dikona)?** Who were the privileged candidates for teaching or pastoral work and why? Since democratic elections have become well established, the supporters of the different candidates can be looked at, as well as the arguments that are used outside the presence of European politicians, even those belonging to the same political side. The name of one of the two principal webs of relationships appeared thirty years ago on the voting papers of an Ouvéa candidate, without any European official even noticing it. However, I did, and this started me on the road of mapping, slowly but precisely, this type of relationship. The result is so intermingled and detailed it has become unreadable, except by Melanesians themselves. Nevertheless, it provides an excellent guide to interpret events, even the most gruesome like the recent massacre in the northern Ouvéa cave.

One question hanging over the Loyalty Islands and New Caledonia is what has happened to the earliest inhabitants, those who are thought to maintain more ancient links with the other world and whose blessing is said to be needed by all later immigrants. The theoretical model offered by Maurice Leenhardt was the dual function served by chiefs, who were really eldest sons of the senior line, **orokau,** and so-called masters of the land, **kavu neva,** who controlled the interface between the land of the living and that shared by the gods and the dead. The problem is that the **kavu neva** can be at the same time **orokau** in their own lineage or group of lineages. Thus, the dual function disappears when it is lodged in a single individual. A number of chiefs are not **kavu neva** while others have no **kavu neva** associated with them, having deliberately sent them on their way. (The expansionist Paici chiefs had a habit of keeping authority among themselves by getting rid of older inhabitants who maintained solidarity links with potential foes.) **Neva** means landscape--in a sense, a territorial concept--but not the soil used to plant yam or taro. These **kavu neva** have little to do with land tenure.

There are other sorts of **kavu.** Among them, the **kavu mëu,** "master of the yam," who decides which day the first of the yam crop will be eaten by men (women and children eat them a month later), is easily the most revered and

most powerful, if power is the correct word. ***Kavu kare ma kwa,*** "masters of sun and rain," play an equally important role.

Today, as we have seen, in Maré the oldest lineages, the ***eletok,*** have been deposed and obliged to change names so as to loosen their former control of land. In Lifou, the ***ten adro*** are the intermediaries with the other world; most of the priests dealing with the innumerable ***haze*** are taken from their ranks. Thus, they cannot enter any chiefly court, being considered too dangerous because of their strong ***men*** (mana) derived from the ***haze*** invisible community. In the Wetr district they are called ***alalu,*** always found in pairs, and linked to a small number of special officers, the ***atresi. Atresi*** are meant to be chiefs of the ***alalu*** but in reality are their go-betweens, having no individual power over any ***haze*** except through them. In Ouvéa, the oldest inhabitants are called ***üay,*** but their membership is a matter of discussion, if not outright quarrel. Though some of them grace every chief's court, no one agrees on their specific function. That is, they are there because tradition says they should be, but they have lost any significant power or privilege.

Hierarchies: Northern Malekula

The Big Nambas of northern Malekula are ruled by dual chieftainships, between which the form of competition alternates between war and the offering of hundreds of pigs. The chief, ***mweleun,*** presides in an alley of stone monoliths along which pigs are tied to wooden stakes. At the same time a ***mweleun*** gives a feast to his arch rival, he takes a degree in the local graded hierarchy specially reserved for chiefs. His men will bring in the pigs to be ceremonially clubbed by their ***mweleun,*** but they cannot compete for grades reserved for him.

The rival ***mweleun*** say they come from two fruits, each having fallen on one side of the stately roots of the ***nakatambol*** tree. The two children born from the fruits survived by sucking the trunk's nodes. When they grew older, they walked about in the open; each discovered the other and that they were born from a ***nakatambol.*** At first, they remained near their mother tree. Then people living on the land discovered them and installed each one as chief of a particular location.

Living people did not divide themselves between the two chiefs, as is the habit elsewhere in the islands, but stayed apart from them. The result is unusual. Wars and offerings of food and pigs are played out between the two chiefly lines, their junior lineages being those who rear the pigs and present them to their respective chiefs to be clubbed. These junior lineages will get their return when their particular chief is the recipient, rather than the giver. Chiefs and their men drink kava from the dry root in the evening in

the Fijian way, clapping cupped hands as each man in turn dips his face in the kava bowl and takes a long sip. If more than one chief or honored guest is present, a man of the host lineage will have to drink between each so men of rank do not drink in direct succession.

The former "masters of the land," the **nembalian,** do not participate, since they live in villages apart from those who support one of the dual **mweleun.** They rear pigs only for their own consumption. However, if there is a war, the chief of the vanquished side must offer a human victim to make peace with his rival. Although the **nembalian** do not participate in the war, they give one of their number to be sacrificed, hung by the legs to the eyes of a standing carved wooden drum, while the men of the victorious chief sing the chants and dance the dance dealing with killing men.

This is the theory The truth is that the victim is left alive but obliged to change identity; he is given a new name, a new lineage, and a new wife, and he must cut all links with his former kin and family. The chants are nevertheless sung and the dance performed. The **nembalian** say they are threatened with extinction if they do not offer such a victim at least once in a generation.

The **nembalian** have other functions. They are surgeons of true circumcision, this being one of the rare areas in Vanuatu (with northern Raga) where it is practiced. They are also the carvers of wooden drums, the makers of clubs and bamboo spears fitted with a wooden human head, and the sculptors of the tree fern finial carvings for the men's houses, the **amel.** If a young chief is in a hurry to take over from his father or from his elder brother, the **nembalian** will furnish murderers to swiftly dispatch the man at night.

Hierarchies: Shepherd Islands

Extending southeast from Epi to Mataso, this area encompasses the larger islands of Tongoa, Tongariki, and Emae. Here the **nawothlam** is at the top of a hierarchy made up of a number of lines, the head of each carrying one of a number of existing titles, organized in one of many parallel series. Some titles are only names; others carry specific functions directed toward the **nawotalam.** No such chief goes without his **atavi.** This man has the obligation of protecting his chief from anything coming from the other world. The chief is inaugurated on the **marae,** the square where dances are held, where men drink kava in the evening, and where each titleholder is allotted a stone seat along sides of the square. At inauguration, the specific stone is regarded as too powerful for the chief, who places his foot on a piece of hard wood slanting from the stone to the ground. Only the **atavi** is allowed to put his foot on the stone. For this power he was to be clubbed and buried while still

alive, so that his corpse would become the **nawotalam's** headrest when the latter died. On each side and at his feet, the chief would have one of his wives, buried alive after having been drugged with kava. Excavations by Jose Garanger throughout the area have produced conclusive evidence of this practice.[38]

The **takalakal** is the mouthpiece of the **nawotalam;** in eastern Melanesia as well as Polynesia, no man of rank should be without his orator. For an orator to deliver a speech in public is a mark of rank for the man on behalf of whom the speech is given. Only in certain parts of New Caledonia proper does the chief speak out in public on his own.

The **manuvasa, munuay,** or **munue** is the man who talks on behalf of the chief to the other world, praying to the god **(nasumwaur)** who protects the residential group--a thing the **atavi** cannot do. He is the person who has visions about the future. The **namataisau** is the carpenter who builds sea-going canoes; he also carves wooden dishes, clubs, and standing wooden drums. The **takaori** takes the lead in war; he also dispatches, by clubbing from behind, any **nakainanga** (a supporter of the chief because of linked titles) who has been condemned to death. He will also kill the chief's wives and **atavi** upon the chiefs death.

A key aspect of the system is that such titles are not inherited but attributed to a young man if and when he is regarded as capable of the responsibilities going with a title. **Marae** are not lineages but residence groups, and one resides according to the title he received. Titles can change according to different stages in life. For example, one can ascend in rank, in the same island or another. There are specific titles for elderly people who want to live a quieter life. Recited genealogies are thus pseudogenealogies, being in fact successions of titleholders to the same title and rank.

Throughout the area, subordinate titleholders give their **nawotalam** the firstfruits of the yam crop, adding a pig or two. This submission, called the **nasaotonga,** is regularly given within the **marae,** but at longer intervals between **nawotalam** of unequal rank. The members of a local residential system of titles are linked to other, more exalted ones and, through their chiefs, to other **nawotalam** in the same or another island. The value and power of a title is linked to the regular exercise of obligations, so that pigs may be sent by canoe as formal recognition of higher rank operating between **marae** in different islands.

Titles thus belong to systems of interlocking formal hierarchies, which appear to be rather stable, inasmuch as one finds in different places the same titles associated with each other, though not always in the same rank order. In a complete survey of this system, and that in Efate and the adjacent islands where succession to titles is matrilineal, each village knew its

local variant of the system and enough of the total to fit their own variant without contradiction. However, the system is not fixed: titles may be added or subtracted.

Certainly a key issue here is land, for a title gives access to land. Nontitle-holders, of whom there are a few, have to work on their father's or elder brothers land. But the landholding going with a title never is a single piece, but many plots, dispersed to provide drier soil for yams and sweet potatoes, more humid soil for taro, and protected areas for banana, sugarcane, and kava shoots. The holding may be in a single island or more than one. The result is that landholdings are mixed in such a way that interpersonal or inter **marae** disputes (over pigs, women, or succession to a title) do not become a fight over land. One cannot take over another man's land as such; only taking over of titles is allowed.

Hierarchies: Tanna

Tanna in the south of Vanuatu is the island for which the most detailed infor-mation exists, because it maintained on its gentle slopes rising to a central plateau much of its former population.[39] I have published a complete survey of all social ranks, privileges, and functions for the entire island, data unfor-tunately ignored by more recent authors although organized by residential groups to be more useful.[40] It is perhaps the habit of what I call "prescriptive anthropology" that has distracted workers from using such material as ten pages of traditional names, with associated privileges and functions, found in the Waesisi district.

This extensive work is the basis for my judgment that the concept of "big-man" is not useful for analyzing Tannese material. The exchange of huge amounts of pigs in the **nekowiar** ceremonies does not in itself indicate a big-man, for pig exchanges are widespread in the Pacific. On Tanna, only certain ranking men, **yèrëmërë,** have the capacity to organize and lead a group of lineages, associated with a dancing square. (There are more than one kava drinking squares, **yimwayim,** for each dancing square.) The lineage mem-bers call on others with whom they are linked so that the throng on either side is never exactly the same at each **nekowiar:** Nor is the leader of the host group the same man. The idea is that for the well-being of all the island responsibilities must circulate, each time on another dancing square, and all dancing squares are formally linked to others through parallel named routes. In this way, the fiction that the two sides at each **nekowiar** represent the entire island is preserved.

Tanna is a society of carefully preserved rank, organized in such a way that few people outrank all the others. Formal privileges and functions are

strongly adhered to and transmitted patrilineally. There are those who have the privilege of carrying a small white plume **(mëruk, nuwamëneng)** stuck in the hair; those who have the right to a short or tall vertical contraption **(küe-ria)** made of coconut fiber and covered with white feathers, so tall and heavy that it must be carried on the right shoulder instead of the head and be supported on sticks by the followers of the ranking man; those who have the right to receive and cook any turtle that is caught; those who have the privilege of coming at night to open the oven and eat the head of the cooked turtle, everyone else recognizing the next day that the special right has been exercised; those who cook the special, hairless black pigs **(poka kepwie)** killed at a **nekowiar,** to be eaten by all the guests at their residences; those who plant, care for, and are the only ones to distribute the **nekaua topunga,** the special kava plant whose stem has been partly covered with soil to concentrate the drug; those who are said to be cannibals, but who in fact have links to similar lineages with whom they exchange corpses that they never eat but pass along until decomposition demands that the corpse be buried; and those who are brought the firstfruits of the yam crop (often enough bearers of **küeria).**

Lesser-ranked dignitaries are those who are the surgeons incising the foreskins of boys, those who possess specific traditional medicines, and those who are the masters of the rites to ensure sufficient supplies of crops or fish in a given area. Each of the last-named owns a stone (or stones, though they often speak as if there was only one) that is washed annually in a wooden dish in the shape of a canoe hull **(niko, nengoo)** in water or occasionally coconut milk. These stones have to do with all the important crops, including kava, with fish generally or specific fishes, or turtle. The possessors of stones allowing for control of rain, sun, storm, and thunder are among the most revered of these so-called magicians, who are in fact priests calling on the dead and the gods to give them satisfaction.

A single man, on the plateau, has the privilege and responsibility of ensuring that all the Tannese will have full bellies all year long. In a special room in his house, he has on the wall a large pandanus basket filled with a number of smaller baskets, each containing a symbol (leaf or twig) of a different vegetable food. Each year all old baskets must be burned and replaced by new ones made by his wife to ensure the overall well-being of all the people throughout the island. He is the only person to have this particular privilege.

All the holders of what may be called fertility stones know each other, by specialty, and act in coordination with one another. They start with a specific rite each year in the northwest of Tanna, for example, for bananas. A message is sent to the next holder of banana stones in a southeasterly direction

so that, in the course of a few weeks, the whole round of the island is completed, crop by crop. Many proud possessors of fertility stones also hold other privileges, but no rule governs this. Traditionally recognized diseases are also linked with stones, the washing of which is added to the use of medicinal plants to achieve a cure.

At least one-fourth of the men in the island thus hold one or another of these privileges and proudly assume its possession as a sign of rank. In such a formalized society, it makes little sense to speak of big-manship, for one always knows who has, or who hasn't, the right to lead an exchange of pigs because such a right has been inherited.

A very special institution on Tanna is linked with the existence of two nonmarital moieties, Numrukwen and Koiometa.[41] These moieties were meant to govern peace and war--no easy task. Numrukwen and Koiometa populations lived intermixed throughout the island, neither group being consolidated on a large tract of land. Thus, if war occurred, it was only between a fragment of Numrukwen and another of Koiometa, with what support they could muster. War consisted of surprise raids and the burning of houses, so that the vanquished group had to flee and negotiate later to be allowed to return. Here entered a special dignitary, ***yani niko*** or ***yani nengoo,*** each having his own messenger, to carry out negotiations allowing resettlement. No conquering group was permitted to deny original residents their land for more than one generation.

The ***yani niko,*** "holder of the canoe" symbolizing the social unit, linked to his kava drinking square and one dancing place only, held sway over more than one residential group. This is what seems to resemble a chief most in Western eyes. He is an anomalous person who can betray his own people and secretly plot to bring war down upon them if he feels they do not pay due respect to him because they have been enjoying peace for too long. After having seen them chased away, he can then change tack and become again, as were his forefathers, the savior of his own people who cannot negotiate their return without his active presence.

Moiety structure might not be the best name for this institution. There is a third group,[42] Kowut Kasua, which manages to avoid the conflicts between the others. In the context of ***nekowiar,*** Numrukwen and Koiometa approximate ceremonial moieties.

At the time of independence, I was called into the Yanamwakel kava square by Rengyao, the ***yani nengoo,*** whom I had earlier registered as belonging to Kowut Kasua. He asked me to drink kava with him, then pointed to two stones protruding from the volcanic soil. He said he had a dream about the location of lost Numrukwen and Koiometa stones, and had dug them out at the precise spot indicated in his dream. At the same time, he

was telling me that the choice of all Kowut Kasua on the island was for the independence of Vanuatu, but that this choice was about peace in the present, not a promise for the future. Some time later the Kowut Kasua switched sides, and the Vanuaaku Pati lost the provincial elections.

The conquest of most of Tanna by the Presbyterian mission, and the return after May 1941 of most of the island to traditional ways through the John Frum movement,[43] provided insights on the inner workings of Tannese society. All privilege holders cooperated enthusiastically in my global survey of the island, so each could have his name registered as he wanted it. Later they came on their own to be shown exactly how this personal information had been written down.

In the course of this work, I was confronted with a number of unresolved land cases. These were created by Presbyterian missionaries following the same policies as had the LMS under John Williams,[44] deciding that land tenure should be defined as it was at the onset of Christianization, allowing for no new claims. As a result, a number of groups of some importance who had been trapped in exile after a lost war were unable to return home. Missionaries, and the British administration following their lead, refused to allow any change.

Land-tenure problems that had arisen from the building of overly large Christian congregations disappeared along with their villages in 1941, as each lineage returned to its premission residence. The exceptions involved the exiles, who called on their **yani niko** to intercede once more on their behalf. They therefore got into trouble with the Condominium administration, which refused to budge any more than it had before based on the same justification. The exiles then came to me.

I discussed the situation for some months with Dr. Armstrong, a very liberal missionary doctor who disagreed on this and other points with his more orthodox colleagues. (Consequently, while they lost their Christian flocks, he managed to keep his patients, even attending to the wives of John Frum adherents who came to deliver babies under his care.) I decided on a strategy that would address the entreaties, repeated since 1948, of James Yehnayeu, former assessor in the native court, deacon in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, and **yani niko** for one of the aggrieved parties. I contacted the descendants of Loohmae of Lenakel (the very first convert of the Reverend Frank Paton), who had used missionaries to help him grab land belonging to a group in exile on the other side of the mountain. These descendants came to a meeting with the claimant group; I had bought a pig and fed them well. After having eaten together, Loohmae's ranking descendant stood up and declared his people were ready to return the land. It was concluded in a matter of months, similar land claims finding at the same time an equally happy resolution.

The only place, to my knowledge, in Tanna where offerings are still made to the god Mauitikitiki, under that very name (Mwatiktik), is in Port Resolution, southeastern Tanna.[45] There a young yam tuber will be put under a rocky, underwater ledge by a diver, the god said to be living at the top of Mount Melen.[46] A parallel is found in Emae, in the Shepherd Islands, where a white rooster will be left to rot, his feet securely tied, at the god's altar. Both of the priests entrusted with these rites live in a Melanesian village, speak a non-Polynesian Austronesian language, and are nominally Christians.

The myth of Mauitikitiki is as well structured in the center of Vanuatu as in eastern Polynesia, except that his fishing up of islands is done by swinging from a rope fastened to a horizontal branch of a banyan tree, that he uses his fishhook and not his maternal grandfathers lower jaw, and that his death is yet to come. Other so-called Polynesian gods are known under cognate names (for example, Karispunga and Tafakisema, as in Maori Karihi and Hema) and with the same stories told, although the name Tangaloa is only applied to a sea snake in Tanna. When this snake was killed and buried, the first coconut tree sprouted from its eyes.

To see Mwatiktik associated with Melanesian institutions might seem like heresy, but only if one has a simplified view of an opposition between Melanesia and Polynesia. The fact is that a version of this deity is found widely and that hierarchies are equally widespread. However, in Tanna, they are not always visible, coming to the fore particularly during ***nekowiar*** periods and lapsing at other times into relative insignificance.

One of the analytic problems I did not see clearly at the start of my work in Tanna is that the society that Tannese rebuilt when they abandoned Christianity lacked its former flexibility. As a kind of ideological blow against Western dominance, they presented a global display coming straight from their remembered past in the last century but a reconstituted culture said to be timeless and unchanging. Brand new interpretations presented as local myths, hundreds of visions in the evening at kava time, or prophetic dreams in the dead of night put movement back into the picture.[47] In fact, Tanna is always dynamic and on the move, although Tannese will stoutly deny this at every opportunity.

Conclusion

This article has presented for an English-reading audience a wide array of data on land tenure and hierarchies in eastern Melanesia, bringing to the fore information too often overlooked because originally published in another language. However, there are some larger theoretical points to be made. One is to attack once more an artificial distinction between "Melanesia" and "Polynesia" that is not supported by cultural studies. A second is

to emphasize that too heavy a reliance on Western concepts, especially notions like "landowning group" or "chiefs versus big-men," obscures rather than advances our understanding. Rather, actual observation of people's activities, ideally made over long periods of time, is the appropriate methodology. Finally, the material presented should show how capable Pacific islanders are of managing their social lives in a flexible, therefore appropriate, manner so long as outsiders do not constrain these working systems with ideas not really applicable to those lives.

NOTES

1. For example, in 1936 Gregory Bateson established links between land-tenure claims and myth among the Iatmul in the middle Sepik area of New Guinea, and Douglas Oliver did the same for the Siwai of Bougainville in 1949. However, neither had much impact on other anthropological work at the time. Gregory Bateson, *Naven* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1936); Douglas L. Oliver, "Land Tenure in North-East Siuai, Southern Bougainville," *Peabody Museum Papers* 29, no. 4 (1949).

2. For a general discussion of such viewpoints in the philosophical background of anthropology, see S. Lee Seaton and Karen Ann Watson-Gegeo, "Meta-anthropology: The Elementary Forms of Ethnological Thought," in K. A. Watson-Gegeo and S. L. Seaton, eds., *Adaptation and Symbolism: Essays on Social Organization* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawai'i, 1978), 173-218.

3. See A. Bernard Deacon, "The Regulation of Marriage in Ambrym," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 57 (1927), 325-342.

4. Jean Guiart, "L'organisation sociale et politique du Nord Malekula, Nouvelles-Hëbrides," *Journal de la Société des Océanistes* 8 (1951). Recent demographic trends have allowed the sex ratio to return to normal.

5. Cf. Jean Guiart et al., *Système des titres aux Nouvelles-Hébrides du Centre, d'Efate à Epi* (Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie, 1973).

6. For the anthropology and ethnohistory of New Caledonia, see Maurice Leenhardt, *Notes d'ethnologie néo-calédonienne* (Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie, 1930); Jean Guiart, *Structure de la chefferie en Mélanésie du Sud,* rev. ed. (Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie, 1992 [orig. 19631]; Alban Bensa and Jean-Claude Rivierre, *Les chemins d'alliance: L'organisation sociale et ses représentations en Nouvelle-Calédonie* (Paris: SELAF, 1982); and Alain Saussol, *L'héritage: Essai sur le problème foncier mélanésien en Nouvelle-Calédonie* (Paris: Publications de la Société des Océanistes, 1979). For the Loyalty Islands, see Guiart, *Structure de la chefferie,* 1963 edition (for Maré and the Isle of Pines) and 1992 edition (for Lifou and Ouvéa).

7. Guiart et al., *Système des titres.* The computer analysis was the work of the specialized laboratory of the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, under Jean-Paul

Gardin, using Euratom computer time, under the aegis of Professor Claude Lévi-Strauss, at whose seminar the data had been presented and discussed.

8. Claude Lévi-Strauss, *Anthropologie structurale* (Paris: Plon, 1966), and *Du miel aux cendres* (Paris: Plon, 1972).

9. See Frederick Damon, *From Muyuw; to the Trobriands* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1990), for an interesting translation of the concept of "transformation" as applied to the northern half of the *"kula* ring."

10. Personal fieldwork, 1951.

11. I learned surveying work in the mountains around my home town of Lyon during the war years with one of my older brothers, who was studying engineering at the École Polytechnique, and by practicing the art as a student in the hills around Paris with the late Professor Lucien Bernot. Because of the complete lack of maps when I began fieldwork in Melanesia, I had to survey villages, paths, and cultivated plots for years, until the time came of systematic coverage of the islands by aerial photographs and the publishing of accurate maps by the Institut Géographique National (IGN). One of my greatest professional satisfactions came when I found that my map of the mountain villages of Espiritu Santo was quite in agreement with the new and modem map published by IGN. The aerial photographs done by the U.S. Air Force during the war were unavailable.

12. For a perceptive assessment, by a law specialist, of the description of a land-tenure system written by an anthropologist, compare Peter G. Sack, "Mythology and Land Rights in Wogeo," *Oceania* 46, no. 1 (September 1975), 40-52; with H. Ian Hogbin, 'Wogeo Land Tenure in New Guinea," *Oceania* 10, no. 2 (December 1939), 113-165, and Hogbin, "Land Tenure in Wogeo," in Peter Lawrence and Ian Hogbin, eds., *Studies in New Guinea Land Tenure* (Sydney: Sydney University Press, 1967), 1-44.

13. See Colin H. Allan, *Customary Land Tenure in the British Solomon Islands Protectorate: Report of the Special Lands Commission* (Honiara: Western Pacific High Commission, 1957); R. G. Crocombe, *Land Tenure in the Cook Islands* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1984); Peter Larmour, ed., *Land in Solomon Islands* (Suva: Institute of Pacific Studies and the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, Solomon Islands, 1979).

14. Oliver, "Land Tenure"; George P. Murdock and Ward H. Goodenough, "Social Organization of Truk," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 3, no. 4 (Winter 1947), 331-343.

15. Peter Lawrence, *Land Tenure among the Garia: The Traditional System of a New Guinea People* (Canberra: Australian National University, 1955); Rusiate Nayacakalou, "Land Tenure and Social Organisation in Tonga," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 68, no. 2 (June 1959), 93-114; R. Nayacakalou, "Land Tenure and Social Organisation in Western Samoa," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 69, no. 2 (June 1960), 104-122; R. Nayacakalou, "Fiji: Manipulating the System," in Ron Crocombe, ed., *Land Tenure in the Pacific* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1977), 206-226; Marshall Sahlins, "Land Use and the Extended Family in Moala," *American Anthropologist* 59, no. 3 (June 1957), 449-462.

16. For example, Michel Panoff, "Land Tenure among the Maenge of New Britain," *Oceania* 40, no. 3 (March 1970), 177-194; Eugene Ogan, "Nasioi Land Tenure: An Extended Case Study," *Oceania* 42, no. 2 (December 1971), 81-93; Crocombe, *Land Tenure in the Pacific;* Henry Lundsgaarde, ed., *Land Tenure in Oceania* (Honolulu: University Press of Hawai'i, 1974); Henry J. Rutz, "Fijian Land Tenure and Agricultural Growth," *Oceania* 49, no. 1 (September 1978), 20-34. Many studies submit to the old concepts about land tenure and are not as useful as they could be.

17. For example, Harold C. Brookfield and Paul Brown, *Struggle for Land: Agriculture and Group Territories among the Chimbu of the New Guinea Highlands* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1963).

18. Socialist theory applied in the field gave queer results. Governor Guillain, a disciple of Saint-Simon, gazetted an Order in Council (22 January 1868) declaring the ownership of land in New Caledonia vested in the tribe and controlled by the paramount chief. This became the legal basis to justify collective punishment--that is, confiscation of land-- each time a European settler claimed to have been mistreated by a Kanak. The extent of the limits of the "tribe" (the people living inside a "reservation") was determined by the colonial authorities, and the paramount chief (the so-called *grand-chef)* was chosen by the governor.

19. Some of the best papers are marred by the persistent notion of the social unit as land-owner. Another problem is the resort to administrative files dealing with land quarrels, as the only possible shortcut if one has not been trained in surveying work and thus lacks the capacity to deal with the tenure system plot by plot. For Fiji, see Tony Chapelle, "Customary Land Tenure in Fiji: Old Truths and Middle-aged Myths," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 87, no. 2 (June 1978), 71-88; Michael A. H. B. Walter, "The Conflict of the Traditional and the Traditionalised," ibid., 89-107. For Tonga, see George E. Marcus, "Succession Disputes and the Position of the Nobility in Modem Tonga," *Oceania* 47, no. 3 (March 1977), 220-242. For Samoa, see Sharon W. Tiffany, "Politics of Land Disputes in Western Samoa," *Oceania* 50, no. 3 (March 1980), 176-208; Walter W. Tiffany, "High Court Influences on Land Tenure Patterns in American Samoa," *Oceania* 49, no. 4 (June 1979), 258-269, and W. Tiffany, "Applicability of Western Judicial Concepts to Polynesian Land Disputes: High Court Use of the Adverse Possession Principle in American Samoa," *Oceania* 52, no. 2 (December 1981), 136-153.

20. I deal here with *rights,* which concept gives a good approximation of the reality, an approximation lost when segmented into primary, secondary, and subsidiary rights (and so forth) on the basis of observations made from a Western viewpoint. See the pragmatic and excellent discussion of Fijian land tenure by Rutz, who shows how wrong in fact are the official notions about communal ownership of land written into the Native Lands Ordinance of 1905. Rutz, "Fijian Land Tenure."

21. Cf. Chapelle, "Customary Land Tenure in Fiji," 73ff.

22. Cf. P. J. Epling, "Lay Perception of Kinship: A Samoan Case Study," *Oceania* 37, no. 4 (June 1967), 260-280; Jean Guiart, "Généalogies équivoques en Nouvelle-Calédonie," in *Langues et Techniques, Nature et Société* vol. 2 (Paris: Klincksiek, 1972), 37-51.

23. Cf. Jean Guiart, "Un problème foncier exemplaire en Nouvelle-Calédonie: La vallée de Tchamba," *Le Monde Non-Chretien,* ns (July-December 1960), 182-196.

24. A. B. Deacon, *Malekula: A Vanishing People in the New Hebrides* (London: George Routledge, 1934). I checked Deacon's data, as admirably put together by Camilla Wedgwood, on the spot with his principal informant, Amarantus, in the fall of 1950.

25. Cf. Guiart, *Structure de la chefferie,* chapter on Lifou.

26. Cf. Ralph Piddington, "A Note on Karadjeri Social Organization," *Oceania* 41, no. 4 (June 1971), 239-243, who questions the value of a Western concept of ownership among Australian Aborigines.

27. Ogan, "Nasioi Land Tenure," is one of the rare authors not writing in terms of specific landowning groups and presenting, for the matrilineal Nasioi of Bougainville, a more flexible approach.

28. "Right of" or "claims to" direct use, as defined by Ron Crocombe, "An Approach to the Analysis of Land Tenure Systems," in Lundsgaarde, ed., *Land Tenure in Oceania,* 1-17. In my view, corroborating Crocombe, there are no systems of land tenure as such, but systems of rank and of control of the environment, which take land tenure into account. Subsidiary rights may be added. Residual rights are peculiarly important, since they can be resurrected even after many generations have passed. The introduction of cash crops inevitably brought great changes, except as regards the coconut tree, which can be worked for copra at the same time as yams or sweet potatoes are planted underneath. (As Codrington noted long ago, ownership of the land and of the trees planted on the same land can differ.) See Crocombe, *Land Tenure in the Pacific.*

29. It is interesting to note how Lamont Lindstrom came to the same conclusion about the link between name giving, land, and social status, proposing more or less the same view, including changing names by collective fiat (or name stealing, as first noted by Bateson, *Naven).* Lamont Lindstrom, "Personal Names and Social Reproduction on Tanna, Vanuatu," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 94, no. 1 (March 1985), 27-45. My complete survey in 1952 of names and social statuses, published in Guiart, *Un siècle et demi de contacts culturels à Tanna* (Nouvelles-Hébrides) (Paris: Publications de la Société des Océanistes, 1956), gave a good half of the clues needed.

30. For the beginning of an anthropology of names see, in addition to works by Bateson and Lindstrom already cited, William L. Rodman and Margaret Rodman, "Rethinking Kastom: On the Politics of Place Names in Vanuatu," *Oceania* 55, no. 4 (June 1985), 242-251; James West Turner, "Some Reflections on the Significance of Names in Matailobau, Fiji," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 100, no. 1 (March 1991), 7-24. A reviewer in *Oceania* once asked why I published such long lists of names. The answer is that these lists, in their organized way, are the real models in working order; they are closer to the everyday life of the people than the structural rules favored so long by social anthropology.

31. Maurice Leenhardt, *Documents neo-calédoniens* (Paris: Institut d'Ethnologie, 1932). In the same way, Lévi-Strauss's recent proposal of *maison* (house) instead of lineage or clan is also practical with little danger of confusing the discussion.

32. The use of the term "chief" here is pragmatic. Although commonly used over two centuries, the term is not without its problems.

33. In writing about "tribute," many authors have said turtles were reserved for the chief's table. In fact, once brought inside the chief's courtyard, killed and cooked there, turtles are eaten by the chiefly family, its servants of both sexes, *and the very people* who caught the turtle and presented it in the first place.

34. An example comes from the village of Jozip, in Lifou, where the chiefly line for generations on end kept the coastal area planted in coconuts, to make copra for its own benefit, through the simple device of never convening the meetings that could deal with redistribution at times when a lineage had been extinguished or reduced to females only. More recently, the population explosion has forced this redistribution as coconut groves are transformed to village plots for housebuilding.

35. See Guiart et al., *Système des titres.*

36. Christina Toren, "All Things Go in Pairs, or the Sharks Will Bite: The Antithetical Nature of Fijian Chiefship," *Oceania* 64, no. 3 (March 1994), 197-216.

37. The chief's legitimate wife cannot do this.

38. José Garanger, *Archéologie des Nouvelles-Hébrides: Contribution à la connaissance des îles du Centre* (Paris: ORSTROM and Publications de la Société des Océanistes, no. 30, 1972).

39. This contrasts with the demographic disasters on Eromanga and Aneityum, fueled by constant reintroduction of gonorrhea. The strong-willed kava drinkers of Tanna escaped this tragedy.

40. Jean Guiart, *Un siècle et demi.*

41. Cf. John Lynch and Kenneth Fakamuria, "Borrowed Moieties, Borrowed Names: Sociolinguistic Contact between Tanna and Futuna-Aniwa, Vanuatu," *Pacific Studies* 17, no. 1 (March 1994), 79-91. I do not agree with the notion that institutions in Melanesian-language-speaking islands are necessarily borrowed from Polynesian islands, even if these are nearby. The implication is of a form of cultural superiority inherent in Polynesia, which cannot be scientifically verified. See Jean Guiart, "A Polynesian Myth and the Invention of Melanesia," *Journal of the Polynesian Society* 91, no. 1 (March 1982), 139-144. It is more likely that borrowing is done by a demographically smaller society from a larger one, and most Polynesian outliers are quite small. Thus, the Polynesian outliers in Ouvéa, Ivira, and Emae show strong borrowing from Melanesian neighbors, evidently through marriage as in the case of Futuna-Aniwa from Tanna.

42. Parallel to the two nonmarital, political and ceremonial moieties in northern New Caledonia, Ohot and Hwaap, lives a third group, composed of the fishermen's groups settled along the west coast of the island. These refuse to be part of the others and call themselves Gwalaap. Special marital practices for chiefly lines only (for example, cross-cousin marriage permitted once in a generation to the Hienghène and Pouebo chiefly lines) may

be an adaptation to the nineteenth-century demographic situation or a result of chiefs representing the ideal model, all others marrying as they will. Intermarriage at the chiefly level had the consequence of constraining war between those lineages. These chiefs tended to stay alive in wars.

43. The exception was the *yohnanaan,* the woman paid for introducing youths to sex life. Tannese women stoutly refused to see this practice come back.

44. It would be interesting to know if the latter's death on Eromanga had something to do with this.

45. See C. B. Humphreys, *The Southern New Hebrides: An Ethnological Record* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1926); and Guiart, *Un siècle et demi.* Katharine Luomala, in her monograph on Māui, did cite these instances, but without drawing the obvious conclusions. Katharine Luomala, *Maui-of-a-Thousand-Tricks: His Oceanic and European Biographers,* Bernice P. Bishop Museum Bulletin, no. 198 (Honolulu: The Museum, 1949).

46. A modem addition to the local legend says that I visited him there in the fall of 1952. I found that, without prompting on my part, a wide road had been cut beforehand by the so-called John Frum cult followers, allowing an easy walk to the summit. I found, too, that fieldwork went much more smoothly from that time on.

47. A good part of the information presented by Joël Bonnemaison is of this type. See his *La dernière île* (Paris: Arlea and ORSTOM, 1986) and *Tanna, les hommes-lieux* (Paris: ORSTOM, 1987). Bonnemaison is a geographer, not an anthropologist, and shows an unfortunate tendency to discard any data coming from Tannese who supported the independence movement. Those who appeared to be in favor of continued French rule were regarded as good informants, others being classified as acculturated and not to be trusted. His published data must be evaluated in that light.

COPRA CAME BEFORE COPPER:
THE NASIOI OF BOUGAINVILLE AND PLANTATION
COLONIALISM, 1902-1964

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For more than sixty years before a giant copper mine was developed on their land, the Nasioi of Bougainville lived in a colonial situation dominated by a copra plantation economy. This form of colonialism was imposed upon an indigenous sociocultural system characterized by political atomism and a strong belief in dependence on supernatural forces. As the colonial situation developed under specific historical conditions over decades, the Nasioi attempted unsuccessfully to find a more satisfactory adjustment to changed circumstances. The article argues that knowledge of this cultural and historical background provides greater insight into the dramatic developments in Bougainville during the last twenty years.

VIOLENCE THAT INITIALLY FOCUSED on the Bougainville Copper mine in North Solomons Province, Papua New Guinea, erupted in 1988. This soon escalated into demands for secession and ongoing warfare between a self-styled Bougainville Revolutionary Army and the central government of Papua New Guinea. These tragic events have provoked a wide variety of publications, scholarly, journalistic and polemic.[1] Amidst all this attention, relatively little has been written about the particular history of Nasioi-speakers, who are not only the traditional landholders of the site of the copper mine but who have also constituted the core of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army and produced its most prominent spokesmen, Francis Ona and Samuel Kauona. This article aims to amplify the discussion by providing an account of the more than sixty years of Nasioi history that preceded the exploration

and establishment of the copper mine, and to emphasize that the current dilemma has long roots in a particular kind of colonial situation, based on a copra plantation economy.

More than forty years ago, Georges Balandier offered anthropologists a way to look at colonialism that was broader than a narrow focus on political or economic issues. To paraphrase him slightly, the characteristics he listed of a "colonial situation" were domination by a " 'racially' and culturally distinct" minority over a technologically inferior indigenous majority "in the name of a dogmatically asserted racial . . . and cultural superiority"; the "antagonistic" relationship between the two societies, owing to the fact that "the subject society is condemned" to serve the dominant minority; and "the need for the dominant society, if it is to maintain its position, to rely not only upon 'force', but also upon a whole range of pseudo-justifications and stereotyped patterns of behaviour."[2] "Plantation colonialism" as it developed among the Nasioi demonstrates these characteristics in historically specific forms.

The Cultural Background

A spate of criticism has made students of Melanesian history and ethnology cautious about describing villagers' lives in an "ethnographic present" that seems to immobilize vital activities like an insect preserved in amber, denying possibilities of change.[3] However, by combining early European accounts with Nasioi memories it is possible to produce a plausible description of cultural patterns operative at the time colonizers first began living on Nasioi land.[4] Development of a particular colonial situation is best understood against the background of these patterns.

The Nasioi cultural system was one of many variations on practices common in this part of the South Pacific. Swidden gardening provided a subsistence base, with a division of labor based on gender. Men did the heavy but intermittent work of clearing forests, building houses, and fencing gardens, while women engaged in the steady production of garden food for both humans and small herds of pigs. Apparently land was plentiful relative to population, and villages were small and scattered. Within the village, the household of husband, wife, and immature children was the basic unit of everyday life.

However, Nasioi also recognized as major elements of social life matrilineal exogamous clans. These clans were not the localized, politically important units described for parts of Highland New Guinea, but clan membership, along with residence and exchange, had a significant effect on rights to

garden land.[5] The fact that women were responsible for both the continuity of the clan and the bulk of subsistence is reflected in relations between the sexes, which tended more toward complementarity than hierarchy (for example, women had control over the products of their labor to the extent that a husband needed his wife's permission even to enter the garden).

Indeed, hierarchy appears to have been notably lacking in Nasioi social life at the time of contact. Although the Siwai of Bougainville provided the classic example of Melanesian "big-man" leadership, among the Nasioi big-men were comparatively small in social stature.[6] Such influence as they had over their fellows was based on feast giving, in turn associated with certain personal characteristics of generosity, wisdom, and industry Should a big-man **(oboring,** plural **obontu)** press his fellow villagers too hard for assistance in pig raising, house building, or feasting, they might simply move to vacant land to begin a new settlement.[7] The ideal of maintaining balance in social life appears to have been a basic principle governing interpersonal relations, not only between the sexes but with other groups as well. Thus, balanced reciprocity was the norm in arranging marriages (often the responsibility of older women): not only was the exchange of food and such other valuables as strings of shells at marriage supposed to balance, but a preferred pairing was between bilateral cross-cousins.[8] Even though not always realized in these terms of European genealogy, marriage tended to link two matrilineal clans in a balanced relationship over generations.

Relations between living Nasioi and the spirits of the dead **(ma'naari)** were different, however, because the former were regarded as profoundly dependent upon the latter. Descriptions by early observers were confirmed by informants in the 1960s: **ma'naari** controlled all benefits, particularly the supply of food. Hard work and skill in such activities as gardening, hunting, or pig raising were regarded by Nasioi as necessary, but not sufficient, for success. Whatever the endeavor, Nasioi sought the support of the spirits by making regular offerings of pork and other valued foods in small household shrines. As an older man said in 1963, "If you didn't give those food offerings, you would become just skin and bones."[9]

These were key aspects of a sociocultural system upon which European colonizers imposed themselves. As the Comaroffs have written about colonialism elsewhere, the invaders and their own cultural attitudes "might establish themselves at the expense of prior forms, but they seldom succeed in totally supplanting what was there before" as the colonized continue "contesting [colonizer] presence and the explicit content of its world view."[10] The contest was especially visible as the Europeans attempted to create a new economic system on Nasioi land, with Nasioi labor,

The Development of Plantation Colonialism

Although Bougainville became part of German New Guinea after negotiations ending in 1899, colonizers were slow to occupy the island. The first Europeans to settle on Nasioi land were Roman Catholic missionaries of the Society of Mary, They, like later arrivals, were attracted to the natural harbor at Kieta, where they purchased land in 1902 (see Figure 1). Although the missionaries were more likely to seek martyrdom than profit, they inevitably became part of the developing colonial situation. Their presence was encouraged by the German administration, which could imagine missionization as an inexpensive means of pacification.[11]

Nasioi attitudes of dependence upon ancestral spirits were oddly congruent with the particular theology and church structure the Marists brought to Bougainville. As Hugh Laracy makes clear, the missionaries had no intention of dismissing ancestral spirits out of hand. On the contrary, they acknowledged them as ever present, but evil and certainly inferior in power to the Christian pantheon. Therefore, it does not seem unreasonable to describe Nasioi conversion as a simple shift from worshiping **ma'naari** to submission to Christ, the Virgin, and the saints, leaving an earlier worldview largely intact.[12] In such a context, a whole range of Marist practices--including the particular veneration of Mary, described in translation as **Niuko paninko,** "Mother of us all in heaven"--must have had a resonance for the Nasioi of which missionaries could hardly have been aware.[13] At the same time, both the hierarchical structure of Catholicism and the attitudes toward other races that the missionaries inevitably brought with them from Germany and France promoted social relations that were, at best, patriarchal in more than one sense. Priests treated all their flock as children but, as in nineteenth-century Europe, women were clearly regarded as inferior to men--the first blow struck, however unintentionally, by colonialism against Nasioi women's traditional status.

Whatever contribution missionaries made to pacification, the process was not a difficult one, at least in comparison to other parts of German New Guinea. Lacking any centralized political organization or notable military tradition, the Nasioi resisted only sporadically By 1915, ten years after the German administrative headquarters had been established at Kieta, only villagers in the more remote mountain areas were relatively free of a colonial yoke. Indeed, at the outbreak of World War I, German administration was probably effective over a wider area of Nasioi land than the subsequent Australian rule would be for the next twenty years. However, traditional political atomism among the Nasioi hampered German plans for orderly governance, as the administration's annual report for 1905-1906 complains:
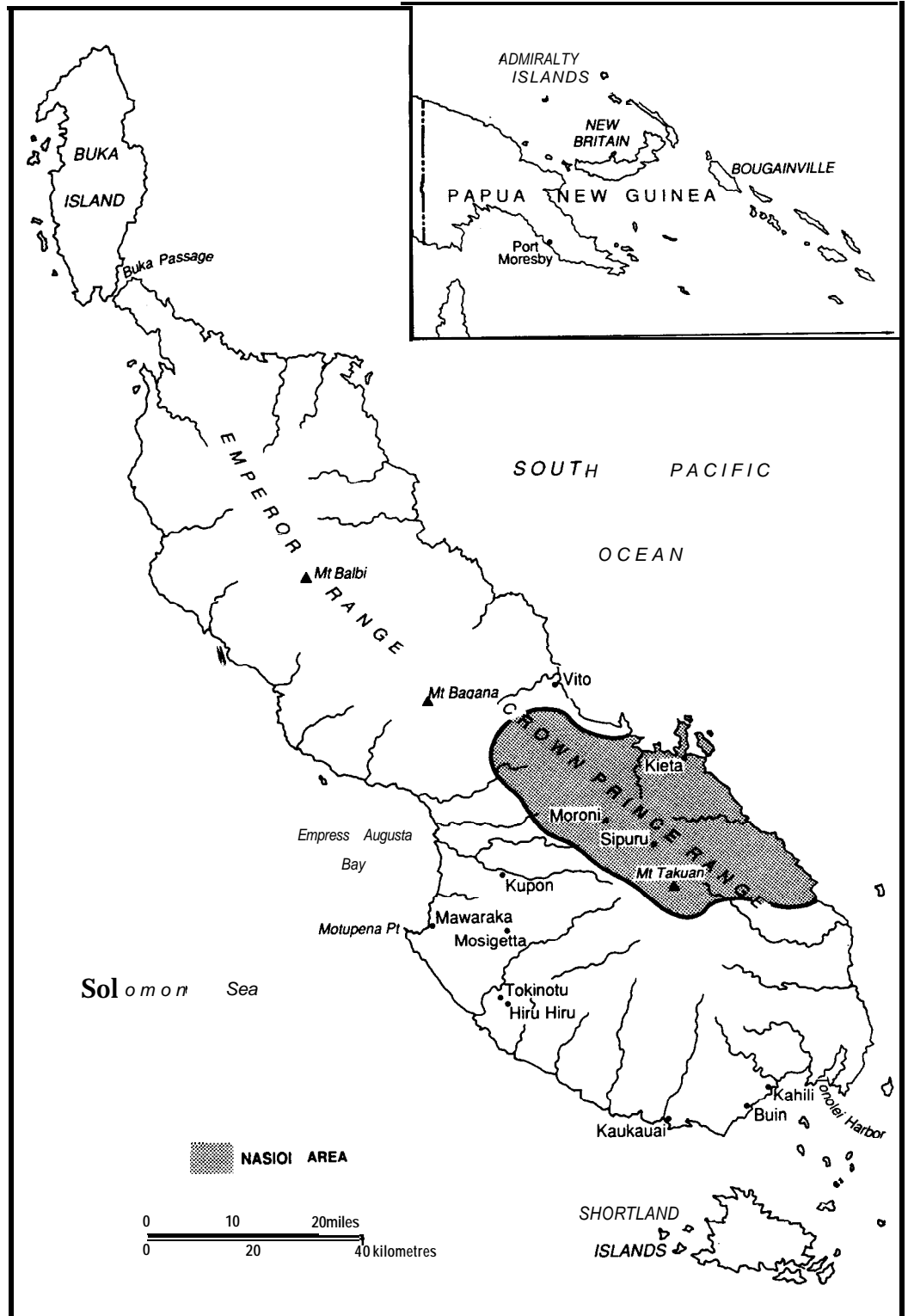
FIGURE 1. Bougainville Island, Papua New Guinea, showing Nasioi lands.

"Here the work of organization is made even more difficult because the idea of a tribal chief was completely foreign to the natives."[14]

The establishment of order was only a means to the real end of German policy--financial gain. Land in the Nasioi area was particularly attractive to colonizers seeking wealth because of the Kieta harbor. "Purchasing" land could not have the same meaning for Europeans as for the Nasioi, whose concepts of land rights did not include permanent alienation beyond the local or kinship group.[15] Nevertheless, the acquisition of land was not the greatest obstacle to the colonizers' economic ambitions.

A distinctive feature of colonialism in Melanesia was the relative ease of land alienation compared to the difficulties of ensuring a labor supply.[16] Several factors were involved. New Guinea certainly never attracted the European settlers the metropolitan powers had initially anticipated; endemic malaria was only one discouraging element. With scattered exceptions (as in east New Britain), land acquisition did not usually deprive villagers of an adequate subsistence base. Indeed, the village subsistence system had to remain intact so that the colonizers did not have to bear the costs of reproducing the labor supply.[17] Finally, neither Germany nor any other European power was willing to pay for the military or police resources necessary to maintain a forced labor system. Only the desire for trade goods and the need for a small amount of cash to pay head tax provided incentives to plantation labor.

The closest approximation to a solution to the labor problem that colonizers in this part of the Pacific achieved is effectively summarized by a "leading planter spokesman" for the British Solomons during the period between the world wars:

> We could grow anything. . . in the Solomons . . . and most of us tried our hand at growing different tropical products--rubber, para-rubber, vanilla, sisal, cocoa . . . practically anything. We could grow the bloody lot. But . . . we had a chronic cancer, and that was . . . labour. We never had all the labour we wanted, we were always short of labour. And as copra is the least labour intensive of all the tropical products, that is why we were forced willy-nilly into copra production.[18]

By settling for a one-crop plantation system that required no more than unskilled labor, and in which planting and harvesting could be interrupted at any time without disastrous financial loss, planters on Nasioi land--together with missionaries and administrators--also shaped a sociocultural system with distinctive features.[19] It is, therefore, worth recapitulating the technical

aspects of copra production to underline this argument. Compared with many other kinds of tropical agriculture, making copra is an extraordinarily nonmodern enterprise. An informative contrast can be drawn with the sugar plantations begun in Hawai'i and Fiji decades before planters entered Bougainville.

Even in the 1860s sugar plantations in Hawai'i required an elaborate irrigation system, demanding intensive labor and regular maintenance. Machinery was necessary to grind sugarcane and separate crystals from molasses. Harvesting had to follow a regular sequence, or the whole crop might be lost. The varied tasks demanded careful timing, so that sugar plantations are among those agricultural enterprises that are reasonably called "factories in the field," demanding absolute control over the labor force.[20]

Nothing could be less like a factory than the kind of copra plantations established in Bougainville before World War I. Land was cleared by chopping down vegetation and burning it off, just as the Nasioi had been doing in their gardens for centuries. Once the sprouting coconuts were planted, all that was required was regular grass cutting, to keep vegetation from covering up the immature trees. Coconuts simply drop from the tree when ripe. They do not mature all at once, nor can human ingenuity affect the maturation process. Production of copra involves nothing more than splitting open fallen coconuts and drying the meat, which requires only sunlight, though it can be done somewhat more efficiently with simple mechanical devices for hot-air drying. Thus there is no urgency to the production process, no need for careful time management, no incentive to make technological improvements to increase production, and no reason to improve the skills of the work force.[21]

The inefficiencies of this kind of production are clear. What is relevant to the present argument is the kind of attitudes and behaviors that plantation colonialism fostered among colonizers and Nasioi. A planter (most plantations were managed by a single male, and "planter" is used here synonymously with "manager") hardly had to worry about labor relations in the modern sense.[22] Rather, he was more likely to deal with his worker "as a recalcitrant child."[23] Corporal punishment as a method of control was standard practice in German New Guinea. When the succeeding Australian administration attempted to forbid this in 1915, protests from planters (and missionaries) forced its restoration within a few months, and such power of punishment remained legal until 1922.[24]

Copra plantations made a perfect venue for colonizers to impress laborers with their claim to racial superiority and political dominance. As Balandier points out, if colonizers are to maintain their position, they must rely not only upon force but on a "whole range of pseudo-justifications and

stereotyped patterns of behavior."[25]   On a copra plantation, there was no reason to increase workers' knowledge, since to do so would not significantly improve productivity but might rather threaten the planters prestige, which, along with physical violence, was thought to constitute a "labour incentive."[26] If dissatisfied workers deserted, and operations were temporarily shut down, no permanent damage was done, nor would new laborers require much training. Thus the planter was free to be as paternalistic and condescending or as authoritarian and brutal in his racism as his individual personality dictated. Peter Sack goes as far as to say, "To become a planter was not a means to an economic end, but the kind of life they wanted to lead. The point was to be the master, rather than to be rich, and the point of being the master was to be able to tell other people what to do."[27]

   "Queen" Emma Forsayth and her associates had been purchasing (by their Western standards) land on Bougainville before 1900; however, development of real plantations in the Nasioi area came after the administrative headquarters was established in Kieta. The largest of these plantations, Aropa, encompassed five thousand acres south of Kieta, and portions remained unplanted as late as 1960. Worth noting for this article's argument is that the original intent was to develop the property as a rubber plantation, but practical considerations of labor supply meant coconuts became the primary crop.[28]   Other plantations, of varying sizes and histories, were created both north and south of Kieta, providing ample opportunity for the Nasioi to work close to home.[29]

   Working on these new enterprises fostered mixed feelings of dependence and inferiority among the Nasioi employed there. Rowley is among those who have written of the "dreary routine" of plantation life. Certainly tasks like clearing land taught no new skills. Wages were not only low but often paid in cloth, tobacco, and other items, which the Nasioi seemed to have perceived in terms of their own practices of nurturing children or other dependents.[30] On the other hand, Nasioi laborers were exposed to the sight of planters enjoying such things as kerosene lanterns (later electric generators), metal tools (later motor vehicles and other machinery), tinned (later frozen) foods--all of them imported, though from what source the worker had no way of knowing. Such material wealth was thus both mysterious and symbolic of the colonizer's claim to innate superiority

   Plantation colonialism thus disrupted Nasioi lives without modernizing them. Since planters were interested only in male labor, by ignoring women they (like administrators and missionaries in different ways) further damaged the complementarity that earlier had characterized gender relations. More significantly, the material conditions and social relations of copra production could be described as ideal for creating dependent attitudes and

behavior on the part of the Nasioi. These dependent attitudes built upon earlier traditions that governed relations between living Nasioi and ancestral spirits, but could not be sustained in anything like the same form with foreigners who had quite different agendas. In their strategy for dealing with foreigners, Nasioi might be willing to act as obedient children, but planters and other colonizers could only be stern and ultimately ungenerous parents.[31]

Australia took over what had been German New Guinea as a Mandated Territory in the aftermath of World War I, but the copra plantation economy remained essentially unchanged until World War II. Expropriation of German-owned property was proclaimed 1 September 1920, and Australians--generally returned soldiers--took over as owners and managers.[32] Robert Stuart, who came to seek his fortune in that postwar era, has provided a notably unselfconscious portrait of his career. Among other things, his memoir demonstrates the continuity between German and Australian relations with laborers and other Bougainvilleans during the interwar period.[33]

Stuart managed and ultimately owned plantations north of the Nasioi area. He also recruited labor and dealt in trochus shell elsewhere in Bougainville, and inevitably pursued both business and pleasure in the administrative headquarters at Kieta. He is at pains to contrast his greater efficiency with the slapdash methods of other managers but is clear about the limits of applying technology to copra production.[34] If laborers were disorderly, "a few cracks with the stock whip" could remedy the situation, although his "usual method of punishing a boy was either to confiscate his tobacco issue" or increase his task assignments.[35] Throughout his description of a planter's life from the 1920s until World War II, the themes of adventure, physical violence, attitudes that can only be described as paternalist and racist by present-day standards, and heavy drinking are prominent.[36] In other words, with Australians now in charge of plantations, copra production remained "business as usual" in terms of its power to shape the world of the colonized.

As for everyday colonial administration by Australians, Rowley has mounted the sternest criticism. To paraphrase his arguments: the best aspects of German policy toward the colonized (for example, in education) were discontinued, while initial concern with the transfer of expropriated properties made it almost "inevitable that business would gain at the expense of sound native administration."[37] Although Bougainville was now part of the Kieta District, with headquarters still at that harbor settlement, administrative staff was small, since the Mandated Territory was supposed to pay for itself.[38] There was an administration hospital in Kieta but missionaries, partially subsidized by the government, supplied much of the public-health and all of the educational services to the indigenous population.[39]

It is not surprising that, for the Nasioi, planters and missionaries played bigger parts than did government officials in the colonial situation during the interwar years. A few patrol officers could hardly be a dominating presence to people scattered in small settlements throughout a rugged landscape, circumstances that easily led the Nasioi to a strategy of avoiding the *kiap* (administrative official in Tok Pisin) whenever possible. Nor did the Australians have any better luck than had the Germans in establishing and maintaining native officials as a supplementary administrative force.[40]

So Bougainville before World War II became a colonial backwater removed from centers like Rabaul, in which copra planters, missionaries, and *kiaps* were relatively free to interfere with the lives of the native inhabitants according to agendas that differed in principle but seemed to have much the same effect, at least on the Nasioi. Racist attitudes were universal, more (among planters) or less (among missionaries); it is hard to find any expression of colonizer sentiment or policy that credited Nasioi with the potential to achieve anything like an equal standing with Europeans. Mission education emphasized conversion, not anything that might be called "modernization." As for the administration, Edward Wolfers has argued that "the primary aim of all colonial administrations in Papua and New Guinea until the 1960s was neither 'development' nor 'preparation' for self-government, but control."[41]

When copra prices began their decline--from a postwar high of more than forty-one Australian pounds in 1920 to a depression low of less than six pounds in 1934[42]--plantations became even less a place for the Nasioi to enter fully a world they saw in tantalizing, but fragmentary, glimpses of the colonizer. Increasingly, individual planters became heavily indebted to the big trading companies and, after 1934, sometimes lost their little fiefdoms.[43] On plantations owned by large firms, hired managers were not under great pressure to increase profits from copra.[44] But whether owner or hired hand, planters in the 1930s were trapped in an economic situation that provided even less incentive to treat Nasioi and other Bougainvilleans in a manner that would cease to promote feelings of frustrated dependence or of inferiority. In Rowley's words:

> Management reflects the [unskilled] nature of the labour; labour, the inefficiency of management. The cultural barriers make for a simple authoritarian pattern; the marked difference in living standards between the workers' barracks and the manager's house ensure [*sic*] that the workers contrast their own situation with that of the white master; the whole situation reinforces impressions made by authoritarian and paternal district administration.[45]

World War II and Aftermath

Colonizer and colonized alike were to have this strange kind of social limbo violently disrupted by World War II. Mannoni has written that colonized people are "prepared to treat as father and mother governors and administrators not always worthy of that honour; but people dominated by a need for dependence cannot identify themselves with leaders who, they feel--they may be wrong, but no matter--have abandoned them."[46]

The Nasioi faced real abandonment in January 1942, about which they still spoke bitterly twenty years later. (Indeed, even youths too young for firsthand experience of the war had incorporated these stories into their ongoing resentment of their colonial situation.) As soon as Japanese planes were reported reconnoitering Bougainville, the district officer, with as many other Europeans as could crowd onto a small vessel, left Kieta with a haste that provoked embarrassment in many Australians then and later.[47] Many Europeans had been evacuated earlier, so that by the time Kieta was actually occupied by Japanese troops in mid-1942, the nonindigenous population had been sharply reduced. Most of those remaining were Catholic missionaries; there were also a few European planters, some Chinese storekeepers with their families, a few Fijian Methodist teachers, and some "coast-watchers," the latter men drawn from administration and plantation and trained to stay behind enemy lines to broadcast information about troop and shipping movements.[48]

Nasioi response to the occupation was, predictably, varied. Like other Bougainvilleans, they were most concerned with the practicalities of surviving. Traumatized by the precipitate departure of the European colonizers, they at first apparently thought that establishing a dependent relationship with the Japanese could be a key to that survival. Although Australians seem to have regarded the Nasioi as "disloyal" or "pro-Japanese," some assisted Paul Mason, the planter-turned-coastwatcher who most often operated in Nasioi territory. After the war, Australians sometimes attributed the different responses to mission affiliation: "disloyal" Catholics versus "onside" Methodists or Seventh-day Adventists. The only certainty is that the Nasioi were never united as to whether to cooperate with the new conquerors or with the coastwatchers.[49]

As the Japanese were cut off from supplies by Allied bombing and began to raid Nasioi gardens for food, any sustained cooperation ceased.[50] During this period, villagers probably suffered more from hunger and illness than from any direct military action. In retrospect in the 1960s, they described their parlous existence in the tropical forest as "living like wild pigs." After American troops established a beachhead on the west coast of

Bougainville in November 1943, some Nasioi began to move toward that outpost where, they reported in the 1960s, they met with a friendly generosity that they contrasted with the treatment they had received under plantation colonialism. Fortunately for most Nasioi, the heaviest fighting of the last Allied ground campaign against the Japanese took place outside their home territory.

Bougainville was one of the parts of the Mandated Territory most afflicted by the war. Although Nasioi casualties might not have been as high as those elsewhere on the island, the psychological trauma was profound. Earlier attitudes toward their place in the colonial situation, shaped by planter, missionary, and *kiap,* had been called into question, as they experienced wartime abandonment by those they had been led to believe possessed superior qualities and knowledge. However, these attitudes did not completely disappear but continued to affect Nasioi attempts to adapt to postwar conditions.

Bougainville, together with the rest of the old Mandated Territory, became a Trust Territory of the United Nations after the war and was in theory to be the subject of a new Australian policy that emphasized "development" in both economic and political terms.[51] For the Nasioi, whose disillusionment with their colonial situation had been brought to a critical point by their wartime experience, any development initiative from returned Australian "masters" was viewed with deep suspicion. They were no longer willing to work in the local plantations when these were reestablished, forcing planters to import contract laborers from mainland New Guinea.[52] Whether the *kiap* promoted cash crops, producers' cooperatives, or local government councils, he was met with stubborn resistance from many Nasioi.

Rowley has shrewdly contrasted the administration's activities in the New Guinea highlands, where directed social change was rapid after the war, with its performance in the long-occupied coastal and island areas like Bougainville:

> Where the people have rapidly become involved in making new decisions, in new economic activities, in new experiences in a wider world, there is every chance that attitudes change, and early traditions of tyrannical interference fade away with the old men. But where the government has maintained over long periods what seems pointless interference in the affairs of villagers; and its officers seem to have pointlessly exercised power at their expense, the initial resentment will remain, often under a facade of what the white man sees as "apathy".[53]

This contrast provides a context for interpreting a Nasioi account, commonly heard in the 1960s of their colonial history:

> When my grandfather was alive and my father just a little boy, the Germans came. They gave us steel axes and loincloths. Then the Australians came and drove away the Germans. Then the Japanese came and drove away the Australians. Then the Americans drove away the Japanese so the Australians could come back. Now my grandfather is dead, my father is an old man, and I am a grown man. And what do we have? Nothing more than steel axes and loincloths.[54]

In other words, many Nasioi believed that, despite changes in colonial rule, their attempts to cooperate had not produced the improvement in their lives that the colonizer presence--including the display of great material wealth--seemed to promise. Administrators, for their part, were frustrated by what they saw as a sullen lack of cooperation with their development efforts, apparently unaware that Nasioi reluctance grew out of decades of disillusionment, whether with planters, missionaries, or colonial officers.

Nasioi "sullenness" was simply one way to deal with a domination they had by the postwar era faced for more than four decades. Withdrawal had long been a favorite tactic; now they had withdrawn their labor from the planters. Even as some Nasioi began cash cropping in earnest, they tried to escape from government interference. But some were also involved in certain activities that caused consternation among the colonizers, who began to be worried about what they called "cargo cult."

There is a vast body of anthropological and other writing about "cargo cults," social movements (usually with millenarian overtones) reported frequently from Melanesia. The term itself has in recent years been severely criticized as a label less informative than mystifying. Nancy McDowell provides a less contentious approach to the subject by proposing that such beliefs and behaviors are best understood as merely one "example of how people conceptualize and experience change in the world."[55] Clearly, by the postwar period, Nasioi conceptualizations of change drew on a variety of experiences. Their attitudes in the 1960s not only displayed continuities with the lives they had known at the beginning of the European invasion but were also shaped by their interactions with planters, missionaries, and administrators, as well as by the cataclysm of war fought on their land. One result was a widespread notion that, if the Nasioi were to enjoy the kind of

life they attributed to colonizers, they needed to obtain the help of more powerful forces.

This notion took diverse forms. As McDowell points out, economics, politics, and religion all contain assumptions about change, so that in particular the line separating so-called cargo cults from economic or business activity "seems to be blurred indeed."[56] Thus, it was often the case in the 1950s and 1960s that the same Nasioi who undertook initiatives--like cash cropping and organizing trade stores--that could be approved as "development" might also lead rituals in cemeteries with the stated goal of summoning the ancestors or the Virgin Mary to bring material wealth *(kago* in Tok Pisin). Since even those Nasioi most eager for "development" could not have acquired such necessary skills as automotive operation and maintenance, much less bookkeeping and marketing, while enrolled in a mission school or making copra, it is not surprising that frustrations with their attempts at new economic activity sometimes led them to seek supernatural assistance, whether in a traditional or mission-influenced mode.

It is correct to note that colonizers in Melanesia had political reasons for putting the tag "cargo cult" on social movements that might threaten their dominance; Kieta administrators were quick to prosecute suspected "cult" leaders, under the charge "spreading false reports." However, one cannot therefore simply ignore the statements made by Nasioi themselves about how they expected to improve their lot. In 1962-1964, villagers were always eager to ask the anthropologist's opinion about stories of a book that contained the secrets of obtaining *kago* or of a cave in another part of the island that reportedly sheltered a treasure trove of Land Rovers and other valuable products of Western technology. In discussing rituals aimed at both ancestral spirits and the Christian pantheon, these Nasioi had their own Tok Pisin label--not "cargo cult" but *"longlong lotu"* (crazy church). In other words, as part of their conceptualization of achieving social change, many Nasioi included the notion that aid from more powerful, often supernatural, forces was as necessary as help from *ma'naari* had been in traditional subsistence activities. One could say that a "drama of dependency" continued, but the drama was always being rewritten by the Nasioi themselves, as their experiences of the modern world broadened.[57]

Nasioi desire for more satisfactory relations with external powers did not always emphasize supernaturalism, however. A particularly telling incident took place in Kieta in April 1962, when a visiting United Nations team touring the Trust Territory asked assembled leaders for their opinions. To the chagrin of administrative officers and other Europeans, several Nasioi asked that Australia be forced to relinquish control of Bougainville to the United States. The charge was made that the Australians treated Nasioi "like dogs,"

doing nothing to improve their welfare, and the implication was that Americans had shown the possibility of better treatment during World War II. (Other Nasioi present disagreed and expressed satisfaction with Australian rule--a further illustration that consensus has been hard to achieve throughout the colonial period.) What would seem most significant is that no Nasioi expressed a desire for ***independence,*** only for more congenial kinds of ***dependence.*** [58]

Thus, sixty years of colonization's contradictions had produced in many, perhaps most, Nasioi profound resentment but no coherent strategy of resistance. In the fertile soil of indigenous religious attitudes present at the beginning of the century, colonizers had planted their own versions of Nasioi subordination and fostered the belief that the Nasioi should be dependent upon allegedly superior Europeans and their introduced ideologies. These messages had been delivered both explicitly and by everyday practice, with special force in the context of a plantation system that taught laborers nothing but their supposed inferiority. At the same time, the Nasioi maintained such agency as they could, even if only by withdrawing from colonizer activity. They continued to revise their ideas about the best ways to deal with social change, without losing all continuity with their precolonial past.

Conclusion

In 1964, geologists began the exploration of Nasioi land that ultimately led to creating a huge mining operation. What happened thereafter is beyond the scope of this article, but it cannot be emphasized too strongly that the Nasioi did not forget about all the years of plantation colonialism simply because new forms of exploitation were on the horizon. Intermittent fieldwork from 1964 through 1972 demonstrated clearly that the mining project was typically interpreted as "the last straw," merely the latest in a long history of disappointments created by a European presence. Experiences of racism and frustrated attempts to achieve satisfactory relations with colonizers formed a lens through which Nasioi assessed Bougainville Coppers activities.[59] When villagers complained about the mine, they regularly related the new threat to stories of earlier disillusion.

Thus, the argument presented here is that the events since 1964 cannot be completely understood without reference to the decades during which the Nasioi lived in a particular kind of colonial situation. Plantation colonialism as the Nasioi knew it differed from colonial history in many other parts of Melanesia. For example, a colonizer presence dominated by missionaries is not likely to have quite the same effect on villagers as one dominated by

planters. For another, even in the New Guinea highlands where coffee planters had a powerful influence on social change, they entered at a different period of world history, with different attitudes shaped in part by the requirements of a different crop as well as by a different administrative policy.[60]

In other words, this article provides an example of viewing colonialism "through its local expressions and refractions" in which the Nasioi have certainly been part of a "disputed process."[61] During the period described, they were never able to challenge colonizer dominance successfully, but they continued to be active agents in a complicated, contradictory history. Their attempts to adapt to change were rooted in attitudes that antedated a European invasion, but these attitudes in turn were reworked by a particular kind of political economy, one in which the peculiar institution of the copra plantation was a preeminent factor. The present group of young adults has grown up in a very different political economy, but they are not likely to forget their elders' stories of planter, ***kiap,*** and missionary. Rather, what must now be carefully scrutinized is how present and future generations of Nasioi will reinterpret and incorporate these earlier experiences in their own struggle for the more satisfactory life that still eludes them,

NOTES

1. The more substantial publications include Douglas L. Oliver, *Black Islanders: A Personal Perspective of Bougainville, 1937-1991* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1991); Paul Quodling, *Bougainville: The Mine and the People* (St. Leonards, N.S.W.: Centre for Independent Studies, 1991); R. J. May and Matthew Spriggs, *The Bougainville Crisis* (Bathurst, N.S.W.: Crawford House Press, 1990); Matthew Spriggs and Donald Denoon, *The Bougainville Crisis 1991 Update* (Bathurst, N.S.W.: Crawford House Press, 1992); and a special issue of *The Contemporary Pacific* (Fall 1992).

2. Georges Balandier, *The Sociology of Black Africa: Social Dynamics in Central Africa* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1970 [orig. 1953]), 52.

3. James G. Carrier, ed., *History and Tradition in Melanesian Anthropology* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992), is a good example of this criticism. See also Eugene Ogan, review of *History and Tradition in Melanesian Anthropology,* ed. James G. Carrier, *The Contemporary Pacific* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1994), 224-229.

4. Ernst Frizzi, *Ein Beitrag zur Ethnologie von Bougainville und Buka, mit spezialler Berucksichtung der Nasioi* (Leipzig and Berlin: B. G. Teubner, 1914), is the earliest substantial account of Nasioi life. The Marist Father Rausch's work on Nasioi language is also relevant: P. Rausch, "Die Sprache von Sudost-Bougainville, Deutsche Salamonsinseln," *Anthropos* 7 (1912), 103-154, 585-616, 964-994; "Die Verwandtschaftsnamen der Nasioi, Sudost-Bougainville, Deutsche Salamonsinseln," *Anthropos* 7 (1912), 1056-1057.

Other publications based on research carried out before World War II that discuss Nasioi include Richard Thurnwald, "Reisebericht aus Buin und Kieta," *Zeitschrift fur Ethnologie* 41 (1909), 512-531; E. W. P. Chinnery, "The Natives of South Bougainville and the Mortlocks (Taku)," *Territory of New Guinea Anthropological Reports* 4-5 (1924), [65]-166; Beatrice Blackwood, "Mountain People of the South Seas," *Natural History* 23 (1931), 414-433; Douglas L. Oliver, *Studies in the Anthropology of Bougainville, Solomon Islands* (Cambridge, Mass.: Peabody Museum, 1948).

5. Eugene Ogan, "Nasioi Land Tenure: An Extended Case Study," *Oceania* 42 (1972), 82-93.

6. Douglas L. Oliver, *A Solomon Island Society: Kinship and Leadership among the Sinai of Bougainville* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1955); cf. Marshall Sahlins. "Poor Man, Rich Man, Big-Man, Chief: Political Types in Melanesia and Polynesia," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 5 (1963), 285-303.

7. Cf. Frizzi, *Ein Beitrag,* 23.

8. Eugene Ogan, "Nasioi Marriage: An Essay in Model-Building," *Southwestern Journal of Anthropology* 22 (1966), 172-193.

9. The statement was originally recorded in Tok Pisin: *"Sapos yu no givim kaikai long ol, yu yet kam bun nating tasol."* For early descriptions, see Frizzi, *Ein Beitrag,* 11; Chinnery, "The Natives," 72-73; Blackwood, "Mountain People," 427. Cf. Hugh Laracy, *Marists and Melanesians: A History of Catholic Missions in the Solomon Islands* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1976), 8.

10. Jean Comaroff and John L. Comaroff, *Revelation and Revolution: Christianity, Colonialism, and Consciousness in South Africa* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 25-26.

11. Laracy, *Marists and Melanesians,* 15, 54.

12. Ibid., 9, 73.

13. Ibid.. 66-71.

14. Peter Sack and Dymphna Clark, *German New Guinea: The Annual Reports* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1979), 257.

15. Ogan, "Nasioi Land Tenure."

16. See, for example, Stephen W. Reed, *The Making of Modern New Guinea* (Philadelphia: American Philosophical Society, 1943), 143-149.

17. C. D. Rowley, *The Australians in German New Guinea 1914-1921* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1958), 156.

18. Quoted in Roger M. Keesing and Peter Corris, *Lightning Meets the East Wind: The Malaita Massacre* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1980), 31-32. Cf. Judith Ben-

nett, *Wealth of the Solomons: A History of a Pacific Archipelago, 1800-1978* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1987), 164-166.

19. Michel Panoff is notable among anthropologists working in Melanesia for his early and continued appreciation of plantations as important forces in culture change. See, for example, his "An Experiment in Inter-tribal Contacts: The Maenge Labourers in European Plantations 1915-1942," *Journal of Pacific History* 4 (1969), 111-125; the special issue he edited of *Journal de la Société des Océanistes* 42 (1986); and "The French Way in Plantation Systems," *Journal of Pacific History* 26 (1991), 206-212.

20. Edward D. Beechert, *Working in Hawaii: A Labor History* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1985), 58-59; Beechert, "Patterns of Resistance and the Social Relations of Production in Hawaii," in Brij V. Lal, Doug Munro, and Edward D. Beechert, eds., *Plantation Workers: Resistance and Accommodation* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1993), 45; Doug Munro, "Patterns of Resistance and Accommodation," in Lal et al., *Plantation Workers,* 11.

21. Cf. C. D. Rowley, *The New Guinea Villager: A Retrospect from 1964* (Melbourne: F. W. Cheshire, 1965), 107-115; Bennett, *Wealth of the Solomons,* 188-191.

22. The description of planters' lives in the Solomons given by Judith Bennett, " 'We Do Not Come Here to Be Beaten': Resistance and the Plantation System in the Solomon Islands," in Lal et al., *Plantation Workers,* 132-133, seems applicable to Bougainville planters as well. See below for further details.

23. Rowley, *The Australians,* 134.

24. Rowley, *The Australians,* 138-149. As Rowley, *The New Guinea Villager,* 105, notes, although illegal it still went on "for a long time." Flogging was taking place in Bougainville at the beginning of World War II; A. B. Feuer, ed., *Coast Watching in the Solomon Islands: The Bougainville Reports, December 1941-July 1943* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1992), 66. During fieldwork in the early 1960s occasional incidents were reported by Nasioi, although in the form of "bashing" rather than systematic flogging. By this time, as described below, the labor force on plantations in the Kieta area was almost entirely non-Nasioi.

25. Balandier, *Sociology of Black Africa,* 52.

26. Rowley, *The Australians,* 134.

27. Peter Sack, "German New Guinea: A Reluctant Plantation Colony?' *Journal de la Société des Océanistes* 40 (1986), 126.

28. Peter G. Sack, *Land between Two Laws: Early European Land Acquisitions in New Guinea* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1973), 103; R. S. McKay, personal communication, Kieta, 1963. Aropa continued to produce a small amount of rubber up to the 1960s.

29. In addition to working on plantations in the Bismarck Archipelago, Bougainvilleans made up the overwhelming majority of plantation workers on their own island until World War II. In 1933, they amounted to 90 percent of the labor force on Bougainville plantations; see Jill Nash and Eugene Ogan, "The Red and the Black: Bougainvillean Perceptions of Other Papua New Guineans," *Pacific Studies* 13, no. 2 (1990), 15. The experience of such "at-home" laborers differs significantly from that of indentured workers in the Solomons and elsewhere in New Guinea in that, for example, they were relatively shielded from new diseases on the one hand and from contact with other Melanesians on the other. Cf. Bennett, " We Do Not Come Here"' and, for Melanesians working in Australia, Clive Moore, "The Counterculture of Survival: Melanesians in the Mackay District of Queensland, 1865-1906," in Lal et al., *Plantation Workers,* 93-95. Being in familiar surroundings was almost certainly one factor leading to Nasioi strategies of "accommodation" rather than "resistance"; Munro, "Patterns."

30. Rowley, *The Australians,* 114, 151-155.

31. On the contrast between Melanesian ideals of reciprocity and the strictures of colonialism, see Bryant Allen, "The Importance of Being Equal: The Colonial and Postcolonial Experience in the Torricelli Foothills," in Nancy Lutkehaus et al., eds., *Sepik Heritage: Tradition and Change in Papua New Guinea* (Durham N.C.: Carolina Academic Press, 1990), 185-196. Of course, many of the planters' attitudes and behaviors were shared by administrators and some missionaries. When planters occupy as prominent a place in the colonizer community as they did in the Kieta area, they may come to be "a stronghold of racial discrimination, an attitude that tends to spread to all European residents." H. Ian Hogbin, *Social Change* (London: Watts, 1958), 176. Cf. Rowley, *The New Guinea Villager* 74.

32. Rowley, *The Australians,* 317-325.

33. Robert Stuart, *Nuts to You!* (Sydney: Wentworth Books, 1977).

34. Ibid., 48, 54.

35. Ibid., 50, 56.

36. Ibid., e.g., 100-101, 109-110. Fieldwork in Kieta from 1962 to 1964 proved that remarkably little had changed in the interim.

37. Rowley, *The Australians,* 10-11.

38. James Griffin, Hank Nelson, and Stewart Firth, *Papua New Guinea: A Political History* (Richmond, Vic.: Heinemann Educational, 1979), 50.

39. Methodists and Seventh-day Adventists established missions in Bougainville during the Mandate era; however, the Nasioi and other Bougainvilleans adhered to Catholicism by a large majority.

40. Rowley, *The Australians,* 213-232.

41. Edward P. Wolfers, *Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea* (Brookvale, N.S.W.: Australia and New Guinea Book Company, 1975), 5. See also Reed, *Making of Modern New Guinea,* 243-252.

42. K. Buckley and K. Klugman, *"The Australian Presence in the Pacific": Burns Philp 1914-1946* (Sydney: George Allen & Unwin, 1983), 125, 234. Prices are f.o.b. Sydney. The Australian pound was devalued in 1931.

43. Griffin et al., *Papua New Guinea,* 53.

44. Buckley and Klugman, *"The Australian Presence,"* 190.

45. Rowley, *The New Guinea Village,* 107-108.

46. O. Mannoni, *Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1964 [orig. 1950]), 139. There are a number of interesting parallels with regard to the creation of new senses of dependency and inferiority, and the ways in which both colonizer and colonized are caught up in such attitudes and behavior, between Mannoni's description of Malagasy and the Nasioi case. However, the present article is based on historical and ethnographic data, and there is no intention of following Mannoni in putting forth a general argument about colonialism that transcends these particulars.

47. Feuer, *Coast Watching,* 6-10, 41; Griffin et al., *Papua New Guinea,* 78-80; Laracy, *Marists and Melanesians,* 110-117.

48. A number of civilians still in Bougainville at the time of Japanese occupation, including most of the Catholic missionaries, were evacuated by U.S. submarines in late 1942. Others were interned; some were killed by the occupying troops. At the end of July, even the coastwatchers were evacuated. Feuer, *Coast Watching,* 155-157. See also Eric Feldt, *The Coastwatchers* (Sydney: Angus & Robertson, 1964).

49. James Griffin, "Paul Mason: Planter and Coastwatcher," in James Griffin, ed., *Papua New Guinea Portraits: The Expatriate Experience* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1978), 139-161. See also Feuer, *Coast Watching,* 88. Even kinship did not determine "loyalty." In 1966, Nasioi in the mountainous Kongara area provided vivid stories of ambushing a raiding party of Japanese who were being assisted by lowland Nasioi of a particular clan in searching for Paul Mason. All in the party were killed by the Kongara villagers, except for one lowland youth who was saved by his classificatory "mother's brother." Note, however, that the same clan affiliation did not protect the other Nasioi raiders.

50. Laracy, *Marists and Melanesians,* 116-117.

51. Eugene Ogan and Terence Wesley-Smith, "Papua New Guinea: Changing Relations of Production," in A. B. Robillard, ed., *Social Change in the Pacific Islands* (London and New York: Kegan Paul International, 1992), 50-55.

52. Nash and Ogan, "The Red and the Black," 7, 15.

53. Rowley, *The New Guinea Villager,* 72.

54. This is a synthesis of a number of statements made by men in their thirties, collected during 1963-1964. Although the statements were made individually, there was remarkable uniformity in their narrative style.

55. Nancy McDowell, "A Note on Cargo Cults and Cultural Constructions of Change," *Pacific Studies* 11, no. 2 (1988), 122. For a standard treatment of the subject, see Peter Worsley, *The Trumpet Shall Sound: A Study of "Cargo" Cults in Melanesia* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968). Andrew Lattas, ed., "Alienating Mirrors: Christianity, Cargo Cults, and Colonialism in Melanesia," *Oceania* 63, no. 4 (1992) is one example of recent criticism of earlier literature.

56. McDowell, "A Note," 129. Cf. Eugene Ogan, *Business and Cargo: Socio-Economic Change among the Nasioi of Bougainville* (Canberra: Australian National University, 1972).

57. Ogan, *Business and Cargo,* 172-176. For a discussion of how new experiences changed Nasioi participation in three national parliamentary elections, see Eugene Ogan, "Cargoism and Politics in Bougainville 1962-1972," *Journal of Pacific History* 9 (1974), 117-129.

58. See *Pacific Islands Monthly* (May 1962), 138. Several local versions of this incident, from both Nasioi and Europeans, were collected in 1962-1964.

59. In 1964, a visiting senior administration official said he found race relations as bad in Kieta as in any place he had seen in Papua New Guinea. See J. Momis and E. Ogan, "A View from Bougainville," in Marion W. Ward, ed., *Change and Development in Rural Melanesia* (Canberra: Australian National University, 1972), 108.

60. Ben Finney, *Big Men and Business* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1973).

61. Nicholas Thomas, "Partial Texts: Representation, Colonialism, and Agency in Pacific History," *Journal of Pacific History* 25 (1990), 158.

THE SECOND DECADE: THE THEME OF SOCIAL CHANGE IN PAPUA NEW GUINEAN LITERATURE, 1979-1989

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In common with other new literatures written in English, Papua New Guinean literature emerged in a period of political upheaval and rapid social change. Building on an earlier essay, the theme of social change in Papua New Guinean texts published in the period 1979-1989 is discussed. Prose fiction, poetry, drama; autobiographical pieces, and essays are examined, setting this body of writing against selected letters written to the editor of the *Times of Papua New Guinea* during the 1980s and personal interviews with several writers in the Port Moresby area. Four specific aspects of social change are examined in detail: development, education, leadership, and urbanization. Taken together, this pair of essays offers a survey of Papua New Guinea's first twenty years of English-language literature by indigenous writers.

IN A RECENT ARTICLE I EXAMINED the theme of social change in the first decade of literature written in English by indigenous Papua New Guineans (Gorle 1995). I expressed the view that the writing of the 1970s was characterized by intense nationalistic fervor and enormous political energy, fueled largely by the buildup to independence in 1975. This essay is a sequel to that article, examining the next decade of writing[1] and arguing that it shared many of the earlier concerns together with a new commitment to cultural consolidation, self-appraisal, and growth.

Papua New Guinea's second decade of English-language literature began with a notable lack of sound and fury. Bernard Minol identified this phenomenon in 1980 in a newspaper article titled "The Death of PNG Writing." Pinpointing the "scarcity of publishing outlets" and "the lack of an interested reading public in PNG," he called for a greater emphasis on "literature and

other humanities related subjects in the syllabi at every phase of formal education" (Minol 1980:21). More recently, Russell Soaba has described the gradual decline in literary activity since independence: "All the excitement waned away from the 1960s to 1989" (personal communication, 25 August 1992). Certainly there was less new creative literature published by Papua New Guineans during the second decade--at least in the first few years.

In discussing this periods literary production I would like to juxtapose the dwindling creative output against other forms of serious writing from the 1980s: essays, unpublished drama scripts, and letters to the editor of the ***Times of Papua New Guinea.***[2] My central argument--that the practice of Papua New Guinea's writers was both dynamic and mimetic--draws substantially from the essays and the letters, because both genres have direct political objectives, working to form opinions and shape attitudes. My discussion of these various texts points to social change as a common concern in the writing of the decade: while a range of ideas and possible solutions are explored, the writers generally agree on the problems needing attention.

In 1980 a new collection of short pieces was published: ***Voices of Independence: New Black Writing from Papua New Guinea,*** edited by Ulli Beier. This anthology featured poetry, drama, and fiction written during the 1970s. Some pieces were published here for the first time; others were reprinted from the journals ***Gigibori*** and ***Kovave.*** From this quiet beginning, a new momentum gradually developed. The "Melanesian Voice" articles (originally published in the ***Papua New Guinea Post-Courier*** newspaper) were collected and published in book form in 1980 and again, slightly adapted, in 1983 (Narokobi 1980).

There was also a steady trickle of new creative work. Ignatius Kilage's novel ***My Mother Calls Me Yaltep*** was published in 1980 and reprinted in 1984, 1987, and 1989. Russell Soaba's second novel, ***Maiba,*** appeared after a long delay in 1985, the same year in which Wilhelm Tagis's novella "Michael Tsim" appeared. Among the drama offerings were John Kasaipwalova's ***Sail the Midnight Sun*** and ***Sana Sana*** in 1980 and 1982 respectively; three new plays by Nora Vagi Brash ***(Black Market Buai*** in 1982, ***Taurama*** in 1985, and ***Pick the Bone Dry*** in 1986); and, towards the end of the decade, drama scripts by Adam Vai Delaney (1991a) and William Takaku (n.d.***a;*** n.d.***b).*** The University of Papua New Guinea's newly launched ***Ondobondo*** magazine, together with the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies' journal ***Bikmaus*** and its Annual Literature Competition, provided publishing outlets for poems, short stories, critiques, and other literary pieces.[3] In addition, poetry collections by Uma More (1984), Benjamin Nakin (n.d.) and Steven Winduo (1991b) were published.[4]

In my view the writing of the 1980s has a different tone from that of the

1970s. Although sharing certain earlier concerns, this new body of work is substantially less angry, more consolidating, and more committed to looking ahead and building for the future. Anticolonial feelings still surface at times, but the tone is generally more practical and constructive. Prominent among the new publications are collections of essays by Bernard Narokobi (1983) and Utula Samana (1988), dealing respectively with leadership and development in the newly independent nation.

My sources for this essay include the letters to the editor of the ***Times of Papua New Guinea,*** written between 1980 and 1989.[5] The ***Times*** is a weekly newspaper that first appeared in September 1980, celebrating the country's first five years of independence. This newspaper offers a more leisurely and reflective approach to current affairs than does the daily ***Post-Courier:*** An examination of the letters through the 1980s indicates some of the major concerns felt by ordinary people during the period.

According to Steven Winduo, Papua New Guinea's English-language literary history to date comprises three distinct periods (interview, 6 October 1992). The first extended to the Writers' Conference in 1976, when "they really wanted to re-live that '60s experience, that euphoric experience of writing. But it didn't actually come through." The second period, "from '76 to about '82," was

> a bit . . . silent. . . . By about '82 the Language and Literature Department [at the University of Papua New Guinea] started trying to help rediscover those experiences. There was a term we used for it: "re-lighting the flame." . . . From '82 up to '86 and onwards, a new group of writers emerged and began to publish in the ***Ondobondo*** magazine.

> ***And you were one of those?***

> Yes, I came in around 1984 and published my first poem in ***Ondobondo.*** . . . I was involved with the PNG Writers' Union. . . . The only remaining writers of the early period I came to know were Kumalau Tawali, Russell Soaba, John Kasaipwalova, John Waiko . . . Russell made a distinction between three categories in which writers belong. The first was political antagonism; the second was nostalgia and self-reflection. The last one was writers writing for their own entertainment. It's a good categorization but I don't totally agree with it. To me, the significance of each writer comes with the time spent in a particular period, . . . because it reflects the social, economic, and political changes of that period.

>   In the '80s we were writing about the changes that were affect-
> ing us--this whole problem of the "haves" and the "have-nets." [In
> the early '70s] there was all this political antagonism; there was a
> need for a counterdiscourse to the colonial discourse. . . . After
> independence there was more self-assessment, people assessing
> whether they had actually done the right thing or not. . . .

During this interview, Winduo commented that there has always been a
stark contrast between the "haves" and the "have-nots" in Papua New
Guinea. In his view this has become more alarming recently because the
lines of demarcation extend beyond racial differences. Similar thoughts
were expressed by Father Bart Advent Setavo Jr. in a letter to the ***Times***
identifying "real black colonialism . . . evident in the many inequalities and
disparities existing in our beautiful country" (29 June-5 July 1989: 8.)

The 1980s were a time of poignant contrasts: political consolidation on
one hand, heightened social division on the other. This was a time in which
the material circumstances of the small, well-educated, indigenous elite
appeared, almost inevitably, to move further from the reach of ordinary
people. In addition, the social, economic, and attitudinal gap between urban
and rural districts grew wider. During this period many people questioned
the basic justice of their changing society. A few courageous individuals sug-
gested solutions. Perhaps more fundamental than this questioning, however,
was a widespread commitment by writers to look at present and future
directions for their country.

One writer who took this commitment seriously is John Kasaipwalova,
whose thirty-five-page poem ***Sail the Midnight Sun*** looks to the future of all
Papua New Guineans. Kasaipwalova has described this poem as "a major
piece on the soul of Kabisawali philosophy" (1980:3). In fluent and lyrical
style the poem affirms the importance of holding on to dreams and believing
in the power of love to bring good out of painful experiences. The poem is a
Kesawaga, a form of dance-drama that Kasaipwalova has described as "Kiri-
wina ballet" (ibid.:2). It was written while Kasaipwalova was serving a prison
sentence, and, according to Greg Murphy (ibid.:introduction), it has a strong
connection with the writer's own life story. The following passage indicates
the strength of his belief:

>   Who has not stood petrified and hopeless
>   When wrathful destruction reeks all around
>   And inevitable death swings down to kill?
>   The weak of heart die before their deaths
>   The foolish smile to hide what their eyes behold

> But cool and lithe are the waiting sinews
> Of the midnight sun who carries a dream of love
> A heart of fountain strength no wave can swamp. (Ibid.:53)

Kasaipwalova's concern for the future of the "dream of love" is shared by all the writers of the period 1979-1989. The concept of development is probably the greatest single concern emerging in their work. My discussion now focuses on this concern, and then turns to the related issues of education, leadership, and urbanization.

The "Development" Debate

Deeply inscribed in the discourse of any postcolonial society is the concept --or, more frequently, widely differing concepts--of development. Closely tied to any discussion of development are the sensitive and potentially divisive issues of decolonization, exploitation, and neocolonialism. My research suggests that the discourse of Papua New Guinea is no exception. These concerns were deeply felt and much debated in the writing of the period 1979-1989, and remain so today. As they did in the 1970s writers have adopted a dynamic, opinion-shaping role, seeking to alert people to the dangers threatening their country's future and their own well-being.

Utula Samana has much to say about the problems associated with conventional development in his collection of essays, ***Papua New Guinea: Which Way?*** (1988). Written during the early 1980s while Samana was serving as premier of the Morobe Province, these essays argue strongly in favor of reassessment and change. In their account the very fabric of Papua New Guinean society is at risk and will be further damaged unless the country's development policies undergo a radical reappraisal.

> The current trend of development is destabilising the social system
> of Papua New Guinea. . . . The question of quality of life is one that
> needs to be raised more and more because Papua New Guineans
> are being taught to see change in terms of material things. If there
> is a road going through they say: "Now development is coming."
> Then all of a sudden people realise that along that road come
> drunken people, road gang hold-ups and all kinds of negative
> effects. . . . We need to look at development from the point of view
> of people. (Samana 1988:9)

Samana's view is widely shared. Benjamin Nakin's poem "Highlands Highway" is just one text that endorses his concern (198413). In 1981

Michael Somare said: "Unemployment among young people is potentially the most explosive situation the country will be facing this decade" *(Times of Papua New Guinea,* 18 September 1981: 2).[6] Sadly, his prediction proved accurate. Unemployment and law-and-order problems feature regularly in correspondence to the *Times of Papua New Guinea* during the 1980s. For example, Gima Temu of the Department of Primary Industry calls for a strengthening of "all elements of the subsistence food production sector. . . [for this will] contribute to increased rural employment and social stability" (25 August 1985: 8).

   In a similar vein Kible A. Bonga, from the University of Papua New Guinea's School of Economics, notes that in 1973 the Faber report, "Eight Aims of PNG," "specifically emphasised self-sufficiency and social justice (i.e. to feed itself and distribute wealth evenly to the masses). . . . PNG has not yet achieved these objectives in any significant way" *(Times of Papua New Guinea,* 14 April 1985: 10). In Bonga's view, the two most important policy issues at the time were high unemployment and the need for "more meaningful economic development." His concern is echoed by James P. Arlo, who wrote the *Times* from the Capricornia Institute (in Rockhampton, Queensland, Australia) to warn against the trading of "people's lives for short-term gain" and to remind readers that "a nation's most important resource is its people" (2-8 November 1989: 8).

   Two writers who pinpoint development as a key issue are Nora Vagi Brash and William Takaku. Brash points to the gap between rural and urban services:

> The village people in the provinces are crying out, "Independence has come. All it means is that development has taken place in town." In December when I was here I went out to Dagoda village. . . . It was election time for the central provincial government. I interviewed a village man who doesn't speak any English. . . . Here's a beautiful image he gave me. "All these politicians come and their words are sweeter than sugar." This was all said in Motu. "But really it's like chewing gum: you chew it until the sweetness has gone, and then you throw it away. We village people are like that. They come and sweet-talk us but when the sweetness is gone they throw us away. They go up to their offices and when they become big men and so forth, we go to see them and they say, 'Come tomorrow.' So we go tomorrow and they say, 'Oh, come next week.' So we go and come back next week and they say, 'Come back six weeks later,' so we go six weeks later. Then they tell us, 'Go. We'll send word to you and you can come back.' When indepen-

dence came we were all enthusiastic. . . . But then everything went to sleep." And that's the attitude of village people nowadays. (Interview, 13 April 1992)

Brash's satirical play **Pick the Bone Dry** highlights the gap between urban and rural services. Set in a government office and then a village, the plot revolves around a sum of money the government has promised to give Munibi village for its new community hall. Originally set at K50,000, the total has steadily dropped to K10,000 because of various demands on the available funds; yet the minister publicly informs the villagers: "We at the national level are very keen to see rural development" (Brash 1985-1986:29).

William Takaku's concern about development focuses on the environment. He is a committed conservationist who worries about logging and other signs of "progress" in the country Logging was a particularly urgent problem in Papua New Guinea during the 1980s and remains so even today; one of the world's few remaining rain forests stands there.[7] Takaku's play **The Conference of the Birds,** written around 1989,[8] dramatizes the dangers commercial logging poses to both human and animal life (n.d.**a).** The action is set in the year 1999. The "island of New Guinea," once lush and forest-covered, has lost most of its trees and become the gloomy scene of strange phenomena. Prominent among the fauna facing extinction is the bird of paradise, an important national emblem whose likeness appears on coins and official letterheads and may soon become just a memory.

A younger writer sharing Takaku's vision is Adam Vai Delaney, who notes that

> cultures and values of indigenous peoples have been suppressed without any real concern for the people. It's all been done in the name of civilization, which translates to money instead of respect. . . . [I]ssues such as environmental damage, pollution, excess logging, cigarette advertising are now principal issues raised at international levels. The co-existence of man and his environment is the history of any indigenous peoples around the world.

This comment comes the playwright's notes to Delaney's musical drama **Chant of the Witchdoctor** (Delaney 1991a),[9] a play that explores the impact of cargo cult beliefs on community attitudes and behavior.

Interesting insights into the issue of development are offered in Ignatius Kilage's novel, **My Mother Calls Me Yaltep.** Set in the Simbu district of Papua New Guinea's highlands, this fictitious account "based on facts" offers

a fascinating glimpse into changes that immediately preceded the arrival of the first **kiaps** (Australian patrol officers). Told with wry humor and an exquisite gift for detail, the story makes no attempt to romanticize village life or gloss over the impact of Westernization. With delightful self-irony, Kilage relates the terrifying rumors that accompanied the first cows and horses to be seen in the highlands: "There were other creatures which were very big and ate up all the green grass overnight. . . . These monsters were rumoured to be eating up every blade of grass--soon they would be devouring us when they finished all the greens in the Valley" (Kilage 1980:23).

Kilage highlights the colonial threat to vulnerable, time-honored customs and values with considerable sensitivity. For example, the traditional courtship ritual, known as Kuanandi, was changed almost beyond recognition in a bid to entertain visiting officials. In the original custom "boys and girls used to meet in front of the fire and in the presence of the old people and children. They sat side by side with both hands interlocked and sang songs, laughed and had innocent fun together" (ibid.:25). Many people in the community were distressed to see this custom give way to a new, promiscuous ritual arranged by

> local dignitaries . . . for the **kiaps** and their followers, who knew nothing about the customary way of conducting it. . . . The new form of the **Kuanandi** could not be recognised from the original so there were whisperings abroad that the strict moral codes of the Kuman people were going overboard. The older people who believe so strongly in the purity of those to be initiated prohibited us from going near the rest houses, lest we might get contaminated. . . . This was the beginning of the breakdown in the strict moral code of behaviour of our people as handed down to us. (Ibid.:26)

Yet Kilage shows that, for all its attendant problems, Westernization did bring benefits; thus, the tone of his novel is predominantly optimistic. While missionaries from different churches add more confusion to this "age of contradictions" (ibid.:77), the adolescent Yaltep gradually understands change in positive terms. As a young adult, he comments, "The people came to see that to get on in this rapidly growing and progressing country they had to change their views on life and the social system had to be remodelled. . . . In assimilating the Western civilisation they clearly saw the need for education" (ibid. : 101). This last observation is particularly significant, coming as it does from a young man who left home as a very small boy and lived with his grandparents in another part of the highlands to avoid going to school.

Although few (if any) Papua New Guinean writers would deny the need for structured education, there has been much criticism of Western-style pedagogy and of the social "remodelling" that Yaltep appears to feel is beneficial to the country's progress. It is interesting to note that the setting and the experiences in Kilage's novel are close to those of his own life. His autobiographical details at the end of the book include this comment: "I am happy to say I have seen a lot of changes and I am glad I was asked to give my bit for the development of our people as we form our young but vigorous society" (ibid.:121). Kilage's assessment seems reasonably optimistic--an uncommon view in the 1980s when most texts portray Western influences as detrimental. Another exception is Andreas Hara Wabiria's story "Mangove" (1985), which makes an oblique reference to the positive influence of Westernization in reducing the amount of tribal fighting.

The Dilemma of Education

Education systems, inevitably influenced by current political conditions, can never be immune to challenge and potential conflict. The establishment and growth of any system of pedagogy raises many possible questions, some of which are explored in the poem "Education" by Benjamin Nakin (1984a). Having considered several alternative views of the educational process, the poem ends on a note of ambivalence: "Perhaps it's a dream / A nightmare. / Who knows?" Questions of education and training, and the dilemmas to which they can lead, are particularly sensitive in a postcolonial context.

Russell Soaba's second novel, **Maiba** (1985), asks searching questions about the implications of a Western educational system in the previously idyllic world of Makawana village, on the coast of Papua New Guinea's Milne Bay Province. **Maiba** is a complex novel that explores many aspects of social change: it sheds light not only on questions of education, but also cultural identity, development, leadership, and exploitation.

The story is set in the village and is written as a parable. The word **maiba** in the Anuki language refers to a traditional genre that communicates truth through parables, and the novels central character is named Yawasa Maibina, meaning "the parable of life." This, together with the inclusion of unglossed Anuki words in the narrative, poses an intriguing challenge to the non-Anuki reader.[10] Commenting on his intentions as a writer, Soaba has said,

> I write in English as a way of inviting people from outside to come and realize the significance--and the dangers--there are in seeing my own language die out. So you notice that even in a novel such as **Maiba** there are a lot of words in my language. The idea there is to

invite as many outsiders as possible to go through literally trying to see what the word **maiba** means.

So when someone reads your book it's an invitation to step into that world and learn a little about that culture and that language.

Yes. (Interview, 25 August 1992)

In this novel, a sharp contrast is developed between Doboro Thomas and Yawasa Maibina (or Maiba, as she is more frequently called). Both have been educated in the Western style. Doboro, an eloquent orator and a crafty rogue, had declared himself the village leader by default soon after the rightful leader died of tuberculosis in his early thirties. This was Chief Komeroana Magura, Maiba's father. By means of a skillful blend of foreign learning and basic terrorism, Doboro establishes almost total control of the village. Maiba, on the other hand, has no apparent power at all.[11] Orphaned and unwanted, maligned by local gossip and tormented by her schoolmates, she has a lonely childhood. Perhaps this isolation from her peers serves to foster her development as a leader: it is her honesty, clear-sightedness, compassion, and courage that enable her to confront Doboro and his thugs, and to gain the villagers' respect at the novel's end.

Doboro's veneer of apparent wisdom sways most people in the village. Not everyone, however: the young schoolboy Percy sees through him and recognizes that his authority lies in "deliberately throwing hard English words at an audience that can't understand them" (Soaba 1985:81). Young people who speak English and are familiar with Doboro's foreign terms of reference can assess his arguments and find them wanting. Older people in the village cannot.

The extent to which Soaba intends the reader to identify with Doboro is not altogether clear. Doboro and Maiba are depicted as the most intelligent characters in the novel. Maiba is the epitome of many good qualities, while Doboro is a liar and a cheat. Yet we cannot simply dismiss him. The story he tells about Westerners exploiting local art is perceptive and probably accurate. It reveals his sensitivity, his understanding of international market forces, and his disillusionment. He is unquestionably talented, but ultimately it becomes clear that these talents, coupled with his dishonesty and greed, are being used purely to further his own advancement. His learning and power benefit no one in the end.

In her review of **Maiba,** Jennifer Evans has commented that the story ends on an optimistic note (1986). My own reading suggests that the ending is open and ambiguous. One thing is certain: the peaceful world symbolized

by Mr. Wawaya and his house has been shattered beyond recovery. We are left with the possibility of new leadership in Makawana village, but no predictions are offered as to what kind of leadership we might expect. It is arguable that either Maiba or Royal Bob Rabobo may become the next leader. Both have aristocratic blood, the advantages of higher education, and--perhaps most important of all--credibility. We know enough of their behavior to be confident that they would use their position and educational opportunities to empower the people, not exploit them as Doboro did. Soaba seems in this novel to be examining the possible effects of "development," including formal Western-style education, and exploring the potential it has for either undermining or enriching a community.

Other texts that explore formal education as a vehicle of change in society include Ambrose Waiyin's autobiographical piece "Crossing the Flooded Sipi" (1983), Wilhelm Tagis's novella "Michael Tsim" (1985), Daniel Kumbon's story "Ambarep Taiakali" (1985-1986), and John Kil's narrative "King of the Marbles" (1985). None of them presents a flattering picture of school.

Kil's story is about three schoolboys who play truant one time too many. Having enjoyed a successful day winning hundreds of marbles from children in a nearby village, the boys return home to find they have been expelled from school. Not surprisingly, their parents are distraught. The boys' ringleader, thirteen-year-old Thomas, endures a beating and an angry lecture from his father, who upbraids him for his lost chances and his bleak future without education. Thomas defiantly resolves to get "all the boys" to work for him and further build his marble empire (Kil 1985:32), thus securing his future without the need for any more formal schooling. The final triumphant note belongs to him. In addition to this, however, the story offers a sensitive insight into the boys' fathers and their way of thinking. They are furious about the expulsion--"not that they were angry at the committee for expelling the boys but angry at the younger generation. They were angry at the way they were dealing with life" (ibid.:29). In particular, Thomas's father questions the value of Westernization: after working hard to build a future for his sons, his hopes are dashed and he is forced to acknowledge the fact that none of the boys has good prospects.

Western education, particularly that with a Christian emphasis, is subjected to close scrutiny by Bernard A. Kaspou in his poem "Education for Confusion." Depicting pupils seated cross-legged on "worn-out mats" and stretching their necks "heron-like," he writes:

> Our half-baked Teacher
> Always said that
> Jesus was the way of life . . .

> I now see that
> there is a mental war
> Between
> Christ, Plato, Karl Marx
> Mao Tse-Tung and I
> And Heaven seems remote. (Kaspou 1987)

The implication is that the poet is ill-equipped to assess critically these conflicting philosophies and make his own choice. Thus he may become a victim in the "mental war."

Similarly, Steven Winduo's poems, written during and immediately after his undergraduate university days, make some incisive comments on the potential pitfalls of conventional learning. "Life in an Evening Glass" expresses disdain for "incompetent academics" who "Cast an evil omen on corridors / Of disasterous [*sic*] learning / In this young country's soil" (Winduo 1991b:B).

In a different but related vein, the poem "Different Histories" highlights the gulf that often separates educated young people from their traditional roots. This possibly draws on Winduo's own experience: he grew up in the East Sepik Province and left home to attend Aiyura National High School in Papua New Guinea's highlands, then the universities of Papua New Guinea (Port Moresby) and Canterbury (Christchurch, New Zealand). This poem concerns a traveler returning home, where he discovers the gap between himself and his background:

> . . . [W]atching the sky again
> I realise the clouds have moved
> So has my Buk'nholi life
> Which has drifted
> Into a different world,
> Making different histories.
> My people no longer to me
> Are the people of my childhood's history,
> My papa and mama are no longer to me
> The protectors of my life,
> My home no longer to me
> My place of being
> But a mere reference of my whole history. (Winduo 1991b:3)

Winduo has remarked that a crucial element in this distancing process for him personally has been his movement away from his mother tongue (the

Boiken dialect) to English (interview, 6 October 1992). For some years now, English has been his "thinking" language and the context in which every aspect of his academic and professional life takes place.

The distance between the two worlds is explored from another perspective in his poem "Letters After Graduation." Here it is apparent that a university education is perceived by many as a ticket to wealth and an open door for needy members of the extended family The poem's speaker has no guests at his graduation ceremony because his "parents cannot afford a trip" and his relatives are "too busy to attend." Yet before long

> Letters arrive requesting financial aid
> Not from mother and father who do not even write
> I refuse to respond to these letters
> I fear more to come like locusts. (Winduo 1991b:10)

The problem described here is a common one in Papua New Guinean society Young professionals are often caught in a "Catch-22" trap. Although many aspects of traditional Melanesian cultures are praised, this particular feature of the *wantok* system is often described as a problem by local people.[12]

Uma More is another poet who has written about the problems that can accompany Western-style education. His poem "Blame Civilisation" poses a series of bitter questions:

> Why am I isolated
> from my people? . . .
>
> Why am I not sharing
> the problems confronted
> by my people? . . .
>
> Why am I facing
> many unknown diseases? . . . (More 1984:n.p.)

In reply to each question the poet repeats the title, "Blame civilisation."

In two other poems, More focuses on the emotional dislocation that often accompanies Westernization. "Whelma (My Name)" explores a young man's feelings about his vernacular name and traces his transition from low self-esteem to cultural pride. So intense is his discomfort at one point in the process that he decides to go by the name "Frank / A sweet little foreign name," only to find that he knows neither its meaning nor its origin (More

1984:n.p.). This discovery prompts him to return to his vernacular name, Whelma, with a new sense of identity and pride. More's poem "All Dad's Weren't Mine" *(sic)* offers a poignant insight into the process of leaving home, and with it, familiar horizons. The speaker recalls the "door to the world" that beckoned him as a young man, and his father's sad prediction that he would soon belong to a totally different world, one from which there could be no complete return (More 1984).

The new world that education introduces can promise neither safe return home nor secure integration into the new society. Loujaya Kouza's poem "Face the Naked Facts" looks at school-leavers' job prospects and draws a sharp contrast between their bright career hopes and the grim realities that will probably arise in their place:

> Everywhere
> you turn, there's a dead end.
>
> . . . .
>
> Face the naked facts. The low-paid
> dead-end jobs available can't compete
> with the fast life and easy money you
> can make by doing something illegal. (Kouza 1981a)

Papua New Guinea's educational system received substantial attention in letters to the ***Times of Papua New Guinea*** during the 1980s. Gabriel Pama (from the North Solomons Province) and Augustine Turi (from the University of Papua New Guinea) both wrote in to underline the importance of offering "true education" and to point to reasons why this is not happening in the country. In Pama's view, the problems spring from popular misconceptions about the role of formal schooling. Many seek education for their children "so that they will obtain a well-paid job, or get an important role in the country. For example, . . . to be politicians so that people will look up to them! . . . Some parents say their children are useless if they fail to go on to higher institutions. . . . The purpose of education is to develop as a person. . . . Are money and importance always what we want to gain from education?" (26 June-2 July 1981: 2). Turi agrees that misconceptions exist but looks for deeper causes: "it was not the people of this country who were to be blamed for wrong attitudes but the government's adoption of the Australian education system" (10-16 July 1981: 2). In his view, foreign expertise needs to be used judiciously--"not in excess because this will create other problems."

The need for more-relevant teacher education is stressed by Brother Andrew Simpson, who wrote to the ***Times*** from Vunakanau to support the

1986 Matane report and the 1989 McNamara report, with their separate calls for a "different approach to education," one that is committed to preparing "reflective teachers able to meet change" (12-18 October 1989: 8). Addressing a slightly different concern, M. B. Peril (assistant secretary for education) contests claims that education is "a recipe for disaster" (14 December 1989: 8). He asserts that such arguments reveal "a disease which the education system has been trying for decades to eradicate--elitism." My contact with teachers and curriculum advisers in Papua New Guinea suggests that Peril's concern about elitism is still strongly supported in several quarters today.

Leadership Woes

The perceived need for honest, just, and courageous leaders is clear in the writings of the period 1979-1989. Different writers employ different genres to explore this theme, but they agree on the essential principles and speak with a substantial measure of unity. In general, letters sent to the **Times** during this decade express disillusionment with the nation's democratically elected leaders--at both local and national levels. Much is said about the disparity between urban and rural districts and the services available to them, a concern shared by writers of essays and imaginative literature generally. These different bodies of writing all attempt to sensitize leaders to the needs of ordinary citizens and to make "grassroots" people more aware of their rights.

During the 1980s the **Times** printed many letters touching on the leadership topic. Peter Walus of Boroko is perhaps unusually forceful in his language, but he is certainly not alone in his anger about the "fat cats" and their exploitation of ordinary people:

> In recent times a number of leaders have called on Papua New Guineans to put their country first. . . . This will not be accepted in silence. . . . For how long will the working class of PNG go on struggling for their day-to-day survival in this very expensive country while the fruits of their toil are siphoned off to feed a few "fat cats"[?] . . . Sir, I pay taxes for the development of PNG--not to feed a few parasites living off the labours of real Papua New Guineans. **(Times of Papua New Guinea,** 3 February 1984: 2)

Notable among the many other letters to the **Times** expressing people's disappointment in their leaders are those from Stephen Toimb of Mount Hagen (15 March 1984: 2), Basil Petaulo of Boroko (5 April 1989: 8), Maria

Kopkop--at that time president of Women in Development (22-28 June 1989: 8), and Joseph Sukwianomb (13 February 1981: 2) who was then based at Kenyatta University College in Nairobi, Kenya.

The difficulty of defining good leadership, particularly when political and religious questions collide, is illumined by correspondence to the *Times* regarding the controversial Father John Momis. In Leo Hannet's assessment, Momis's behavior as a politician was "extremely divisive"--and this was because of a fundamental divide between the functions of church and state:

> Paradoxically, I maintain with Ivan Illich, the view that the less effective the "church" is as a power in politics the more effective she can be as a celebrant of the mystery and then she can reveal to us more the full meaning of integrated human development. . . . She can, then, unmistakably present the seamless truth of Christ and speak more succinctly in season and out of season on issues such as the morality of politics rather than be involved in the politics of morality. *(Times of Papua New Guinea,* 14-20 May 1987: 9)

Several weeks after Hannet's letter appeared in print, Moro R. Nime wrote to the *Times* from Simbu Province to defend the controversial cleric against such "vicious attacks": "Papua New Guinea needs poor, but principled people like Fr Momis . . . to ensure that this country is not sold to foreign interests. He is the one . . . true leader who doesn't sell our country while he is in the position" (11-17 June 1987: 9).

Correspondents to the *Times* were not the only ones to be worried about the corruptibility of leaders during this second decade. This theme is satirized in Nora Brash's play *Pick the Bone Dry,* already discussed briefly in connection with development, and in Bernard Minol's story "The Kongan Way" (1987b). In her play, Brash cleverly dramatizes a conflict of vested interests among a government minister, the director of his department, and "Waitad" (a European adviser). While trying to maintain a public facade of concern and generosity towards villagers and their development projects, these men squabble behind the scenes over the allocation of promised money and the use of a discretionary fund. As a result, the finance actually given to the village amounts to a small fraction of the figure promised earlier.

Minol's story is set in the imaginary country of Konga, where public servants enjoy many social privileges at government expense. In addition to making full use of their convenient cover-all "Special Services Account" that caters for food, drink, and entertainment, they welcome appropriate advice from overseas experts: "An Australian psychologist who visited the Kongan

capital two years earlier had strongly recommended that their daily booze sessions be built into the normal office hours. In fact the professional psychologist had used the phrase 'therapeutic sessions' not 'booze sessions.' For the Konga public servants and Members of Parliament these fine semantical differences were meaningless . . . as long as they meant, partying and drinking beer" (Minol 1987b:64). The tone of both these texts is deliberately tongue-in-cheek, but there can be little doubt about the serious intention behind the plots. Brash has specifically said that she believes writers have a responsibility to comment on social trends and problems, even if this makes them unpopular (interview, 13 April 1992).

In a more sober vein, Bernard Narokobi casts a thoughtful and critical eye over the quality of leadership in Papua New Guinea and the wider community. His collection of essays titled **Life and Leadership in Melanesia** sets high standards for community, church, and national leaders to emulate. One area of his concern is the possible impact of private business interests on leaders' ability to act with integrity. Although unwilling to state that such interests are necessarily a corrupting influence, he argues that this is often the case (Narokobi 1983:9). In his view it is essential for leaders to be committed to the equitable distribution of wealth.

On this particular point, Narokobi is in agreement with Brash (interview, 13 April 1992), Utula Samana (1988), and many writers of letters to the **Times.** Narokobi observes:

> As far as most ordinary people are concerned, most leaders are hypocrites and liars, concerned primarily for their own interests and secondarily for the benefit of their country. . . . One of the most important needs of the Melanesian nations is to take control of the economy. . . . This poses a critical ideological question. . . . Our political sovereignty and independence cannot be authentic if we leave control of the economy to foreigners. (1983:12)

Some quite similar terms are employed in a letter by Andrew U. Baing, titled "Time to be Independent": "Could it be that the 1980s is an era of struggle against colonialism and domination by foreign elements? As for us in the Pacific our awareness is crucial to the survival of independence, culture and national interests" **(Times of Papua New Guinea,** 14 November 1980: 2).

Narokobi has scant respect for leaders who commit "sins against their people and against democracy" (1983:12-15). These "sins" include using parliamentary time for their own work, failing to represent the views of their electorate, absenting themselves from important or controversial discussions (especially those that involve "having to make decisions on conscience"),

doing inadequate study, being lazy or irresponsible, and neglecting the needs of provincial areas. In his account, "One of the acts village people find most offensive is to be ignored" (ibid.:15).

This last observation is endorsed by my interview with Brash, and by the poem "Democracy," in which Elsie Mataio points out that everyone receives their fair share of government rhetoric, but real services (symbolized in the poem by smart new aircraft) are a different matter: "Only the bigmen have wings / the small men have dead roots" (1983). This problem is treated just as seriously in Wilhelm Tagis's novella "Michael Tsim" (1985). The character Makule (who is eventually jailed for five and a half years) is an extravagantly corrupt leader in his official capacity as a member of the Toberaki Community Government. Michael (the novella's narrator and central character) is appalled by Makule's behavior but finds the community's apathy equally devastating.

Willful blindness to known problems is not unique to this fictitious community, as Loujaya Kouza's poem "Tell Me Brother to Brother" makes clear:

> . . . all I know is I'm working on an order
> What happens next
> don't blame me brother.
> The ostrich has its eggs to lay
> Let's rest this matter
> another day. (Kouza 1987)

Both Narokobi and Samana stress that PNG leaders need to tap into their traditional cultures and create an appropriate, uniquely Melanesian path for the future. Both writers caution against the dangers of exploitation in the form of foreign investment and large-scale "development." In the 1970s much was made of Narokobi's writing about the "Melanesian Way." In this more recent writing he notes "the oppressive and exploitative regimes of Indonesia and the West," and argues that Melanesian principles, such as respect for others and communal ownership, need to be applied to industry: "This is a dynamic application of the Melanesian Way. Unless industry is democratised and humanised, there will be no end to industrial strike action. No man strikes against himself, or walks off his own industry" (Narokobi 1983:19).

Urbanization--A Country Drifting Apart?

According to Steven Winduo (interview, 6 October 1992), an important commitment among the writers of the 1980s was to look at the changes

occurring in society and attempt to assess them. My reading suggests widespread concern during this period over the breakdown of the traditional fabric of PNG society--particularly relationships. Two letters to the **Times** expressing this concern are "Fast Going Down Hill" by Phillip Apa from Mount Hagen (15 April 1987: 9) and "Take a Pride in PNG" by John Bonam of Hohola, near Port Moresby (16 December 1984: 9). The same concern over deteriorating relationships is also prominent in Utula Samana's essays (1988). In his account, it is vital that the youth in the rural areas be "stabilised" with gainful employment and a viable way of life away from the major centers. If true development occurs at this level, many urban problems--especially unemployment, vandalism and crime--will diminish, he argues.

The short poem "Papua New Guinea" by B. Elijah notes changes so great that the country is scarcely recognizable. The text is the work of a high school student, but it adopts an old person's perspective in examining "the beginning of a new era" and asking in a bewildered tone, "So this is Papua New Guinea?" (Elijah 1987). The writers I interviewed in the course of my research all stressed the importance of strengthening links within society. Nora Brash and William Takaku specifically mentioned urbanization as a worrying phenomenon because of the accompanying problems, particularly urban drift, youth unemployment, "raskolism," and the breakdown of traditional lines of communication and support.

Speaking to Dr. Adeola James on an earlier occasion about the work and responsibilities of the media, Loujaya Kouza stressed the value of traditional channels of communication: "We consider the total development of the human being--physically, spiritually and morally, according to our national goals, as our main purpose. We try to communicate with people according to our traditional custom of the **Wantok** system. People are free to come and talk to us and they do so freely. It means a lot to them" (quoted in James 1991:238). Kouza's work with the National Broadcasting Network, her role as assistant subeditor of the **Times** and assistant editor at the National Research Institute, and her continued involvement in creative writing (including songwriting) equip her to speak firsthand about the opportunities open to writers and journalists.

Increased urbanization seems to have made it more difficult to maintain --much less strengthen-- traditional lines of communication. In "Michael Tsim," Wilhelm Tagis offers a graphic description of the rapid growth of Arawa from sleepy little community to town (1985). Tagis does not apparently attempt to gloss over the considerable associated problems. Prominent among the casualties of such rapid change are family relationships, security and law-and-order. A much shorter piece, Shem Yarupawa's story "Kita Basara, the Lone Traveller" (1985), touches on the problems that arise when

a person leaves the village but retains the expectation of traditional values and mores. To such people, urban life can come as a severe shock.

Several poems in Steven Winduo's collection--notably "Fraternity of Boroko," "Hanuabada," "The Rising Heat," and "Gahunagaudi Street"--highlight the ugliness of modern life in the city, with its incongruous juxtaposition of rundown houses and glossy new cars. In "Sheltered Silence," the poet builds up a crescendo of night noises so disturbing that even the insects seek "refuge / Behind their shelled wings," and people who were hoping for peace find instead that "Nature threatens to fall apart" (Winduo 1991b:18).

"Gahunagaudi Street" is particularly powerful in its evocation of despair and alienation. Here the poet depicts "the stray dogs" of the area: the refuse of society, rummaging silently through rubbish bins. In the second stanza it becomes evident that these "dogs" are not necessarily four-legged:

> We strive for discovery
> Possessed by desire and lust for imported goods.
> Disappointed by rising posts and melted metals
> Desperate prayers for another bin will not answer
> Displaced citizens of our own soil.
>
> Who gave us this history? . . .
> This moment of betrayal! (Winduo 1991b:35)

The poem's impact is enhanced by the strategic repetition of key sounds, words, and phrases. On a different level, the poem is especially evocative for residents of Port Moresby and its suburbs, where stray dogs are numerous. The dogs are all the more memorable for their extremely thin and destitute appearance. The theme of urban despair is explored elsewhere, including Abba B. Bina's "Port Moresby" (1983) and Loujaya Kouza's "Morning Comes" (1981c). Similarly, the poem "The City" by Sorariba Nash Gegera depicts a place that is characterized by "[n]oises of laughter, cries and yells," a place in which every morning "[h]uman life explodes with rage" (1981).

Many other texts deal with urbanization problems. For instance, Joyce Kumbeli's poem "Caught Up" (1983), Loujaya Kouza's "It's Friday" (1981b), and Jack Lahui's "Fed Up with Consumerism" (1983) all highlight the insidious effects of materialism once people begin living in a cash society. The harshness and potential brutality of urban life, especially as it affects personal relationships, is afforded honest and disturbing treatment in many stories from the period. Notable among them are Russell Soaba's "Traffic Jam" (1983), Adam Delaney's "Machine Tragedy" (1983), Malum Nalu's "Rambo" (1987), and Sorariba Nash Gegera's "A Sordid Affair" (1987).

Adam Delaney's play *When Two Tribes Go to War* takes a harrowing look

at the pressures facing "successful" professional families in a contemporary urban setting (1991b).[13] While news reports on the radio tell of tribal fighting in the highlands, a personal conflict escalates between Peter (a bank clerk) and his wife Maria, an articulate and ambitious lawyer whose higher wage threatens his traditional role as family provider. The possibility of violence is never far away. Commenting that his play "pinpoint[s] a lot of the defects of society," Delaney observes, "Social commentary is political commentary as I see it. You can't give a social commentary without making a political statement. . . . *Two Tribes* is political: two people killing each other mentally" (conversation, 22 October 1992).

Although a concern in the letters to the *Times* from this period, increasing urbanization tends to surface more obliquely than in the creative writing --often arising amidst more general comments about development. For example, Peter I. Peipul (at that time Papua New Guinea's ambassador to the European Economic Community) stresses the importance of the country's agriculture and the need for greater focus on "small cottage industries in rural areas" *(Times of Papua New Guinea,* 6 September 1984: 2). In his view, this would help to alleviate urban drift, unemployment and "raskolism." Two correspondents who write directly about the economic tensions between urban and rural areas are John Tambi of Boroko (9 March 1983: 2) and Mend Max Kep of Gerehu (30 September 1983: 2).[14] Tambi remarks: "There is much debate on the two tier structure of salaries of nationals versus foreigners. However, the proportion of Expatriates to Papua New Guineans is surely decreasing. . . . What appears to be ignored is the huge discrepancy between urban and rural wages of Papua New Guineans." (Currently urban basic wage is about double the rural basic wage.) This point is endorsed by Kep, who argues that the country's economy needs urgent attention; he cites "the high urban-rural gap" as a problem in the wages policy.

One aspect of the ugliness of life in a rapidly growing city is highlighted by Joseph Manau of Boroko, in his letter "Transportation Chaos": "Port Moresby is growing so fast that the problems associated are evident in traffic congestion and the highly ineffective and unreliable public transport system" *(Times of Papua New Guinea,* 22 September 1985: 8). Manau asserts that a better system is needed. As evidence he points to "astronomical" prices, noise and air pollution, and illnesses such as "lung cancer, asthma and chronic bronchitis."

The Decade in Summary

Social change thus emerges as a significant concern in the writing of the period 1979-1989. Both the "literary" and the "popular" texts indicate that

during this decade writers and correspondents from many different locali-
ties were willing to take a close look at their country. Their approach was
twofold: first, assessing the changes that had already occurred; and second,
pointing to further changes they considered necessary. The objective the
writers had in common during this decade was to foster national pride and
integrity as they sought to build something uniquely Papua New Guinean
for their children's generation.

The much-debated question of development is most prominent among
the various aspects of social change that the literature explores between
1979 and 1989. Writers and correspondents alike express anxiety over the
depletion of the country's valuable natural resources and what they perceive
as a large-scale "selling out" to foreign companies. Questions of leadership
and education are closely connected with development issues in the imagi-
native literature, the essays, and the letters to the **Times.** The rapid growth
of urban centers is generally regarded with a measure of distaste--although
on this particular topic, the "literary" work has considerably more to say than
the letters do.

Conclusion: The Two Decades Together--Changes for the Better?

In 1977 John Waiko took an uncompromising stand in his polemic essay
"The Political Responsibility of a Writer," arguing that there can be no soft
options where writers' commitment and accountability are concerned. "It is
a terrible thing to be a writer, because any writer is under threat from Big
Finance and the call of internationalism: the former restricts the publication
of anything a writer produces, while the latter robs him of his language and
his culture. It is a strange feeling indeed, for one's first lesson in writing is to
be involved in translating one's people's view of the world to an outsider"
(Waiko 1977:36).

The need for cultural or philosophical "translation" Waiko mentions here
is uniquely complex for Papua New Guinea's writers, because of the vast
geographical, linguistic, and cultural diversities that characterize their coun-
try. Russell Soaba is one writer who has commented on the position of the
English language in the midst of this complexity. Paramount to him is the
goal of developing a distinctively Papua New Guinean literature. For him
personally this means working in the "borrowed" English language, a
medium he uses "out of choicelessness" (interview, 25 August 1992).

Twenty years before my interview with Soaba, and five years before the
publication of Waiko's essay, Apisai Enos offered this insight into his coun-
try's cultural diversity and his own paradoxical position in it: "Talking about
traditional literature, I can only generalize and rely on my limited knowl-

edge of the various cultures of Niugini. Although I am a Niuginian, I am at the same time a stranger, an outsider in cultures other than my own. . . . Such cultural, linguistic and geographical spectra make it hard for me to reduce Niugini to a uniform scale" (1972:46). This diversity is vitally important to Papua New Guinean writers and thinkers alike.

My research demonstrates that Waiko is not alone in taking the writer's role so seriously. John Kasaipwalova has spoken of the "onerous responsibility" resting on his particular generation of Papua New Guinean writers (interview, 24 September 1992). A similar view was expressed in 1978 by Kumalau Tawali, who asserted that writers and artists "are meant to be the conscience, the inspiration and the prophets of a new world order. . . . Those who have offered their artistic might to the remaking of their nation should bum with revolutionary flames to lead their nation and humanity into fresh thinking and living" (1978:l). Much more recently, Loujaya Kouza has supported this idea by describing writers as "the mirror of society's many faces" and "a conscience, a reminder of the realities of ourselves and our surroundings" (personal communication, June 1992).

Nora Vagi Brash is equally serious about the role of writers. Addressing the Pacific Women Writers Conference at the University of Papua New Guinea in April 1992, she declared that people who are afraid of opposition should not call themselves writers. In my interview with her soon afterward, she elaborated on the responsibility of writers to comment on changes and trends in society: "It is their duty to point some of these things out. . . . Otherwise, how is anyone going to make things clear? . . . I feel writing should be a lifetime commitment. . . . There have been writers who've been thrown into jail, or tortured, or banned. That's a commitment they make. It's a commitment we are making" (interview, 13 April 1992).

In common with other new literatures written in English, Papua New Guinean literature emerged in a period of political upheaval and rapid social change. The theme of social change has been an important concern all the way through the twenty years of writing I have examined. In general, social change has been treated seriously and seen as inevitable and unfortunate. The impact of Christianity and Westernization has been neither acclaimed nor censured unanimously. Instead, it has been explored with profound ambivalence. Writers have tended to focus more on the negative aspects of foreign influences, particularly where these have jeopardized time-honored cultural patterns and attitudes. During the two decades under investigation, few writers expressed a syncretic vision of social change.

The writers I have met in the course of my research represent a diversity of views on the value of social change. Nora Brash points sadly to the increase in urbanization and the presence of more beggars on the streets of

Port Moresby--an indication to her that traditional relationships and lines of support are deteriorating (interview, 13 April 1992). Russell Soaba laments the weakening of the country's traditional cultures but says "there is no denying that . . . change has had some positive influences" (interview, 25 August 1992). Loujaya Kouza comments: "No society is immune to change. The pace of change determines whether it is destructive or otherwise" (personal communication, June 1992). In Adam Delaney's assessment, change is inevitable "so long as there's a cross-cultural balance that exists within a society. . . . But unfortunately in Papua New Guinea we're trying to imitate what [the Western countries] have done, and emulate Australia all the time. . . . Change is beneficial, definitely. But it's also destructive. [Regarding] the environmental impact which change is bringing . . . people should really listen to the ground" (conversation, 22 October 1992).

Steven Winduo asserts that his "personal politics" involves looking at the changes that are occurring and examining "the transition, the sacrifice. . . . A lot of people are losing their values--values that make them a person of dignity, a person of respect, and a person of worth" (interview, 6 October 1992). In William Takaku's assessment, "social changes have been destructive to . . . traditionally creative people" (interview, 23 September 1992).

On a more positive note, John Kasaipwalova describes social change as "the engine and the dynamic" of his writing and says, "I thrive on social change. . . . Change . . . is always a good thing. What is classified as 'destructive' or 'beneficial' is really a description of. . . two polarities. . . . Change . . . does in fact mean that you have to destroy something. But you also have to build onto something. You cannot have change without having to destroy some preconceived ideas" (interview, 24 September 1992).

The world of all these writers has altered dramatically since 1969. Notable among the questions raised in the process is the evolving role of the writer and of English writing in Papua New Guinea's fast-changing society.

NOTES

1. As the focus of the research was on indigenous Papua New Guinean writers, John Kolia's work is not included.

2. Other media items such as news articles fell outside the scope of the research project. So did literary material published after 1989.

3. The Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies (in Boroko, Port Moresby), already established as an important publishing outlet, continued to fill a major role during this second decade of writing.

4. Steven Winduo's collection, *Lomo'ha I Am, in Spirit's Voice I Call,* was published in 1991, but the poems were written between 1984 and 1988. The collection represents an edited version of "Shrivelled Shrine in a Smoke Crowned House," an unpublished set of poems for which Winduo was awarded the inaugural poetry anthology prize in Papua New Guinea's National Literature Competition in 1988.

5. I am indebted to William Takaku for the idea of including newspaper letters in my research. During a conversation at the National Theatre Company's Waigani office in November 1991, he remarked that very few people were writing literature anymore: they were writing letters to the editor instead.

6. Michael Somare was Papua New Guinea's first prime minister, serving from 1975 to 1981. When he made this statement, Somare was leader of the opposition (heading the Pangu Pati) and Sir Julius Chan was the new prime minister.

7. Dr. David Suzuki, speaking at the University of Papua New Guinea in mid-1992, stated that there are only four remaining rain forests in the world. Earlier that week, he had been invited to observe a low-impact logging operation in Papua New Guinea's rain forest near Finschhaffen--an experience that he described glowingly during his university address.

8. Personal communication, 23 September 1992. My copy of this unpublished drama bears no date.

9. The play, first entitled "Vailala Madness," was written between 1988 and 1991, and has been published privately.

10. The Anuki language is spoken by only a few hundred people in Papua New Guinea's Milne Bay Province.

11. The following passage from the novel indicates the gulf that existed between Maiba's power as a young child and that of Doboro:

> "The girl is possessed by the devil," continued the old orator. "One wonders if her kind will survive the changing seasons. I have a good mind to declare openly that your adopted daughter suffers considerably from the hereditary curse of phobic depression; she's a moral reprobate, to be exact; a criminal and murderer in the making; an evil whore who isn't aware that she is suffering from schizophrenia . . . truly she was born with the disease, for wasn't she paralyzed until she was four years old?" Those who surrounded Doboro Thomas agreed with him, seeing that he was using words that they had never heard before, and if anyone similarly used big English words for the first time in Makawana, he was automatically believed. (Soaba 1985:53).

12. *Wantok* literally means "one talk' or one language. The *wantok* system refers to the network of support among speakers of one language or people from one area. It is similar to an extended family network but has wider parameters. My experience suggests that many Pacific Islanders who have had tertiary education are ambivalent about the *wantok* system--particularly as it affects issues of personal freedom, possessions, and decision

making. Many report the extreme difficulty of saying no to a *wantok* in need--and this can open up a kaleidoscope of personal and social conflicts.

13. This play won the drama prize in the 1988 National Literature Competition. It was performed by the Moresby Theatre Group in 1990 and was published (in a slightly short-ened form) in 1991.

14. Both locations are suburbs of Port Moresby.

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NEW TRENDS IN MICRONESIAN MIGRATION: FSM MIGRATION TO GUAM AND THE MARIANAS, 1990-1993

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THE AIR ROUTES THAT CRISSCROSS the Pacific have carried thousands of islanders away to more developed Pacific Rim countries for some years now. Extensive out-migration has become a fact of life for many Pacific Island nations--Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, the Cook Islands, and Kiribati, to mention just a few. In recent years the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), a newly formed nation of 105,000 people divided into four states (Yap, Chuuk, Pohnpei, and Kosrae), has joined the coterie of island countries sending large numbers of their people abroad. The FSM's Compact of Free Association with the United States, implemented in November 1986, granted its citizens free access to the United States and its territories. This created new opportunities for Micronesians, who hitherto had been allowed into the United States for schooling but not for employment. It also opened a "new and rather unique chapter in Pacific Islander migration" (Rubinstein 1991: 1). This article will chronicle the latest developments in this "new chapter" of Pacific migration.

The first significant emigration from the Federated States began in the years following the implementation of the Compact of Free Association in 1986, as hundreds of FSM citizens left for Guam and the Commonwealth of

the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). Micronesians had settled in Hawai‘i and the mainland United States even before implementation of the compact, but always sporadically and in small numbers. The emigration was overdue, for this new island nation was beset by high population growth and almost no job expansion. The beginnings of the outflow were first noted in an article that appeared three years after compact implementation (Hezel and McGrath 1989). In subsequent years a growing body of literature documents the migration and describes the evolution of migrant communities on Guam (for example, Rubinstein 1990, 1993; Rubinstein and Levin 1992; Connell 1991; Smith 1994).

The explanation of the outflow, at least in its earliest years, is simple. Citizens of the FSM, disappointed at the lack of employment at home, left in search of the many jobs available in Guam and the CNMI. These islands were enjoying an economic boom fueled by a surge in Japanese tourism. Guam was the preferred destination of migrants, but some moved to Saipan in the Marianas to join relatives and take work in its expanding garment industry. The proximity of Guam and Saipan to the FSM allowed migrants to visit their home islands frequently. Some migrant laborers maintained such close social bonds with their families and communities that they were virtually commuters (Rubinstein and Levin 1992:351). Those who left had the freedom to return home permanently, with little or no rupture of kinship ties, if personal circumstances demanded. The compact, with its free-entry provisions, removed the last immigration barricade. At the same time, the compact signaled the beginning of the reduction of the large U.S. subsidies to which Micronesia had become accustomed since the 1960s. So it was that island peoples who had never in recent memory experienced a sizable outflow of population, peoples once described as possessing a "homing instinct," initiated their tentative, purposeful migration northward (Hezel and Levin 1989:43).

In this article the authors, using more recent data on migrant communities, propose to furnish an update on the magnitude of this migration and to present a profile of Micronesian migrant communities in Guam and the Northern Marianas. We draw mainly on two sources. The first is a 1992 census of Micronesians residing on Guam, supervised by Donald Rubinstein, an anthropologist at the University of Guam who has studied the new migration from the beginning. The second source is a 1993 survey of FSM citizens residing in the CNMI. To the best of our knowledge, this article is the first attempt to analyze the data collected on the Northern Marianas. We are using that data here to shed light on the significant differences between the migrants on Guam and those in the CNMI. Since the data on which this article is based are two or three years old at the time this is written, we will

be offering a description of a social phenomenon that has probably already undergone further transformation. Nonetheless, we can hope that this essay, building on the analysis of Rubinstein and others, will show trends in the new migration and patterns in the social development of Micronesian households in Guam and the CNMI. On the basis of the survey data for Guam and the CNMI, this article will provide a comparative view of the characteristics of the FSM migrant populations and their economic well-being in these two destinations. Moreover, this article offers, for the first time, a comparison between the educational attainments of migrants and those of the population still resident in the FSM in order to establish whether the vaunted "brain drain" is reality or myth. Finally, drawing on data from the 1994 FSM census, the article also quantifies the economic impact of this migration on the FSM in the form of remittances.

Sources of Migration Data

As Table 1 shows, 4,954 FSM citizens were residing on Guam in 1992 and 2,261 were living in the Northern Marianas in 1993.

We have been able to plot the growth of the migrant community on Guam during its nascent years since we have four sets of data, derived from surveys conducted there between September 1988 and September 1992. The first was based on a partial household survey done in the fall of 1988. Estimates of the size of the migrant populations for each state were extrapo-

TABLE 1. FSM Citizens Residing in Guam and the CNMI by State of Origin and Year

Year	Total FSM	Chuuk	Pohnpei	Yap	Kosrae
			Guam		
1988 (Sept.)	1,700	1,100	300	150	150
1990 (April)	2,944	1,843	662	303	136
1990 (Sept.)	2,973	2,143	377[a]	318	135
1992 (Sept.)	4,954	3,587	866	309	192
			CNMI		
1990	1,754	1,063	522	152	17
1993	2,261	1,119	717	376	49

Sources: Hezel and McGrath 1989; U.S. Department of Commerce 1992; Unpublished survey of FSM migrants on Guam, September 1990; University of Guam 1992; CNMI 1994.

[a] The Pohnpei figure is an undercount, by admission of those who conducted the survey, due to the failure to contact many of the widely dispersed Pohnpeian households.

lated from the sample on the basis of the ratio of the known number of college students to the total number of migrants. These estimates were checked against the emigration rate from sample FSM municipalities, as calculated by a gate count, and found to concur nicely (Hezel and McGrath 1989:49-51). The second set of figures, which recorded all residents of Guam who had been born in the FSM, was drawn from the decennial U.S. census conducted on Guam in April 1990 (Rubinstein and Levin 1992). The third set of data is derived from a household survey conducted by Father Kenneth Hezel, the head of the Catholic Micronesian Ministry program, about September 1990. The survey, which was never published, includes infants born on Guam as well as those born abroad. The fourth set of figures comes from the census of migrants to Guam from the FSM and the Marshall Islands that was probably the most thorough to date. This census, using mid-1992 as the reference date, was conducted by a paid and trained staff of Micronesian interviewers under the supervision of Don Rubinstein (University of Guam 1992).

It should be noted that, in view of the methodological unevenness of the surveys, the internal consistency of the resulting figures is remarkable and should inspire greater confidence in these data than methodological considerations alone might warrant.

For the Northern Marianas the two data points are 1990 and 1993 (CNMI 1994). The 1990 data are taken from the U.S. decennial census, while those for 1993 come from a household survey done by the CNMI Central Statistics Division. Although the figures show an increase in the migrant population, the paucity of data points makes it difficult to extrapolate with any statistical confidence the FSM population living in the Northern Marianas today.

Increase in Migration

The FSM population on Guam has grown rapidly, but not as alarmingly so as some seem to think. Early, wildly exaggerated estimates in the Guam press were shown by Rubinstein to be groundless, but his own 1991 figure of "5,500 Micronesian migrants in Guam" with an "increase by roughly one thousand per year" (Rubinstein 1991:2), while an honest guess, is still inflated. Rubinstein's figures would yield an FSM-born population of over 8,000 by the end of 1994, a figure that is widely quoted by Guam government authorities in addressing the issue of postcompact immigration (for example, Territory of Guam 1995).

The FSM population on Guam, already about 1,700 two years after the Compact of Free Association was implemented, numbered 4,954 by 1992 and was estimated at about 6,330 in 1994 (see Tables 1 and 2). In the North-

TABLE 2. Estimated FSM-born Population in Guam and the CNMI by State of Origin, 1994

	Total FSM	Chuuk	Pohnpei	Yap	Kosrae
Total	8,750	5,900	1,800	750	300
Guam	6,330	4,770	1,000	320	240
CNMI	2,420	1,130	800	430	60

Source: Authors' projections.

em Marianas the FSM-born population increased by 29 percent, from 1,754 to 2,261, between 1990 and 1993 and was estimated at 2,420 in 1994. Growth of the migrant community there has been much slower than on Guam. Table 2 shows the projected size of the migrant population from each state in Guam and the CNMI in 1994.

The growth of FSM migration to Guam by state of origin between 1988 and 1992 is graphed in Figure 1. Migrants from Chuuk State, who have out-numbered those from the other three states combined, constituted 72 per-cent of the total FSM population on Guam in the fall of 1992. As the graph
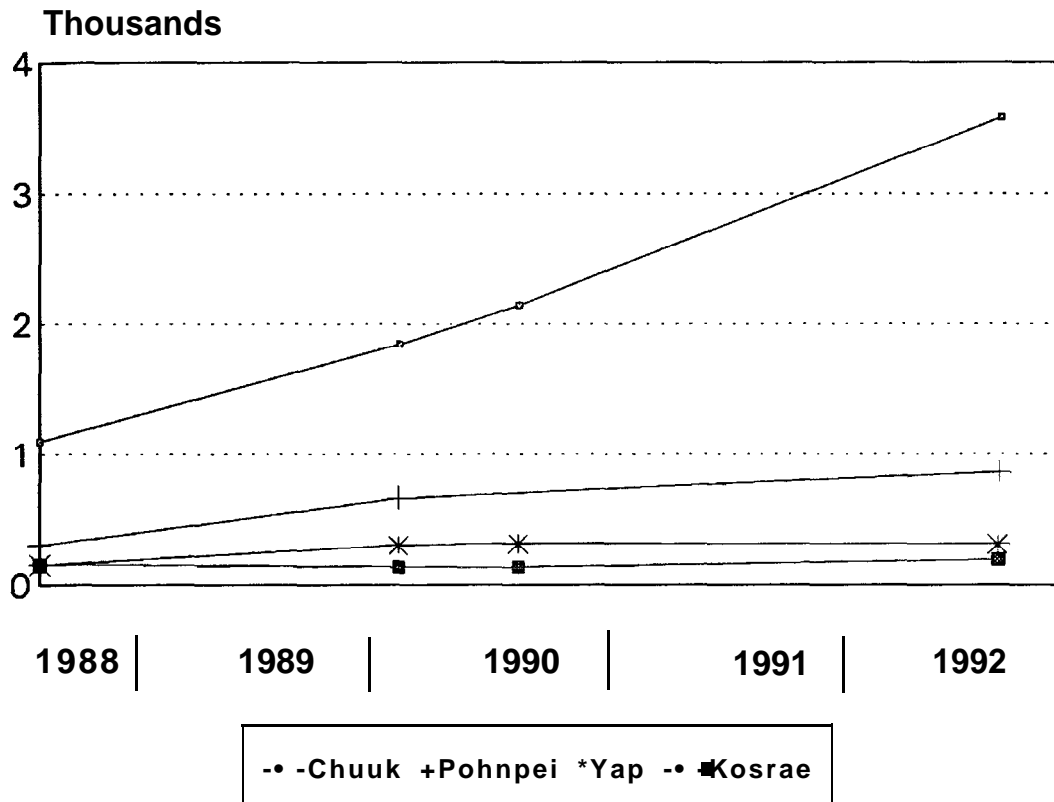
FIGURE 1. Emigration from the Federated States of Micronesia to Guam by state of origin, 1988-1992.

indicates, the flow of Chuukese migrants to Guam has been linear, with the Chuukese population there growing by almost 600 a year.

The Pohnpeian community's growth, unlike that of the Chuukese, has not been steady and progressive. Table 3 shows that, while Pohnpeians have continued migrating to Guam year by year, the number moving there each year did not increase between 1990 and 1992. There were roughly 180 Pohnpeians a year who first entered Guam during this period. Although Table 3 indicates 563 Pohnpeians first arriving on Guam during those three years, the Pohnpeian migrant community showed a net increase of only 204 persons during this period (Table 1). The difference may be attributable to back-migration, that is, the return of earlier Pohnpei migrants to their home island. The data are not robust enough to determine a reliable growth rate, but it appears that the upward trend of migration from Pohnpei has slowed compared to that of the first six years following the compact. We can make only a crude estimate that in 1994 the Pohnpeian population on Guam must have been a little more than 1,000.

The size of the Yapese migrant population on Guam has hovered at a little more than 300 between 1990 and 1992 (see Table 1). The number of Yapese arrivals in more recent years has remained steady at 50-60 a year (Table 3), with many of the new migrants presumably offset by those returning to their home islands. The Yapese community on Guam has shown no signs of expansion in the 1990s.

The Kosraean population on Guam is growing slowly, as the survey data in Table 1 reveal and the arrival data in Table 3 confirm. Since 1986 the number of arrivals from Kosrae has been increasing each year. The data do not furnish a basis for reliable prediction of future growth, however.

TABLE 3. **Year of First Arrival on Guam for FSM-born Migrants by State of Origin, 1992**

Year	Total FSM	Chuuk	Pohnpei	Yap	Kosrae
Total	4,953	3,586	866	309	192
1992 or later	1,191	894	184	63	50
1991	1,036	743	208	50	35
1990	920	658	171	61	30
1989	611	438	120	31	22
1988	425	308	87	20	10
1987	276	222	34	14	6
1986	155	119	16	17	3
1985 & before	273	172	40	26	35
NA	66	32	6	27	1

Source: University of Guam 1992: table 19.

TABLE 4. **Year of First Arrival in the CNMI for FSM-born Migrants by State of Origin, 1993**

Year	Total FSM	Chuuk	Pohnpei	Yap	Kosrae
Total	2,261	1,119	717	376	49
1992 or later	281	142	75	51	13
1991	226	117	81	24	4
1990	268	143	88	31	6
1989	235	133	69	31	2
1988	182	112	61	4	5
1987	178	109	51	16	2
1986	119	54	47	18	0
1985 & before	439	193	144	92	10
NA	333	116	101	109	7

Source: CNMI 1994: table 19.

The data for the CNMI are inadequate for the purpose of extracting migration rates, but some important inferences can be made. An average of 134 Chuukese a year arrived during the period 1990-1992 even though the Chuukese population in the CNMI had a net growth of only 56 people during that whole period (Table 4; see Table 1). This substantial back-migration among Chuukese may largely be the return of women who once held jobs in the garment factories on Saipan. By contrast, the other states had little back-migration; the more recent arrivals from Pohnpei, Yap, and Kosrae, when added to the 1990 figures, roughly account for the increase in the migrant population between 1990 and 1993. Hence, we can assume that Chuukese migrants tend to drift in and out, much like Chuukese residing on Guam, while those from the other states move to the CNMI to stay.

Migration Rates

Table 5 shows the resident population of each FSM state, as recorded in the 1994 census, alongside the total estimated size of its migrant population in Guam and the CNMI combined. The table also shows the percentage of the total population that has emigrated to the northern islands since the compact took effect and the approximate annual migration rate.

A full 10 percent of the entire Chuuk-born population was living in Guam and the Northern Marianas in 1994, and there is every reason to believe that the 1.2 percent annual emigration rate will continue in the years to come. The preliminary 1994 FSM census figures show no evidence of a decline in Chuuk's fertility rate, and the state's economy is unlikely to take an upswing. The annual growth rate of the resident population in Chuuk for

TABLE 5. **FSM Resident Population and Migrant Population (in Guam and the CNMI) in 1994, with Migrants as Percentage of Total FSM-born Population and Yearly Migration Rate**

State	Resident Population	Migrants (est.)	Total	Migrants (%)	Rate/Yr. (%)
FSM Total	105,146	8,750	113,896	7.7	1.0
Chuuk	53,292	5,900	59,192	10.0	1.2
Pohnpei	33,372	1,800	35,172	5.1	0.6
Yap	11,128	750	11,878	6.3	0.8
Kosrae	7,354	300	7,654	3.9	0.5

Sources: FSM 1995; Table 2.

the intercensal period 1989-1994 was 2.3 percent despite the fact that its migration rate of 1.2 percent was the highest in the Federated States.

The annual net out-migration rates from the other states were lower, ranging from 0.5 percent for Kosrae and 0.6 percent for Pohnpei to 0.8 percent for Yap. These figures reflect the lower annual growth rates of the population in these states, and perhaps the slightly better economic conditions there as well.

An-estimated 8,750 FSM citizens resided in Guam and the CNMI in 1994 (see Table 2), representing 7.7 percent of the entire FSM-born population. The emigration rate for the FSM between 1986 and 1994 was about 1 percent a year.

Composition of Migrant Populations

The earliest FSM migrants to Guam were predominantly young males in search of jobs. Many of the original households were inherently unstable, composed as they were of several young men in their twenties or thirties working at low-paying jobs and pooling their income to cover rent and other expenses (Hezel and McGrath 1989:58-60). In the absence of a viable authority structure and generational depth, such "peer-group households," as Rubinstein terms them, were continually "dissolving and reforming, with new arrivals coming in, others moving out" (Rubinstein 1993:260). Rubinstein went on to note the gradual evolution of this fragile type of household into more typically Micronesian forms. In the second stage of the pattern Rubinstein identified on Guam, two-generation households emerged around a nuclear family, but they contained a potpourri of loosely related kin and friends. In the final stages, the household members were selected according to the kinship principles normative back home, and grandparents or other

older people were added, giving the household important generational depth (Rubinstein 1993:260-261).

Guam has had a broad range of migrant household types, extending from "peer-group households" to the much more stable types that mirror social organization in the migrants' home islands. Data on gender and age distribution of migrants in Guam and the CNMI offer strong hints about how far households in each place have advanced on Rubinstein's spectrum.

The overall ratio of males to females among FSM migrants on Guam is 132:100 (Table 6). Thus, in 1992 there were about four FSM males for every three females. Surprisingly, the preponderance of males on Guam had increased since 1990, when the ratio was 121 males per 100 females (Rubinstein and Levin 1992:354). Males outnumbered females on Guam among the migrants from every state but was greatest for Yapese and Kosraeans, an imbalance approaching a ratio of two males for each female. For Chuukese and Pohnpeians, the ratio was highest for those from the outer islands of both places and from Faichuk.

In the CNMI, on the other hand, the overall ratio was reversed and women outnumbered men. Only among Kosraeans and Yapese were males more numerous, and even among them the ratio was much lower than on Guam. Although the higher percentage of women in the Northern Marianas might be attributed in part to employment that the garment industry offers women, it could also indicate the relatively high degree of normality found in composition of the migrant households there. The data on age distribu-

TABLE **6. Males per 100 Females in Guam and the CNMI by Birthplace, 1992/1993**

Birthplace	Total	Guam	CNMI
FSM Total	116	132	88
Chuuk	115	129	77
N. Namoneas	97	112	75
S. Namoneas	106	118	70
Faichuk	150	155	100
Mortlocks	109	126	79
Oksoritod	123	146	57
Pohnpei	103	115	90
Pohnpei Island	102	115	86
Outer Islands	110	135	101
Yap	152	209	119
Yap	188	188	NA
Outer Islands	296	296	NA
Kosrae	156	167	123

Sources: University of Guam 1992; CNMI 1994.

tion in the Marianas, as we shall see, support the latter interpretation. Our assumption, of course, is that equal numbers by sex and a broader age spread reflect a normal demographic pattern and suggest that migrant households are beginning to resemble households back home.

Age distribution is a further index of the stability of migrant households, since the presence of children and older persons to fill out the normal family unit usually indicates readiness to settle into their new homeland for a long duration. By this index, migrants in the CNMI show a much greater degree of stability than those on Guam. As indicated in Table 7, in 1993 the percentage of children (that is, persons under the age of 15) in the CNMI, at 30 percent of the total migrant population, is significantly higher than on Guam in 1992 (20 percent), although much lower than the 43 percent recorded for the FSM in the 1994 census (FSM 1995). A look at the other end of the population tells much the same story, for elderly migrants (age 60 and older) represent about 8 percent of the CNMI population, as compared to less than 2 percent on Guam. This age group comprises about 5 percent of the total population of the FSM (FSM 1995).

To gauge the extent to which migrant communities in Guam and the CNMI have been normalized, we can look at the changes in the age distribution in both places between 1990 and 1992/1993. On Guam no appreciable reduction occurred in the relative size of the 15-29 age cohort, the largest among migrant communities inasmuch as it comprised the students and many of the workers. This age cohort, which represented 51 percent of all

TABLE 7. **FSM Migrants in Guam and the CNMI by Age, 1990 and 1992/1993**

Age Group	1990		1992/1993	
	Guam	CNMI	Guam	CNMI
Total number	2,963	1,817	4,932	2,212
Percentage	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 15 years	21.8	19.8	19.5	30.3
15 to 29 years	50.7	44.5	49.7	34.4
30 to 44 years	20.5	21.8	23.4	22.6
45 to 59 years	5.2	8.8	5.7	4.9
60+ years	1.8	5.1	1.8	7.8
Dependency ratio	31.0	33.0	27.0	61.6

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce 1992: table 46; University of Guam 1992; CNMI 1994.

Note: Percentages in this and following tables may not sum to 100.0 percent owing to rounding.

migrants on Guam in 1990, still contained 50 percent in 1992. During the same two years, the size of the elderly population on Guam remained the same, while the percentage of children on Guam fell slightly--from 22 to 20 percent (see Table 7).

In the CNMI, on the other hand, the size of the 15-29 age cohort dropped from 45 percent to 34 percent over the three-year period 1990-1993. During the same period, the percentage of children rose sharply from 20 to 30 percent, and the over-60 age bracket showed a slight increase, from 5 to 8 percent (see Table 7).

Probably the most striking measure of the contrast between migrants to Guam and the CNMI is in the dependency ratio, that is, the number of dependents (children and elderly) per 100 workers. While Guam's dependency ratio dropped slightly during this period, from 31 dependents for every 100 workers to 27, the ratio in the CNMI nearly doubled. It rose from 33 to nearly 62 in three years, indicating a substantial increase in the number of nonworking members of FSM households (see Table 7).

The data in these tables convincingly show that the FSM migrant community in the CNMI was being rapidly transformed during these years, while the FSM community on Guam showed little evidence of parallel changes. It would appear that migrant households in the CNMI are much further along the road of normalization and stabilization than are Guam's

Housing

FSM citizens living on Guam in 1992 were distributed in 599 housing units, with an average of 8.3 persons in each (see Table 8). The average migrant housing unit in the CNMI held only 5.1 persons. Housing units in general in the CNMI tend to be physically larger than those on Guam, in part because many more of the CNMI migrants lived in single-family houses while Guam migrants lived in apartments. Migrant housing on Guam was considerably more crowded than housing in the CNMI, owing in great measure to the much higher rental rates on Guam. A single room on Guam had an average of 2.4 occupants, 50 percent higher than the 1.7 figure for the CNMI.

Although crowded, the housing on Guam was superior to that in the CNMI. More of the units were built of concrete and had cement rather than metal roofs. Additionally, Guam migrants also enjoyed other amenities (Table 9). Many more had hot water than did migrants in the CNMI, almost one-third of whom did not have even running water in their houses. Nearly two out of five of the CNMI migrants had to do without a flush toilet or a shower in their houses, conveniences that only a very small percentage of the Guam residents lacked. The contrast between Guam and CNMI mi-

TABLE **8.** **Housing Conditions of FSM Migrant Households in Guam and the CNMI, 1992/1993**

	Number		Percentage	
	Guam	CNMI	Guam	CNMI
Units in building				
Total buildings	599	440	100.0	100.0
1	324	380	54.0	86.4
2	103	26	17.1	5.9
3 or 4	70	19	11.6	4.3
5 to 9	41	7	6.8	1.6
10 or more	61	8	10.1	1.8
Persons per unit				
Total buildings	599	440	100.0	100.0
1	10	42	1.6	9.5
2-4	137	162	22.8	36.8
5-7	184	136	30.7	30.9
8-10	123	71	20.5	16.2
11-14	77	24	12.9	5.5
15 or more	68	5	11.4	1.2
Persons per room				
Total buildings	599	440	100.0	100.0
Less than 0.5	6	22	1.0	5.0
0.5 to 0.9	34	58	5.7	13.2
1 to 1.9	170	203	28.4	46.2
2 to 2.9	198	86	33.1	19.6
3 to 3.9	97	35	16.2	8.0
4 to 4.9	55	17	9.2	4.0
5 or more	39	19	6.5	4.3
Material in construction of building				
Total buildings	599	440	100.0	100.0
Concrete	405	202	67.6	46.0
Metal	50	131	8.4	29.8
Wood	142	106	23.7	24.0
Thatch	2	1	0.3	0.2

Sources: University of Guam 1992: table 2; CNMI 1994: table 2.

grants extended to other amenities like sewage disposal and to appliances like electric stoves, refrigerators, and television sets.

In short, Guam offered its migrants well-built but rather cramped housing with less living space per person than those in the CNMI enjoyed. Even recreational spaces and cooking areas were indoors, in marked contrast to Micronesian custom on their home islands (Levin and Mailos 1992:5-7). On the other hand; the housing on Guam was equipped with all of the conve-

TABLE 9. Conveniences in FSM Migrant Households in Guam and the CNMI, 1992/1993

	Number		Percentage	
	Guam	CNMI	Guam	CNMI
Running water				
Total	599	440	100.0	100.0
Hot & cold	348	60	58.1	13.6
Cold	241	247	40.2	56.2
None	10	133	1.7	30.2
Flush toilet				
Total	599	440	100.0	100.0
None	37	184	6.2	41.8
1 or more	562	256	93.8	58.2
Electricity				
Total	599	440	100.0	100.0
None	39	84	6.5	19.1
With electricity	560	356	93.5	80.9
Cooking facilities				
Total	599	440	100.0	100.0
Electric stove	481	215	80.3	48.9
Gas stove	67	94	11.2	21.4
Other. or none	51	131	8.5	29.8

Sources: See Table 8.

niences that a significant number of the CNMI migrants lacked. In short, the CNMI offered migrants a lifestyle not too dissimilar to the one they had become habituated to back home. Whatever the housing facilities there may lack, the environment seems to be a more comfortable one for the larger families that are gradually being assembled there.

Language Use

Guam and CNMI residents born in the FSM spoke English at home much less frequently than did the general population (Table 10). Only 6 percent of FSM citizens on Guam used English as their only language, compared with 37 percent of the total Guam population. In the CNMI the difference between FSM migrants and the general population was not nearly as great, since a very small fraction (5 percent) of the local people use English as their only language, preferring instead the still widely used Chamorro and Carolinian languages and the newer Filipino languages.

It is not very remarkable that migrants as recent as those from the FSM should favor speaking their own language within their households or com-

TABLE 10. Frequency of English Use of FSM-born and General Populations in Guam and the CNMI, 1990 and 1992/1993

| | 1990 | | | | 1992 Guam | 1993 CNMI |
| | Guam | | CNMI | | | |
	Total	FSM-born	Total	FSM-born	FSM-born	FSM-born
			Number			
Total (age 5+)	118,055	2,791	39,206	1,754	4,739	1,941
Speak English only	44,048	180	1,878	38	139	294
Speak other language	74,007	2,611	37,328	1,716	4,291	1,512
Not stated					309	135
			Percentage			
Speak English only	37.3	6.4	4.8	2.2	2.9	15.1
Speak other language						
More than English	35.6	71.5	65.4	75.6	86.9	60.2
Both equally often	36.2	19.4	17.4	16.1	9.8	32.5
Less than English	26.6	7.2	7.2	6.6	3.3	6.3
Don't speak English	1.6	1.9	9.9	1.6	NA	NA

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce 1992: table 50; University of Guam 1992; CNMI 1994: table 12.

munities. More noteworthy is how slowly the migrants on Guam are entering the mainstream, as measured by language use, in contrast to those in the CNMI. Between 1990 and 1992, the percentage of FSM migrants on Guam recorded as speaking their own language more than English jumped from 72 to 87 percent, while the corresponding percentages for FSM citizens in the CNMI dropped from 76 to 60. Accordingly, the percentage of migrants to the CNMI who spoke English as much as their own language rose from 16 to 33 percent, with the figures for Guam falling from 19 to 10 percent. This finding is a surprising reversal of what we might have expected, for the FSM migrant population on Guam is still heavily young and male--and presumably relatively well educated. The FSM community in the CNMI, by contrast, shows a broader range of age and aptitude than that formed by the educated young men or women who first set out for employment.

Education

The data in Table 11 reveal that the average education of the migrant from the FSM was substantially poorer than that of the general populations in the

TABLE 11. Educational Attainment of FSM Migrants and Total Populations in Guam and the CNMI, 1990 (cumulative percentages)

Level Completed	Guam & CNMI		Guam		CNMI	
	Total	FSM-born	Total	FSM-born	Total	FSM-born
Total (age 25+)	91,333	2,268	66,700	1,347	24,633	921
Finished elementary	87.7	84.1	88.4	88.3	85.8	78.0
High school graduate	71.4	56.3	73.3	62.4	66.3	47.4
College, no degree	37.6	26.3	39.9	31.9	31.1	18.1
Associate's degree	19.5	7.9	20.0	8.1	18.1	7.7
Bachelor's degree	17.0	5.1	17.5	5.3	15.6	4.8
Graduate/professional degree	3.8	0.7	4.3	0.6	2.5	0.8

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce 1992: table 51; CNMI 1994.

CNMI and Guam in 1990. While 73 percent of the Guam population over the age of 24 had a high school diploma, only 62 percent of the FSM citizens on Guam did. The gap was slightly greater in the CNMI, where 66 percent of the general population had finished high school, compared with only 47 percent of FSM citizens. The difference in the college-educated was even greater: the percentage of the FSM-born with college degrees was only about one-third that of the general population in both places. This relatively low level of educational attainment explains why FSM migrants have usually held entry-level jobs (for example, security guards, chambermaids, seamstresses, waiters, and cooks), even after several years abroad.

The comparison in Table 12 between the educational levels of migrants

TABLE 12. Educational Attainment of FSM Migrants and FSM Residents (cumulative numbers and percentages)

Level Completed	FSM Residents (1994)		FSM Migrants in CNMI (1993)		FSM Migrants in Guam (1992)	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total (ages 2544)	22,655	100	1,406	100	2,032	100
High school degree	8,955	39.5	827	58.8	1,077	53.0
Some college	4,981	22.0	268	19.1	544	26.8
Associate's degree or equivalent	2,633	11.6	45	3.2	74	3.6
Bachelor's degree or equivalent	951	4.2	35	2.5	33	1.6

Sources: FSM 1995; University of Guam 1992; CNMI 1994.

and the resident FSM population is more illuminating. Since the older age cohorts, underrepresented in the migrant communities, have had fewer opportunities for schooling inasmuch as many were raised during the time of Japanese colonization, we selected only a mid-range age group (ages 25-44) in an effort to make a more-valid comparison. For this age group, migrant communities in the CNMI and Guam had a significantly greater percentage of those who had obtained their high school diplomas. Fully 53 percent of all FSM citizens on Guam and nearly 59 percent in the CNMI had finished high school, compared with less than 40 percent of the FSM resident population in 1994. As we progress up the educational ladder, however, the figures lean in the other direction. The percentage of those who had some college but did not finish their degree was roughly the same in all three populations, while the rate of college degree holders in the FSM was much higher than in either of the migrant communities abroad. Nearly 12 percent of all FSM residents ages 25-44 had either associate's or bachelor's degrees, whereas only 4 percent of FSM migrants on Guam and about 3 percent of those in the CNMI had such degrees.

These data reveal that the outflow of migrants to Guam and the CNMI cannot be called a "brain drain" in the usual sense of that term. They also confirm the authors' suspicion that those Micronesians with the best degrees, and thus the brightest prospects for employment, will remain in the FSM and take the best jobs (Hezel and McGrath 1989:62). Those who, have left home characteristically have been those with a high school diploma, or perhaps a year or two of college, who would be entering the labor pool in the FSM without the kind of credentials that would have given them a competitive edge in the battle for employment there.

Employment

Figures from 1990 indicate that Micronesian participation in the labor force on Guam was comparable to that of the general population on the island (Table 13). Close to 70 percent of all FSM-born migrants were either working or seeking employment at the time, whatever their original reason may have been for moving to Guam. In the CNMI there was an appreciable difference in participation in the labor force: 64 percent of FSM migrants versus 82 percent of the general population. The Micronesian participation in the labor force in the CNMI was lower than for Guam because of the higher ratio of dependents in the CNMI, as we have already seen, while the very high rate of participation 'of the general population there can be explained by the great number of foreign-born workers in the commonwealth.

Unemployment was higher among FSM migrants who entered the labor

TABLE 13. Labor Force Status of FSM-born and General Populations in Guam and the CNMI, 1990

	Guam		CNMI	
	Total	FSM-born	Total	FSM-born
Persons (age 16+)	90,990	2,280	32,522	1,425
In labor-force	66,138	1,579	26,589	905
Percentage	72.7	69.3	81.8	63.5
Armed forces	11,952	11	8	0
Civilian labor force	54,186	1,568	26,581	905
Employed	52,144	1,410	25,965	830
Percentage	96.2	89.9	97.7	91.7
Unemployed	2,042	158	616	75
Percentage	3.8	10.1	2.3	8.3
Not in labor force	24,852	701	5,933	520

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce 1992: table 53; CNMI 1994.

force than among the general Guam and CNMI populations. Eight to 10 percent of FSM-born seeking employment were unemployed, compared to under 4 percent of the Guam labor force and 2 percent of the CNMI labor force (see Table 13). Inasmuch as Micronesians were new arrivals and many were still looking for work or were between jobs, the higher unemployment rate is not surprising.

The common perception in the past year or two is that fewer FSM migrants now come to Guam to work; many simply wish to educate their children in Guam's schools or take advantage of the munificent welfare benefits that the island offers. The data in Table 14 would seem to offer some support for this perception, although we should recall that the early 1990s was a slack economic period for Guam because of the Japanese recession, several serious typhoons, and a downturn in tourism. The percentage of adult Micronesians on Guam who were employed decreased from 62 percent to 56 percent between 1990 and 1992. It is unlikely that this drop can

TABLE 14. FSM Migrants Employed in Guam and the CNMI, 1990 and 1992/1993

	1990		1992/1993	
	Guam	CNMI	Guam	CNMI
Persons (age 16+)	2,280	1,425	3,904	1,479
Employed	1,410	830	2,185	826
Percentage	61.8	58.2	56.0	55.8

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce 1992; University of Guam 1992; CNMI 1994.

be ascribed mainly to Guam's economic troubles, though, since total island employment rose by 24 percent during this same two-year period (Territory of Guam 1993).

The decrease of employed adult FSM migrants in the CNMI during roughly the same period was much smaller, down from 58 to 56 percent. We can expect this downward trend in employment to continue as migrants reconstitute their households and bring in an increasingly large number of housewives and older people who will not enter the labor force.

Income

The 2,185 FSM-born persons working on Guam in 1992 were earning an average of $6.43 an hour (Table 15), a figure that was $2.18 above the minimum wage at the time but significantly lower than the $8.61 average hourly wage of Guam private-sector employees and the $16.91 average of those employed by the government (Territory of Guam 1993). Although the salaries of migrants were low, their cumulative earnings were significant and could have considerable impact on the FSM economy. If we assume that all were working full-time (that is, 2,000 hours a year), the total annual wages earned by FSM migrants would have come to about $28 million.

There were 825 FSM citizens working in the CNMI in 1993 for an average hourly wage of $6.30 (Table 16). If they averaged about 2,000 work

TABLE 15. **Hourly Income of Employed FSM Migrants on Guam by State of Origin, 1992**

	Total FSM	Chuuk	Pohnpei	Yap	Kosrae
Persons (age 16+)	2,185	1,534	348	184	119
Less than $2.00	10	6	4	0	0
$2.00-2.99	4	2	0	2	0
$3.00-3.99	5	3	1	1	0
$4.00-4.99	656	529	75	37	15
$5.00-5.99	753	542	103	57	51
$6.00-6.99	352	243	60	23	26
$7.00-7.99	200	129	40	20	11
$8.00 to $9.99	113	50	45	9	9
$10.00 to $20.00	53	14	19	15	5
$20.00 or more	13	10	1	0	2
NA	26	6	0	20	0
Median (dollars)	5.73	5.41	5.91	5.74	5.87
Mean (dollars)	6.43	6.03	6.35	6.29	7.03

Source: University of Guam 1992: table 30.

TABLE 16. Hourly Income of Employed FSM Migrants in the CNMI by State of Origin, 1993

	Total FSM	Chuuk	Pohnpei	Yap	Kosrae
Persons (age 16+)	825	415	277	108	25
Less than $2.00	5	2	1	2	0
$2.00-2.99	352	229	93	29	1
$3.00-3.99	132	59	54	16	3
$4.00-4.99	60	19	23	14	4
$5.00-5.99	42	16	14	11	1
$6.00-6.99	30	11	13	3	3
$7.00-7.99	47	19	19	7	2
$8.00 to $9.99	49	13	22	11	3
$10.00 to $20.00	49	10	26	9	4
$20.00 or more	15	5	5	2	3
NA	44	32	7	4	1
Median (dollars)	4.44	2.83	3.68	4.25	7.00
Mean (dollars)	6.30	3.89	6.12	6.26	8.71

Source: CNMI 1994: table 30.

hours during the year, their annual earnings would total more than $10 million.

Five or six dollars an hour can seem like a regal salary to an islander who has just arrived from a place where the minimum wage may be little more than a dollar an hour. In fact, the high salaries to be made on Guam and in the Northern Marianas are one of the main attractions of these places. Nonetheless, the average Micronesian salary is small by Guam or Saipan standards, and most migrants find themselves hard-pressed to stretch their take-home pay enough to provide all the necessities, especially in view of the high cost of housing, the need to buy all their food, and the outlay they are required to make for suitable clothes in the workplace. Indeed, the 1990 U.S. census revealed that about 59 percent of the FSM migrants in the CNMI and 51 percent of those on Guam were classified as living at or below the U.S. poverty level (Table 17). We may safely assume that these figures did not change much in the past two or three years.

Remittances

With the new jobs in Guam and the CNMI has come a substantial amount of additional income for FSM citizens. We need only recall that in 1992 FSM-born migrants earned an estimated $28 million on Guam and in 1993 another $10 million in the CNMI. The remittances that economic planners have been anticipating since the beginning of the outflow have been slow in

TABLE 17. **Ratio of Income to Poverty Level for FSM-born and General Populations in Guam and the CNMI, 1990 (cumulative numbers and percentages)**

	Number				Percentage			
	Guam		CNMI		Guam		CNMI	
Income	Total	FSM-born	Total	FSM-born	Total	FSM-born	Total	FSM-born
Persons	126,460	2,933	43,025	1,797	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Below 50% of poverty level	8,022	862	11,449	541	6.3	29.4	26.6	30.1
Poverty level	18,957	1,497	22,084	1,056	15.0	51.0	51.3	58.8
Below 125% of poverty level	27,323	1,859	26,109	1,236	21.6	63.4	60.7	68.8
Below 185% of poverty level	47,916	2,312	31,878	1,481	37.9	78.8	74.1	82.4

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce 1992: table 52; CNMI 1994.

coming, though, because of the migrants' set-up needs in Guam and the CNMI. Hitherto, the major benefits those at home received from their relatives abroad were the cases of frozen chicken and boxes of secondhand clothing that were being shipped back regularly

Finally, after several years of population outflow, we have begun to see the first clear sign of monetary remittances. The 1994 FSM census has provided us with our first measure of the magnitude of remittances to Micronesia. In the FSM as a whole, 3,290 households, or 14.7 percent of all households in the nation, reported receiving remittances (Table 18). Remittances reported everywhere in the FSM totaled $1.26 million, constituting nearly 15 percent of the total income of the households reporting them, according to the 1994 FSM census. Remittances appear to have become a significant source of income for families remaining in the FSM.

TABLE 18. **Total Remittances from Abroad Received in FSM, 1994**

	Total FSM	Chuuk	Pohnpei	Yap	Kosrae
Total households	22,423	9,904	7,779	2,632	2,108
Households reporting remittances	3,290	2,831	260		
Total amount	$1,260,000	$952,750	$196,200	$41,725	$69,325
Average amount per household reporting remittances	$383	$336	$755	$614	$529

Source: FSM 1995.

In Chuuk, a populous state with a depressed economy, few jobs, and a plethora of its people abroad, remittances have had a particularly great impact. About 29 percent of households, or twice that of the FSM as a whole, reported receiving remittances (see Table 18). The total dollar figure put on the remittances Chuukese received in 1994 was about $950,000, more than three-quarters of the total reported remittances for the FSM.

Conclusions

The migration rate from the FSM, which has been rather steady since 1986, shows no signs of falling off in the immediate future. The outflow from Pohnpei and Kosrae slowed down between 1990 and 1992, and the Yapese stream was diverted to the Northern Marianas, but emigration from Chuuk, which supplies about two-thirds of the migrant pool, has continued unabated. In view of the high total fertility rate recorded for Chuuk in the recent FSM census (more than six children per woman), we can expect Chuukese emigration either to maintain its present level or to increase, unless the governments of Guam and the CNMI intervene.

Over the first six years of the compact period (1986-1992), the average annual migrant outflow was about 1,000 persons, or 1 percent of the FSM resident population per year. In all likelihood, this rate will not be reduced significantly in the near future. By the year 2000, at the present rate, there will be 10,000 FSM people on Guam, including more than 8,000 Chuukese.

We know from census items that the traffic to Guam and the CNMI is not one-way; considerable back-migration occurs, that is, return of former emigrants to their original home. Indeed, much of the appeal of Guam and the CNMI, in contrast to Hawai‘i or the mainland United States, is the ease and inexpensiveness of a return trip to one's home island. The extent of back-migration has yet to be adequately measured, however.

The data for 1992-1993 reviewed in this article reveal some pronounced differences between the FSM migrant communities in Guam and the Northern Marianas. The households in the CNMI were rapidly filling out with dependents--women, children, and the elderly--and were evidently well on the way to full reconstitution as normal Micronesian households. Although no strong evidence exists that this was happening on Guam, the data provide hints of the ways in which the Micronesian community there was being transformed between 1990 and 1992. The drop in employment rate among Guam migrants and the possible increase in the number of those who do not speak English suggest that more migrants are choosing not to enter the labor force. We can expect that in future years the size and pattern

of the FSM-born households will continue to develop along the lines of the model elucidated by Rubinstein.

A comparison of the educational achievement of migrants with the resident FSM population explodes the myth of a "brain drain" from the FSM since the implementation of the compact. Contrary to what we read in the academic and popular press, the FSM is not being deprived of its most valuable human resources through migration. The best educated of FSM citizens, those with college degrees, generally stayed home to take their pick of jobs on their own islands. Meanwhile, the unemployed high school graduates without the skills or educational attainment to compete for jobs at home left to take advantage of the job markets in Guam and the CNMI. By and large, they took jobs having little appeal for local people and lack the background to advance beyond these entry-level occupations. Far from being a "brain drain," out-migration is a spillway for excess bodies in the labor pool--that is, those who would be unemployable at home.

The total income earned by migrants in Guam and the CNMI is estimated at more than $38 million a year during the period studied and ought to be well over $40 million by now. This represents a substantial sum of money, given the present feeble condition of the FSM's economy. The remittances that were recorded in 1994 signal for the first time a change in direction of the dollar tide; the money has at last begun to flow inward rather than outward and the remittances of $1.26 million last year should increase in years to come.

The data on the short period between the 1990 census and the surveys in Guam and the CNMI a few years later are less significant for the numbers they record than for the trends they reveal. Not only are the extent and rate of the FSM population outflow more precisely defined, but the changing patterns of household composition and other features of life in the migrants' destinations are taking clearer shape. In a word, the survey data offer us a surer base from which to project migration and its attendant consequences on the FSM and the destinations to the north in years to come.

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UNBOUNDED POLITICS IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS: LEADERSHIP AND PARTY ALIGNMENTS

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The Melanesian countries of the Southwest Pacific--Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and the Republic of Vanuatu--have remained committed to an open, competitive democratic political process since achieving independence. Unlike former colonies in Africa that preceded them in decolonization, these states have held regular national elections that have seen the defeat of governments and the turnover of national leaders. In addition, the use of no-confidence motions has added another dynamic element to the political process. However, the Melanesian cultural setting has modified the inherited Westminster model of government. The political process has featured a weak party system, a central role for independent MPs, and shifting coalitions to construct new governments. This Melanesian variant can be termed an "unbounded model" of politics. The Solomon Islands is utilized here as an example of this important Melanesian adaptation.

AN INTENSE DEBATE HAS EMERGED among scholars over the potential for democratic transition among Third World countries. The movement for democracy that began in the Philippines with "people power" has become a second revolution. In Asia, Latin America, and Africa, regime change is under way in the wake of external and popular pressures for reform. The transition to democracy has in some cases been complete, with the introduction of a fully competitive political process, while in other countries only partial success has been achieved. Within the scholarly literature, attention has been directed to the preconditions for democracy, the requisites for a successful transition, the configurations of competing societal interests and forces, and the processes of resolving conflict between pro- and antidemoc-

racy forces.[1] Little attention however, has been given to the pattern of poli-
tics likely to emerge following the introduction of democracy into Third
World settings. As Robert Pinkney has suggested recently:

> If a country can negotiate the hazards of transition to democracy,
> what are the prospects of this democracy surviving? And might it
> even evolve from a crude system which is distinguished from
> authoritarianism mainly by the existence of competitive elections,
> into one in which civil liberties, toleration, citizen participation, sta-
> bility based on respect for democratic values and social justice all
> flourish?. . . Why should we expect the current wave of democrati-
> zations to be any longer lasting? Our task would be easier if we
> could parade a collection of case studies of viable democracies that
> have followed recent transitions, or even studies of recently estab-
> lished democracies that reverted to authoritarianism, but it is still
> early days, and so far we have few cases of anything as dramatic as
> either the evolution of model democracies or democratic collapse.[2]

In this article, the focus is on examining the pattern of democratic politics
that has emerged in the Melanesian countries of the Southwest Pacific.[3]
Papua New Guinea, the Republic of Vanuatu, and the Solomon Islands have
managed to remain committed to a democratic process from the moment of
independence to the present. I suggest that a particular form of politics has
taken hold that exhibits some of the characteristics of Western liberal
democracies but that has unique features stimulated by elements found in
Melanesian culture. In this initial formulation, the Solomon Islands will be
examined, focusing in particular on the 1989 elections and the period up to
the present. Leadership patterns do not follow the neopatrimonial model
found in many Third World countries[4] nor has clientage-based politics
formed fully.[5] From the Solomons case, it is possible to suggest one potential
pattern of accommodation that democratic forms may be forced to take
within the Third World context.

Background

The island states of Melanesia have thrown up a different pattern of post-
independence politics than their African predecessors in decolonization.
Instead of a quick dismantling of colonially bequeathed representative polit-
ical structures, which characterized African politics,[6] the Westminster model
continues to have relevance more than a decade after independence. National
elections have been held at constitutionally prescribed intervals and have

featured vigorous campaigns organized largely around competition among political parties. In the case of the inherited public-service structures, which were highly centralized instruments of colonial rule, the Melanesian experience also presents a contrast to the African pattern. In Africa the new political leaders used the state to buttress central control to the point of cementing their authoritarian patterns of rule, including the neopatrimonial form. In Melanesia central institutions have been targets of decentralization movements, often seen to go hand in hand with decolonization itself.[7] New provincial levels of government have been created to move government closer to the people and to more accurately reflect the diverse and dispersed island character of these new states. The political leadership has not engaged in repressive authoritarian practices.

However, bedeviling the Melanesian political system has been a lack of stability in political alignments following national elections.[8] It is especially at the moment when new governments are formed that the party system has been most problematic. Rarely has one party captured a majority of seats through the electoral process. Hence, government formation has been driven by coalition arrangements that include combinations of multiple parties as well as a range of independents who owe no allegiance to party. These coalitions find it difficult to stand the heat of political battle on the floor of Parliament. Thus, they tend to be highly unstable, continually in flux, and open to persistent challenge through the mechanism of votes of no-confidence, which feature throughout the term of an elected government. This pattern of political uncertainty can be called an "unbounded" political process, in the sense that political parties are not sufficiently strong in binding the loyalty of elected members to ensure that the party controls their legislative behavior. MPs defect from the party if it is to their political advantage or to the advantage of their regional base of support. In political societies divided deeply by ethnonational sympathies and regional identities, unbounded politics thrives with each new political crisis.

This article examines the evolution of the postindependence Solomon Islands to assess the extent to which unbounded politics has become entrenched in political life.[9] The 1989 election results presented a unique opportunity for a decisive break with the past pattern of a highly unstable, fragmented political competition between elected MPs. For the first time, one political party, the People's Alliance Party (PAP), won a majority of seats in the National Parliament. Solomon Islands voters opted for dramatic change, selecting the PAP partly on the basis of its emphasis on economic renewal and constitutional reforms and partly on the basis of its established leadership, including former Prime Minister Solomon Mamaloni. Given the popular mandate for the PAP and the experience of its leadership, Solomon

Islands politics had the potential to move beyond the unbounded politics model. However, barely a year into its term of office, the party's hold on governing ministers had collapsed for all to see. What can account for this unraveling of the PAP's predominance? Let us begin by introducing the unbounded nature of the Solomon Islands' politics.

Unbounded Politics in the Solomon Islands

At the outset, one can identify several key elements of an unbounded politics model. Although political parties are formed around a group of individuals who share common interests and aspirations, the party is essentially an electoral phenomenon.[10] Political parties in the Solomon Islands formulate party platforms and endorse party candidates. The party seeks to arouse within the electorate an identification with party labels and very general party positions with clear prodevelopment messages. Parties are weakly organized with little permanent staff and no strong branch structures. They do not espouse clear ideological positions grounded in a consistent set of political principles. Usually identified with a dominant personality, the party encompasses those political aspirants who have a degree of affinity with the leader.

National elections serve to determine those who will participate in the political competition in Honiara to construct a new government, that is, the elected MPs. At the first session of a newly elected Parliament, MPs vote for a new prime minister. Where no one party captures a majority of seats, nominated candidates stand for election by secret ballot. The candidates are put forward by alliances of MPs crafted in the days between the announcement of the general election results and the first session of Parliament. A successful coalition depends on a calculated allocation of ministerial portfolios to reflect the balance of forces in a just manner. Potential alliance MPs attempt to bargain for prestigious and powerful portfolios to advance their interests and those of their islands and constituencies.

The dominant political actors who can contest for the post of prime minister are those who are able to translate constituency support into a solid political base over a number of elections. The "big men" of politics are not unlike the big-men within localized, clan-based Melanesian society. Their claim to power rests on continuity in the political arena and their ability to garner and maintain strong regional or island support. They act as magnets around which newly elected politicans gravitate in loose alliances to bargain for power. If a leader falters in the competition, new aspirants are likely to seek out alternative leaders who can prove more successful in the parliamentary struggle for government and ministerial positions.

To be in government, particularly in the post of a minister, is highly prestigious and coveted prize. To be in opposition is to be lost in the wilderness. Indeed, to be an opposition MP is a recognition of failure. It is a purely temporary condition for the truly ambitious individual, who will act in his or her best interest by shifting alignments to overcome the isolation from power. Party affiliation, then, can be useful if the leadership is skilled but an impediment if it is not. Mixed in with those MPs who identify with a party are usually a group of independents, who provide the fluidity to the bargaining process for constructing a governing coalition. The independent MPs' allegiance is a crucial resource subject to intense lobbying from the political big-men of Solomon Islands national politics.

Given that independents are part of the governing coalition, the opposition will immediately begin an active campaign to woo MPs away from the government benches, in the early stages focusing on those who have not been able to capture a coveted ministerial assignment. Once the opposition feels that the governing group has developed significant fissures within its ranks, a motion of no-confidence will be moved to test and hopefully overthrow the incumbent power holders. No-confidence motions threaten a government over the course of its electoral mandate. The unbounded politics model, then, assumes a highly fluid and deeply competitive parliamentary system. Allegiances mean nothing beyond the narrowly short term. Given this fluidity, it is difficult to hold party loyalty, to give the political party meaning beyond its role in influencing voter behavior.

Contributing to the unbounded politics model is the political culture of national politics. The Solomon Islands is a ministate with a population of some 340,000 people scattered over a dispersed number of islands. The majority of Solomon Islanders live in rural societies in highly fragmented, small-village settings with strong clan identifications. Politicians who are elected to the National Parliament are those who can successfully build interclan support or divide the ethnic base of their leading competitors by promoting rival candidates. Once elected, the MP travels to Honiara to join with thirty-seven other parliamentarians (expanded to forty-seven seats for the 1993 national elections).[11] As a modern center and the site of the national government with a substantial public service, Honiara, with a population of only 30,000, remains an intensely localized urban setting. MPs are in continual contact with each other both in their official lives and in their social activities. This tends to lead to a hothouse effect in political discourse. Political ambitions and political grievances are constantly in view. The enclosed nature of the political circle and its intensive level of interaction encourage competition, bargaining, and shifting coalitions.

Postindependence Elections: 1980, 1984, 1989

The Solomon Islands gained independence from Great Britain on 7 July 1978. In the first elections after independence, held in August 1980,[12] three political parties competed for power along with many independent candidates.

The United Party (UP), formed in 1979 in the face of impending national elections, was led by Peter Kenilorea, an ardent member of the South Seas Evangelical Church who had his base in Malaita. The UP espoused a moderate platform advocating "Solomonization" of the government and economy and professing a strong commitment to democracy. The UP won sixteen seats in Parliament, including nine of the eleven Malaita seats.

The National Democratic Party (NADEPA) had been formed early in electoral history in 1975 by Bart Ulufa'alu and had won nine seats in the 1976 elections to form the official opposition during the 1976-1980 period. In the 1980 elections the NADEPA advocated a position it termed "indigenism," which represented a more advanced stage of Melanesian communalism. It disparaged both class structures in society and socialist philosophy, indicating a commitment to the free enterprise system. NADEPA had strong links to the trade union movement in the Solomon Islands. In the 1980 election NADEPA suffered a serious decline to only two seats.

The People's Alliance Party (PAP), formed in 1980 on the basis of two forerunners, the Rural Alliance Party and the People's Progress Party, campaigned on the need for rural development and a decentralization of powers to the provinces. It identified itself closely with villagers, criticizing the government for being dominated by a centralizing bureaucracy under the continuing influence of foreigners. The PAP won twelve seats in the elections but lost two members to the UP in bargaining for a coalition government following the elections. Its most prominent members were David Kausimae, a veteran politician who lost in his campaign for a seat, and Solomon Mamaloni, the party's campaign manager, who won decisively in his home island of Makira.

A broad range of independents coalesced to form the Independent Parliamentary Group and distributed a limited-circulation manifesto that mirrored the policies advocated by the United Party. The Independent Group won ten seats in the elections. In the postelection bargaining, Kenilorea's United Party joined with the Independent Group to form a governing coalition with Kenilorea as prime minister. The new government had the support of twenty-six of the thirty-eight MPs. However, the newly formed government rested on shaky ground. Less than a year later, Solomon Mamaloni orchestrated a successful no-confidence motion resulting in a new coalition

government under the leadership of Mamaloni's PAP This coalition ruled until the 1984 national elections.

In the October 1984 elections, Mamaloni's PAP entered the fray positioned as the governing party having to defend its record. Once again the PAP faced its formidable foe, the United Party led by Peter Kenilorea, and the NADEPA, led by Bart Ulufa'alu, which fielded a higher number of candidates than in 1980. The NADEPA presented a simplified and straightforward "Ten Point Improvement Plan" to counter the detailed and broad-based platforms advanced by the PAP and the United Party. The UP not surprisingly, laid heavy emphasis on the need for a government that was elected democratically, not constructed by parliamentary maneuvering. Joining the fray was a new political formation, the Solomen Agu Fenua (SAS), created by young, well-educated, but disenchanted public servants. Of the 251 candidates for the 38 seats, approximately 130 were listed as independents. Voting was postponed in the East Kwaio electorate, because threats were made against returning officers (appointed by the Electoral Commission to supervise voting). In the results, Mamaloni's PAP held twelve seats, the United Party under Kenilorea won thirteen seats, SAS attained four seats, and NADEPA held one seat; the remaining seven seats went to independents. Kenilorea and the UP managed to build a governing coalition with the support of the independents and the SAS. In 1987 Kenilorea was forced to resign as prime minister in the throes of a scandal; power passed to Ezekiel Alebua, his deputy prime minister and the UP member from East Guadalcanal. Alebua headed the UP-led coalition and remained in power up to the 1989 national elections.

In the period leading to the 1989 elections, the Alebua government was shaken by a precipitous decline in the Solomon Islands economy.[13] Weakening commodity prices for key export crops and the devastating effects of Cyclone Namu, which pummeled the Guadalcanal plain and productive islands nearby, undermined economic performance and caused Alebua to be seen as a poor economic manager. The PAP was also weakened by the defection of Andrew Nori after a leadership struggle against Mamaloni. Nori formed the National Front for Progress Party (NFP), which sought to abolish the system of provincial government. The NADEPA, which had only minimal success in the 1980 and 1984 elections, also split, dividing into a Liberal Party led by Bart Ulufa'alu and a Labour Party led by the young and vigorous unionist Joses Tuhanuku. SAS was not a factor in the 1989 campaign.

The 1989 electoral contest featured five parties--PAP, UP, NFP, Liberal, and Labour--and, once again, a large number of independents. A total of 257 candidates stood for the 38 seats.[14] Of the 128,830 Solomon Islanders

officially registered to vote, 80,930 actually voted, a national turnout of 63 percent. Two candidates were declared elected unopposed, PAP leader Solomon Mamaloni in West Makira and Nathaniel Waena in Ulawa/Ugi. The party standings following the 1989 election, by number of seats won, were: PAP twenty-three; NFP, three; UP, four; Liberal Party, two; Labour Party, two; and independents, four.

The magnitude of the PAP victory was startling given the past history of party performance in the Solomon Islands. Of the twenty-three PAP seats, fifteen were won by committed PAP members and eight were won by independent candidates who were aligned with the party but more weakly than the core adherents. Mamaloni's cabinet was selected to include both types (see Table 1).

TABLE 1. Mamaloni's 1989 Cabinet

Name	Strength of Party Tie[a]	Portfolio	Island
S. Mamaloni	M	Prime Minister	Makira
D. Philip	I	Home Affairs & Deputy Prime Minister	Vonavona/Rendova
C. Abe	M	Finance	Marovo
Sir B. Devesi	M	Foreign Affairs	Guadalcanal
E. Andresen	I	Commerce	Isabel
N. Waena	I	Prov. Govt.	Ulawa/Ugi
A. Kemakeza	M	Police/ Justice	Savo/Russell
M. Maina	M	Transport	Temotu Pele
A. Laore	M	Education	Shortlands
B. Gale	M	Post	Guadalcanal
N. Supa	M	Health	Isabel
A. Paul	I	Natural Resources	Vella Lavella
A. Kapei	I	Agriculture	Malaita
A. Qurusu	M	Housing	Choiseul
V. Ngele	M	Tourism	Guadalcanal

Source: Field interviews, Honiara.
[a] M = strong; I = independent.

Mamaloni, Party Fractures, and a New Coalition: 1989-1993

PAP's strategy of party development emerged in July 1989 as a phased "Programme of Action" for the years 1989 to 1993, that is, coinciding with the governing party's electoral mandate. The action program laid bare the failures of the previous Alebua government to provide sound economic management. Beyond the highly partisan tone of the critique, the state of the Solomon Islands economy was portrayed in dismal terms:

On leaving office in 1984 my Government had left behind a vibrant economy, a cohesive social and political system. However, the ensuing years [have] seen a deterioration in the affairs of our nation. . . . Whilst policies have been espoused for developing the agricultural and manufacturing sectors and diversifying the economy, the transformation of the Solomon Islands economy into a dynamic modern economy, on the threshold of the 21st century has not been realised. Inflation soared from 7 percent in 1984 to about 22 percent in 1988 with no signs of abatement. The increase in budget deficit from $12m in 1984 to over $70m in 1988, was staggering, to say the least. The foreign reserves declined from about four months of imports in 1984 to about two months in 1988. Foreign debt was $79m in 1984 but increased to about $280m in 1988, while debt servicing increased from $10.3m in 1984 to $18.7m in 1988. . . . [W]e have also inherited a defunct public service and a demoralised private sector. The situation is both fragile and potentially explosive and requires major surgery to put the country back on its feet.[15]

It was clear that the new Mamaloni government viewed its strong electoral victory in 1989 as the basis for a major restructuring of the nation's economy Indeed, the electoral mandate was seen to provide the springboard for economic reform: "The People of this country elected a new Government in March 1989. In so doing history has been created since it is this Nation's first one party government. The Peoples Alliance Party Government has provided you, the local and overseas business community[,] with unprecedented political stability."[16] The two core reforms sought by the PAP focused on economic renewal and a stronger commitment to decentralization along the lines of a federal system of government. With both the political mandate and an expressed political will to act, the next four years heralded major policy reforms.

However, by October 1990, the People's Alliance Party was in disarray with a no-confidence motion before the party's national executive, seeking Mamaloni's removal as PAP's parliamentary leader. Mamaloni was being challenged from within his own party rather than on the floor of Parliament. The bonds of party unity, loyalty, and discipline were fractured for all to see. In a dramatic and bold stroke, Mamaloni headed off the challenge by resigning from the party and, using his power as prime minister, forming a "Government of National Unity and Reconciliation."[17] Mamaloni displaced five members from his cabinet including the deputy prime minister, Danny Philip, to make room in the ministerial ranks to build a new governing coalition.

For political analysts, the central question that arises is what variables

help to explain the erosion of party consensus both in terms of policy commitments and party leadership. Is it possible to isolate the factors that worked to undermine party unity and discipline? Five key variables help to explain the erosion of support for Mamaloni's leadership of the PAP They are: (1) Mamaloni's failure to implement PAP policies owing to the entrenched power of the central public service, in particular the determined opposition to key elements of the reform program by the permanent secretaries (civil-service department heads); (2) the slow recovery of the Solomon Islands economy, a touchstone of the PAP's election promise of sound economic management in contrast to the Alebua years; (3) the tentative nature of Mamaloni's actual realization of structural adjustment measures advocated both by the PAP and the International Monetary Fund; (4) Mamaloni's aloof style of leadership whereby he relied on a small circle of influential Chinese advisers to the exclusion of party leaders, coupled with his tendency to intervene directly in areas of ministerial responsibility through the secretary of the Prime Minister's Office; and (5) two financial scandals, one over a foreign loan of US$250 million and the other over Arab financing estimated at SI$1 billion, both of which fell at the feet of the prime minister.

The Entrenched Power of the Public Service

The public-service establishment based in Honiara had grown from 6,564 posts at independence in 1978 to 8,605 positions by June 1992.[18] In a major public-service review conducted in 1987, public-service employment was found to constitute 34 percent of total employment, compared with 22 percent for Asian nations and 20 percent for industrial countries.[19] Even more significant, however, was the drain of the wages and salaries drawn by the public service on the government's recurrent budget. As the 1987 review commented:

> The proportion of the Government's budget consumed by salaries and wages is a matter of great concern. It has risen sharply in recent years and is currently at a level beyond 60%. This trend is unacceptable as too many resources are increasingly being tied up in maintaining existing establishments, leaving little scope for improving the priority health and education sectors, or for facilitating the development of the revenue generating areas of the economy Also, the increasing "pull" effect of high recurrent expenditures, as a result of the high staff costs element, is leading to a situation in the economy where the tax burden may inhibit the development of the industrial and commercial sectors.[20]

In 1989 the Alebua government faced a determined Solomon Islands Public Employees Union, which held the government to ransom for a wage increase of 17.5 percent. Despite pressures from the governor of the Solomon Islands Central Bank and from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Mamaloni government also found it exceedingly difficult to hold the line on wage increases. In 1991 the public service was awarded another substantial salary rise of 16.5 percent.[21]

The public service further exacted a toll on the Mamaloni government by resisting attempts to implement a full package of structural adjustment measures designed by the IMF to revitalize the economy. Permanent secretaries delayed and obfuscated on reform measures, reinforced in their position by the extended tenure they enjoyed as a result of a colonial inheritance. Only in August 1990 did Mamaloni move to overcome this bureaucratic resistance by retiring all permanent secretaries as of 25 September.[22] Moreover, ministers tended to defer to their senior public servants in the hopes of having development projects targeted for their island bases of political support.

The Slow Economic Recovery

In the 1970s the Solomon Islands economy benefited from relatively high prices for its primary exports. The 1980s however, saw these prices plummet and the economy slow accordingly. Copra, cocoa, and palm oil all experienced major declines in price returns.

The poor performance of the primary sector was replicated in formal wage employment. What is striking has been the slow rate of growth: from June 1982 to June 1992, employment increased from 20,811 to 26,842, a rise of little more than 6,000 jobs over a ten-year period.[23] Considering that there are more than 5,000 school-leavers each year, employment creation is a major political issue. Over the same ten-year period, wage employment became increasingly concentrated geographically: the number of jobs declined in all provinces save for Central (where the total increased by 184 positions) and Malaita (up by 319 positions) while employment in Honiara almost doubled, from 7,048 to 13,355 jobs. Such growth explains the rapid rates of urban drift to Honiara by young job seekers. The Central Bank characterized the general economic performance during the Mamaloni period as unchanged from previous administrations, essentially, a "running on the spot feeling."[24]

To be fair, though, projections on the likely prospects for major export commodities over the 1990s suggested a strong recovery both in terms of demand and price.[25] Unfortunately for the Mamaloni government, the Solomon Islands would not benefit substantially from the economic turnaround until after the 1993 national election.

Policy Reform in Government Restructuring and Reduction

A cornerstone of the PAP's action program was major economic restructuring to move government out of the economy and instead foster a resurgence of the private sector. The substance of these reforms and the arguments sustaining them appeared in a 1989 IMF report.[26] The IMF concerns included restraining fiscal expenditure, promoting the private sector and foreign investment, privatizing public-sector commercial activity, seeking economic diversification, emphasizing rural development and the role of provincial government, and restructuring financial institutions.

Mamaloni himself was cautious in embracing the full package of reforms. However, in 1991 he announced plans to eliminate some 900 positions from the total complement of 5,241 central-payroll staff.[27] For 1992 the public service and police were reduced by 17 percent to 4,313 posts, and in 1993 the public-service establishment was reduced another 7 percent. However, this trimming did not generate financial savings as the posts had been unfilled for some time.[28]

With respect to public corporations, the statutory bodies were expensive creatures: in 1989 they consumed 4 percent of GDP in resource transfers and in 1990, 5 percent. Their financial performance was weak, with aggregated net losses of between 2 and 4 percent of GDP between 1985 and 1990.[29] In light of this, the Mamaloni government moved to divest public holdings in several major companies. In 1990 the government withdrew from Solomons Rice Company, Limited, in which it had a 100 percent share and it sold its 100 percent share in National Fisheries Developments, Limited, to a Canadian firm, B.C. Packers. It also promoted the sale of the Mendana Hotel in Honiara to Japanese interests and liquidated its 20 percent share, and it privatized the Solomon Islands Philatelic Bureau. Near the end of its term, the Mamaloni government offered, although without success, Solomon Airlines for sale to private interests.

In terms of stimulating the rise of a vigorous private sector, high public-sector wage increases forced high wage settlements in the private sector. The average private-sector increases were 9.0 percent for 1989, 10.5 percent for 1990, and 9.5 percent for 1991. This escalating labor cost undermined competitiveness. In addition, interest rates averaged 16 to 20 percent during the 1990-1993 period. In part, the effect of high wage increases was to blame. So too, however, was Mamaloni's public borrowing from local rather than foreign sources. The Mamaloni government financed its deficits through a high rate of domestic borrowing--in 1990 the government borrowed SI$19.9 million; in 1991, SI$72.0 million; and, in 1992, SI$25.2 million.[30] This had the effect of the government's preempting of domestic credit for the private sector.[31]

Yet, despite an atmosphere of precarious economic stability, a large number of foreign-financed investment projects were under way in 1991, in plantation forestry, logging, fisheries, minerals, tourism, and manufacturing. The government moved to encourage foreign investment by easing the bureaucratic stages for approving foreign investment projects and simplifying the review process.[32] As the government's term went on, Mamaloni turned to the rapid escalation of the foreign-dominated and primarily Asian-controlled logging industry to provide much-needed government revenue. The export of uncut round logs to Japan and Taiwan became so expansive that Central Bank Governor Tony Hughes cautioned that the resource would be totally depleted by the year 2000 if the current rate of cutting continued unabated.[33]

The most dramatic endeavor was Mamaloni's commitment to strengthening provincial governments. Decentralization of power had been an integral part of the Solomon Islands decolonization process from the inherited pattern of overcentralized colonial rule.[34] Under Mamaloni's government provinces were given the power to negotiate directly with foreign governments for aid, subject to central government ratification, and the power to recruit directly their public-service staffs. Efforts were made to assure a sounder revenue base for the provinces to finance the wide range of powers that had devolved to them.[35] The expansion of provincial government can be seen in budget-data (Table 2).

This promotion of provincial government was carried a step further with the 1991 decision to create a separate province for Choiseul to take effect in 1992. A similar commitment was given to Rennell and Bellona, which together became a separate province in 1993. In a crucial sense, this represented a clear recognition that island identities remain central to the culture and values of Solomon Islanders.

TABLE 2. Provincial Government Budgets (000s of SI$)

	1988	1989	1990	1991
Revenue				
Central Govt. Grant	6,887	7,680	11,556	10,128
Other Revenue	2,130	3,185	26,528	10,296
Total Revenue	9,017	10,865	38,084	20,424
Expenditure				
Recurrent	8,352	11,221	19,962	19,140
Capital	340	796	15,464	4,828
Total	8,692	12,017	35,426	23,968
Surplus/(Deficit)	325	(1,152)	2,658	(3,543)

Source: Central Bank of Solomon Islands, *Annual Report 1991* (Honiara: Government Printing Works, 1992), 35.

Mamaloni's Leadership Style

Solomon Mamaloni has been a potent force in Solomon Islands politics for more than two decades as the acknowledged leader of the Makira people and as prime minister and opposition leader. In 1989 he agreed to be parliamentary leader of the PAP and its candidate for prime minister. His election was assured given the PAP's majority victory. Once in power Mamaloni quickly became distant from the party executive and its manifesto, preferring to rely on a close circle of local Chinese interests and advisers. Mamaloni let ministers indulge in their business and representational interests but frequently intervened in departmental assignments to direct both the ministers and their public officials. In the process, some ministers felt frustrated by being given the familiar instruction, ***"Boss i'm tok"*** (the boss has spoken), and held to account if they did not respect the prime minister's directives.[36] In his relations with cabinet ministers, Mamaloni was not "first among equals" so much as "first, period." The party executive rankled under Mamaloni's firm hand and became eager to call him to account.

The Loans Scandals

In May 1990 documents leaked to Leader of the Opposition Andrew Nori and the ***Solomon Star*** implicated the prime minister, the minister of finance, and an expatriate consultant in a questionable series of moves to secure private loans overseas without cabinet or parliamentary approval.[37] Nori led a no-confidence motion in Parliament after presenting a detailed number of charges against the prime minister and his minister of finance. The motion lost by twenty-three votes to thirteen with two abstentions. The integrity of the prime minister and the credibility of the government came under continued challenge during August and September 1990.[38] Edward Kingmele, PAP secretary-general, and several cabinet ministers felt that the scandal had permanently undermined PAP's credibility and support among Solomon Islanders. Mamaloni caught wind of a plot by the dissident ministers to challenge his leadership at a national party convention to be held in October 1990. It also became known that the party president, David Kausimae, had authorized a review of Mamaloni government actions since coming to power to demonstrate that the PAP manifesto had not been actively implemented.[39]

On October 17, just a day before the PAP convention, Mamaloni called on the governor-general at Government House to present contingency plans to recast his governing coalition. Mamaloni quit the party and resigned from being its parliamentary leader. He declared himself to be an independent MP and a nonpartisan prime minister. In his proposal to the governor-

general, he expressed an intent to form a new government based on principles of national unity, political reconciliation, national reconstruction, and policy redirection. To implement this premptive strike he revoked the appointments of five ministers and appointed replacements.

The new Solomon Islands Government of National Unity and Reconciliation (SIGNUR) coalition was composed of fifteen PAP MPs, three United Party MPs, one National Front for Progress MP, and three Liberal Party MPs, for a total of twenty-two. Mamaloni's calculations in constructing his new cabinet represented a masterpiece. To see this, we have to examine the ministers who were displaced by the prime minister in light of the affiliations outlined in Table 1, Mamaloni's 1989 cabinet. All five ousted ministers were PAP independents--D. Philip, E. Andresen, N. Waena, A. Paul, and A. Kapei--who were not deeply committed to the PAP or to Mamaloni. Mamaloni sought to build his new cabinet with his staunchest supporters and as broad a base of other-party participation as possible. On the first consideration, ten of the fifteen PAP-committed (M) elected MPs landed in the new cabinet. Mamaloni tried to incorporate the support of the United Party MPs by offering three cabinet portfolios. However, former Prime Minister Ezekiel Alebua refused a post and remained as an opposition UP member.") But Mamaloni was successful in garnering the support of three United Party MPs by bringing two into the new cabinet: former Prime Minister Sir Peter Kenilorea and Alfred Maetia, both MPs from Malaita Province. Mamaloni appointed Sam Alasia, an MP from Andrew Nori's National Front for Progress party, to his cabinet as well as George Luilamo, a member of the Liberal Party, who became minister of agriculture and lands. Thus Mamaloni was able to forge a four-party coalition with only the small Labour Party left out of the new government. More significant still, the new cabinet more carefully balanced regional representation--Malaita Province acquired four ministers, Guadalcanal three, Western three, and Isabel, Central, Makira, Temotu, and Honiara one each. The remaining sixteen MPs formed the opposition, composed of eight PAP adherents, one Labour Party MP, four independents, two NFP MPs, and one United Party MP. In essence, Mamaloni survived as prime minister but at the head of a weakened government until the May 1993 national elections.

1993 National Elections and 1994 Constitutional Crisis

In the 1993 national elections, Mamaloni's SIGNUR grouping was challenged by the PAP led by Edward Kingmele and David Kausimae, the United Party led by Ezekiel Alebua, the National Front for Progress led by Andrew Nori, a new party--the National Action Party of the Solomon

Islands (NAPSI)--led by Francis Saemala, the Labour Party led by Joses Tuhanuku, the small Liberal Party led by Bart Ulufaʻalu, the Christian Action Party of Solomon Islands-- a new grouping of Christian candidates, and a range of independents, including Francis Billy Hilly of Western Province. This time the electoral battle was waged for forty-seven seats in a newly expanded Parliament. No party was able to capture a majority, as the following result by seats won shows: SIGNUR, twenty; PAP, nine; NAPSI, three; NFP, three; UP three; Labour Party, three; Christian Action Party, four; independents, five.

Although SIGNUR won twenty seats, it fell short of being able to command a majority to assure its continuance in office. Francis Saemala, supported by leaders of five other parties, managed to construct a coalition to challenge Mamaloni for power. The challengers formed the National Coalition Partnership (NCP), which selected its parliamentary leader, and candidate for the post of prime minister, through a series of run-off ballots among party leaders. Ezekiel Alebua, leader of the United Party, chaired the balloting process after deciding to abstain from the contest. On the fifth and final ballot, Francis Billy Hilly, the leader of the independent members of the coalition, defeated Francis Saemala, the NAPSI leader, by sixteen votes to ten. When the elected MPs met in Parliament to vote for a new prime minister, Solomon Mamaloni stood as the SIGNUR nominee against Hilly for the NCP. The bargaining for support between SIGNUR and the NCP continued right up to the moment when MPs entered the parliamentary chamber. Offers and counteroffers of ministerial assignments flew back and forth, and vigorous efforts were made by both camps to poach MPs from the other side. In a vote reminiscent of the 1992 Papua New Guinean contest where Paias Wingti defeated Rabbie Namaliu by fifty-five votes to fifty-four, Francis Billy Hilly edged out Mamaloni twenty-four to twenty-three.

The new Hilly government faced a difficult challenge, having won power by the slimmest of majorities. Sitting opposite the government was the SIGNUR grouping led by the shrewd tactician, Solomon Mamaloni. Although emphasizing its unified strength, the NCP was inherently fragile as the coalition represented a mosaic of parties and ambitious leaders. Saemala became deputy prime minister even though his NAPSI had won only three seats. Saemala's claim to the deputy prime minister's position was based on his initiative in forming the NCP and on his having survived to the last ballot for its leadership. Dennis Lulei, the parliamentary leader of the PAP who saw himself as the strongest candidate for prime minister before the NCP selection process began, was appointed the new minister for education in the NCP government. His portfolio could not be viewed as a senior cabinet appointment. In the result, Lulei was the first MP to depart from the NCP,

renouncing his party affiliation after criticism of his leadership from within the PAP Having left the party and indicating he would join the opposition forces, Lulei was dismissed from his ministerial post by Hilly.[41] Lulei claimed that his voice within the NCP coalition was ineffectual despite his having the largest bloc of MPs behind him.[42] Lulei's defection to the opposition was followed quickly by that of two other NCP ministers, Minister of Provincial Government Eric Seri and Minister of Culture, Sports, and Tourism Allan Paul, who in a stunning move crossed the floor to join Mamaloni's forces. This gave the opposition the support of twenty-six MPs to the government's twenty-one according to opposition calculations.[43]

As late as September 1994 the NCP still claimed to have its slim majority of twenty-four to twenty-three MPs.[44] Yet on September 7 the NCP government was shaken further by the resignation of its minister of finance and leader of the NFP, Andrew Nori, over allegations of financial misdealings.[45] His resignation was precipitated by the threat of MP Walter Folotalu, a government backbencher and member of the Christian Action Party, to leave the NCP if Nor-i did not do the right thing and resign.[46] Under stinging opposition attack, Hilly refused to call a meeting of Parliament, knowing that his government would face and fall in a vote of no-confidence.[47] This eventuality became ever more likely with a succession of devastating resignations from the NCP at the end of the month.[48]

The NCP's weakened position and its refusal to call a meeting of Parliament led the governor-general, Moses Pitakaka, to intervene; he called upon Hilly to either convene Parliament into session or resign as prime minister.[49] Hilly resisted both alternatives, stating that he would meet with Parliament on 18 November 1994 when his government's budget would be presented to the House. In the meantime, Hilly intended to function as prime minister and the NCP would govern. Pitakaka furthered the constitutional crisis by setting deadlines that Hilly had to meet to recall Parliament and failing that to resign as prime minister. Finally, as the standoff continued, Pitakaka, citing his constitutional powers as head of the executive, appointed Solomon Mamaloni as a caretaker prime minister.[50] Hilly and the NCP vociferously criticized the governor-general, with Hilly determinedly remaining as prime minister until the High Court could rule as to the constitutionality of the governor-general's actions. The High Court ruled on October 26 that Hilly remained the legal prime minister.[51] Hilly finally resigned as prime minister on October 31, remaining to head an interim government until a new prime minister could be chosen.

Nomination of candidates for a new prime minister was set for the next day, November 1, with Parliament scheduled to meet on November 7 to vote in a secret ballot. Hilly refused to stand as a candidate.[52] Sir Bad-

deley Devesi, a former governor-general and the former deputy prime minister under the SIGNUR government, agreed to stand as the NCP nominee against his former boss, Mamaloni. Mamaloni won the secret ballot among reassembled MPs by a vote of twenty-nine to eighteen.[53] In the shifting world of Solomon Islands politics, Mamaloni had overcome the campaign of his former opposition colleague, Devesi. Once again, Mamaloni faced the challenge of holding together his new party alignment, now called the Solomon Islands Reconciliation and Progressive Party (SIRPP), until the next election. The NCP has vowed that it will be back in power once again.[54]

Melanesian Leadership and Democratic Adaptation

The Solomon Islands model of unbounded politics illustrates how Melanesian political culture exacts a toll on the liberal-democratic parliamentary system of government. The inherited Westminster model assumes as a core precondition that MPs and aspirants will pursue their careers within the framework of commitment to a party. Party loyalty and party discipline are to structure political competition and debate. Selected cases of MPs switching parties can be accommodated, but generally the majority of politicians are to remain party adherents. The crossing-the-floor phenomenon is to be rare indeed. However, in Melanesia, represented here by the Solomon Islands, the political party is simply an electoral and strategic tool to be discarded at convenience. A number of big-men, all potential prime ministers, vie for power. They act like magnets, pulling into their circles other successful MPs, who themselves continually calculate their advantage in affiliating with a particular big-man. The lesser stars will shift allegiance quickly if a better bargain can be struck elsewhere. The Third World neopatrimonial model of individual dominance does not--indeed cannot--form, as leadership changes too quickly. Similarly, the patron-client model is not salient either, as allegiances shift too rapidly to sustain a fully integrated network of dependency, Yet the political process is highly competitive and sustains a democratic form that persists over time.

    What, then, are the implications of the unbounded politics model? First, elected MPs have to cultivate their community bases of support very carefully, for longevity in Parliament is crucial to one's bargaining strength. Otherwise, an MP will face a rapid rise to prominence and an equally rapid fall. The turnover rate for incumbent MPs in national elections is usually very high. To aspire to leadership as a cabinet minister or potential prime ministerial candidate, an MP must adopt a leadership pattern close to that of the people of one's tribe, and become elevated and respected by influentials

in the community. Once elected, the MP who adopts an arrogant and self-serving posture will quickly come to grief. Having a firm community base of support, over time the MP will be required to advance constituency and island interests at the government center. This perspective is reinforced by the electoral system in which islands define constituency clusters. The parliamentarian will have to be able to work in a highly competitive political world where the focus is on evaluating individual behavior.

Second, long-term commitments are irrational for aspiring leaders unless limits are set by the individual on his/her ambition. Thus, this sustains calculations of short-term advantage. Like Devesi, one must be able to walk away from past allegiances.

Third, once one becomes a minister, the successful leader must seize all opportunities to advance one's interests: open businesses, dispense funds, control departmental decisions on development project allocations, and dispense patronage wisely to assure appointments of key associates *(wantoks)* and relatives. There is tremendous pressure on a minister to embrace the short-term perspective, to achieve results, to build and to distribute.

Fourth, and finally, inevitably a tension exists between the interests of ministers and the prime minister as against those of the permanent public servants. Tenured, anonymous, and loyal officials seek to protect their departments and the public interest and to remain true to their expertise and professional standards. On the other side, ministers and the prime minister seek to control and direct the public servants towards their own distributional, policy, and program objectives. Public servants attempt to resist ministerial dominance to assure policy and program continuity and control. Ministers complain that the public service is too conservative, too recalcitrant, blocking the democratic will. Public servants see ministers as too aggressive, too involved in departmental affairs, and lacking in policy expertise. The unbounded politics model promotes a continual struggle between political leaders and public officials. In a political arena where instability and strife are endemic, medium- and long-term policy and program planning become early victims to calculations of political advantage.

In sum, although the Melanesian cultural adaptation of the Westminster model remains committed to a highly competitive democratic process, unbounded politics fosters political instability.

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50. "G-G's Choice," *Solomon Star,* 26 October 1994, 1.

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BOOK REVIEW FORUM

Geoffrey M. White, ***Identity through History: Living Stories in a Solomon Islands Society.*** Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology, no. 83. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991. Pp. xvi, 270, illus., bibliography, index. US$21.95 cloth.

Review: MARGARET JOLLY
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Person and Collectivity in Narratives of Conversion

THIS BOOK IS SITUATED at the intersection of three recent trajectories of analysis in Pacific anthropology and history. The first is the relation between indigenous and European genres of telling history, the second is the dialectic between Christianity and tradition in the constitution of contemporary identities, and the third is the articulation between person and collectivity in Melanesian ethnography, and in social theory more broadly. These are integrated in White's concept of "conversion narratives"--those stories that tell of first contacts with missionaries and the subsequent conversion to Christianity by the people of Santa Isabel, in the central Solomons. White is interested generally in telling the past: how people narrate, dance, and sing their history for the present. But the most frequent and compelling narratives on Santa Isabel are about conversion, rather than about, for example, national independence or World War II (although White has written extensively about the latter elsewhere).

I will concentrate on his concept of "conversion narratives"--but first a few preliminary observations. Until now our knowledge of the Solomon

Islands has been focused further east, in particular on the island of Malaita where the ethnographies and histories of Keesing, de Coppet, and Burt have been situated. There has been important ethnography done in the west since Hocart was there in the early twentieth century (1922, 1931)-- Scheffler on Choiseul (1965), Hviding at Marovo Lagoon, and Dureau on Simbo (1994). But this book will help to reorient some of the present theoretical debates towards the west. White evocatively recaptures his own first contact with Santa Isabel in 1974. The reader is invited to sail along with him on the **Ligomo,** a typical cargo/copra vessel, as it chugs up the coast. We witness not just the island's topography and vegetation--the patterns of lush rain forest in the interior, the precipitous ridges and deep valleys descending from the mountains--but the visible traces of root-crop gardens inland and coconut plantations on the coast and the concentration of people by the sea rather than in the remote, deep forests, the **dak bus.**

The arrival story that most engages White in this book is not his own, but those about missionaries--arrivals that reconfigured the difference between the coastal and interior peoples as the difference between **solwota** and **bus,** between accommodation and conversion to the beliefs of the strangers as against resistance and recalcitrant heathenism. This difference does not have the same present pertinence as on Malaita, by Keesing's account (for example, 1992), since in Santa Isabel there are no traditionalists, no resistant heathens in the mode of the **kastom** Kwaio. From 1861, following the arrival of Bishop Patteson at Bughotu, the work of indigenous catechists like Wadrokal and that of European missionaries like Penny and Welchman resulted in the total conversion of the island to the Anglican Melanesian Mission. Their success was partly due to the escalation of raiding and headhunting in the preceding era. These practices, though ancestral and endemic, intensified dramatically with the arrival of European traders who procured turtle shell and bêche-de-mer in exchange for steel tools, particularly weapons, such as axes and guns. As a result those groups and leaders who had best access to the new technologies of violence dominated others. So Simbo and Roviana dominated Santa Isabel and Choiseul, and those on the coast of Santa Isabel at Kia and Bughotu dominated the Cheke Holo speakers of the interior--taking not just skulls but live captives as "slaves."[1] From the 1860s onward, intensified raiding and massacres resulted in successive movements of refugees, deserting the area between Kia and Maringe Lagoon. In this "flight from death" some barricaded themselves in high fortified settlements, others fled to the southeastern tip. This massive dislocation of people provided fertile ground for the Christian message, although as White suggests, the Christians used the power of violent force as much as they argued against it.

There are many Santa Isabel stories that retell the events of such conversions in a variety of genres. In his preface White introduces us to the most stark and simple form--the school essay. In response to White's question, "What was life like in Santa Isabel before the church came?" one boy wrote in part:

> Beginning in the past, our ancestors, our fathers and mothers did not understand the love *(nahma)* that we know today. And they didn't know about the togetherness *(fofodu)* of the present time either. They did know about killing people . . . and about fighting
>   But life in the past was extremely difficult. People did not live in happiness *(gleale'a)* or love. Nor did they sleep calmly *(blakno).* If they were traveling or sleeping, they could not forget their clubs, their axes or their spears. (P. 8)

Here White exposes two canonical features of conversion narratives. The first is the imputed antithesis between "now" and "before," the now characterized by love, togetherness, and happiness, the before by fighting and cannibalism, hostility between local groups, and chronic anxiety. This extreme, even "overdrawn," antithesis is not found in all such narratives, many of which are far more subtle and ambiguous in their rendering of the transformation from the "time of darkness" to the "time of light." Secondly, this example makes clear how such narratives not only mutually constitute present and past but also the relation between person and collectivity As White expresses it, "Present and past, self and other are joined in mutually defining relations" (p. 9). But the relation is rarely so simple as the identification of the speaking subject as "self" and the ancestor as "other." Rather the speaking subject, the "I," is elided in the "we" of a demarcated collectivity, and the ancestors are differentiated not only into good and bad persons but a single ancestor might be differentiated into recuperable and repugnant aspects.

Most stories of conversion are not communicated as texts, written with a pen and paper, but rather are told, embodied and enacted, in ways that connect persons and places. Thus, soon after White first arrives, Knabu men take him deep into the forest on a tour of sites sacred to both ancestral and Christian religions, first to Sithalehe where ancestors were offered crops, pigs, and sometimes humans. At this shrine Father Hudson Lagusu demonstrates the use of the altar in human sacrifice, and several men tell grisly stories of decapitating victims and of warriors drinking blood and cooking flesh (p. 37). Such sites have salience not just as mnemonics of ancestral practices but also as places where ancestral and Christian powers are still in

contest. Despite the eclipsing potency of God, the sacred power of such sites is still credited and manifest in ghostly appearances, in the inexplicable movement of objects or the appearance of snakes. White stresses how, although European missionaries tried to discredit the efficacy of ancestral powers, indigenous catechists were more likely to admit them in order to demonstrate the superior efficacy of God by banishing spirits or neutralizing their powers: "ghostbusting" as White dubs it.

White's early guided tour of such places--sacrificial altars, sites of old ceremonial houses--is accompanied by narrative commentary from his guides. Narrative and landscape are thus rendered indissociable; stories are spatialized. "In our short journey a sequence of place names codified a sequence of historical events" (p. 39). But importantly, this itinerary/ history is not always shared. Such old shrines and relics may be boundary markers between groups, used to support contesting contemporary land claims, rather than nostalgic evocations of a shared space and past.

Thus, the "we" in conversion narratives is as problematic as the "I." White's recounting of the epic of the Knabu people evokes how a "closed dark" community was opened to the "light" of Christianity. But this is not just a story of the combat between the peaceful Christian missionaries and the violent warriors of old. It is also a memorial to Matasi Iho, the good chief, and his wife, whose intervention stopped violent warriors from killing the indigenous catechist, Gagai. Such stories are often told, or rather sung as a lament, expressing sorrow both for dead ancestors and places of past residence (cf. Feld 1982). But evoking particular ancestors and place names as they do, they also tell the history from a position that is partial in both senses. So Forest retold the Knabu epic at a feast that was simultaneously to celebrate a wedding, Pentecost, the day Christianity arrived, and the day Iho allegedly died. The life of the married couple and the good of Christian conjugality were thereby linked to the life that Iho delivered by his conversion. There is not just a generalized appeal to the values of the church and of the good Christian person: Christianity is localized and grounded by particular genealogical attachments. In remembering Matasi Iho (his maternal grandfather) accepting Christianity, Forest is legitimating a claim to the chiefly preeminence of Iho and his descendants, including himself (pp. 40-51).

In the latter part of the book White insists on the dramaturgical quality of many conversion narratives. These are not disembodied texts but situated performances, particularly as laments or skits that focus on the moments of first interaction between European missionaries or indigenous catechists with ancestral heathens. Very often clowning skits satirize the naivete of their ancestors--their failure to comprehend the meaning of prayers, hymns, or baptism, or their ignorance about clothes and goods. The old

colonial joke about cannibals wanting to eat the boots as well as the bodies of their stranger-victims is here replayed in local form (p. 142). But in this caricature of their heathen ancestors, White also detects a reflexive play with the deprivations and conflicts of the living (p. 143). To amplify the lack of wealth or the dark passions of the past is also to stress the persistence of inequalities or the potential of gossip, sorcery, or violence in the present. Thus, it is not only ancestors who have good and bad qualities, but narrating subjects and their audiences are divided between their good, moral Christian aspects and their potential for devilishness.

One of the most compelling chapters of this book is chapter 8. Here White counterposes three indigenous narratives with that recorded in the diaries of the missionary Welchman of his ascent in 1890 to the "bush" chief Figrima in his fort at Khakatio to bring the word. Two indigenous narratives --one told and one written--employ similar core episodes exemplifying Welchman's approach, Figrima's resistance, and his eventual acceptance of the missionary. Like the Knabu epic, they counter-pose the violence and death that Figrima authored with the familial solidarity and life that Christ promised. Both these narratives and a third sung version employ shared core metaphors--of violence versus peace, death versus life, darkness versus light. Both the spoken and written narratives use the trope of the darkness and closure of the fort as a physical instantiation of pre-Christian society being opened to the light of the missionary. Both stress the barring of the fort and the chief's shouting abuse or offering armed resistance. Both stories emphasize the sacred power of Welchman--for Sati it is exemplified in his walking stick; for Hagiera it is amplified by acts of prayer throughout the ascent, and manifest in his power to subdue the armed warriors simply by shaking their hands. In both accounts it is Figrima who visits Welchman and accepts his word. They diverge in significant ways, too. Hagiera, who writes his history, is descended from Figrima and dwells on his ancestor's chiefly power rather than on his propensity for killing and cannibalism. On the other hand, the late Sati, in telling his version of the story, does stress Figrima's violence and also confers on his own ancestor, Kofuthara (one of Welchman's guides), a more prominent role (pp. 156-168).

But the differences between both these narratives and Welchman's own account are even more telling. Welchman records no acts of resistance by Figrima and does not mention that he prayed en route. He writes that he was "summoned" by the chief rather than that he forced entry or that Figrima came to him. From his account it emerges that at first he had no direct contact with Figrima, who stayed behind a screen, and that his later conversations were dominated by benign exchanges of goods rather than abuse. As White concludes, "In the local histories, Welchman emerges as an

even more heroic figure than in his own description" (p. 172). Thus, paradoxically, although stressing the agency of locals and especially chiefs in their narratives of conversion, Santa Isabel narrators heroize and amplify the power of the missionary.

As White shows, conversion narratives are saturated with the power of chiefs. But the chiefs of whom Santa Isabel people speak are not, White claims, those of conventional anthropological parlance. *Jif* in pidgin reflects a mutual accommodation of indigenous and exogenous concepts of leadership. Chiefs in the past had more wives, more shells, bigger houses, and the authority both to summon warriors and to order death. It was chiefs who mediated relations between living persons and spirits. They "covered over" others and were elevated above them. They were seen as necessarily dominant in a way that differed from the ideal ordinary person, who refrained from dominance. But, although associated with height and haughtiness, they were still expected to be empathetic.

Contemporary chiefs are still seen as towering over others and as endowed with the power of unseen or enchanted forces. It is these dimensions of chiefliness that Christians have valorized, opposing them not only to the warriors of old but also to the government chiefs and police of the colonial period. In the motivated assimilation of church chiefs to pacific, empathetic chiefs and government chiefs to violent strongmen, there was clearly a contest between church and colonial state for hegemony Moreover, in this process, the mission's own use of violence and force was elided. Thus Soga, newly converted, imposed conversion on others. He no doubt sought new sacred power in the church as well as a place of refuge and protection. Yet, ironically, although represented as a paramount chief and a peacemaker, Soga enforced his message of peace by armed raids on those who would not convert.

The recent revival of the position of paramount chief provides compelling evidence of the salience of chiefly values in the present. Despite some local opposition to the idea of a single chief for the entire island, when Bishop Dudley Tuti was installed as paramount chief in 1975, more than two thousand people attended the ceremony. And, true to form, the ritual included some of the key events of conversion narratives--recounting the missionary's approach, violent rejection, followed by acceptance and ultimate conversion. In one version the man of God was Bishop Selwyn, who cured Soga of an illness with drugs (one local interpretation being that they were antimalarials). This retelling of the early events of conversion legitimated the installation of Tuti and condensed the connection of person, power, and local identity. Thus, White interprets his installation as an integration of ideas of chiefly leadership and church power: Tuti wore both chiefly shell

pendant and bishop's cross. Rather than being perceived as a foreign institution, chiefs and paramount chiefs were seen by their supporters as of ***kastom,*** since chiefs were always mediators with the outside and agents of new knowledge and power. Moreover, this local revival was indissociable from the national debates about ***kastom*** and chiefs before and after independence in 1978. The very contestation about the notions of the paramount chief and later the national Council of Chiefs made them central in debates about tradition and development.

This book is a valuable addition to the historical anthropology of the Pacific. Firstly, it warns us against the imputation of that tired dichotomy, tradition and modernity, in our dealings with notions of ***kastom*** and culture in the contemporary Pacific. The essentialist notion of "tradition" that this entails exoticizes others as it denies them agency in their own historical transformation (see Linnekin 1992; Jolly 1992). But we might also add that a reified notion of "modernity" also essentializes Europeans, denying the conflict between colonial agents that emerges clearly here in the contest between ***lotu*** (church) and ***gavman*** (government). It also occludes the divergencies and varieties of modernities. Secondly, White insists on the pervasive process of self-representation through history, as against those theorists who would caution us not to find self-awareness, or notions of culture and history, where they do not exist (for example, Strathern 1988:9). There is no doubt that the very arrival of anthropologists, in White's words, "provokes" acts of self-representation and reflexivity. There is no doubt, too, that the way in which local people use the notions of ***kastom*** and ***kalja*** (loosely, "culture") are derived from English words. But it is important to insist as White does that this capacity for reflexivity is not just a response to colonial processes. ***Kalja*** is not the same as culture but rather a pidgin appropriation of an English word and concept, its meanings reworked in local conversations and political debates. Thirdly, the book is innovative in the way in which it links the broader cultural history of collective conversion with constructs of personhood. White highlights the centrality of the narrating subject in telling history, the way in which Santa Isabel persons are relational rather than those individuated selves who allegedly inhabit modernity. Moreover, he links this dynamic constitution of subjectivity with moral notions of good and bad persons, and shows how such polarities cut across the portentous partition between ***bifo*** and ***nao,*** heathen and Christian.

But still there are ways in which the book fails to satisfy. The genre of writing sometimes moves rather awkwardly between situated and embodied storytelling and disembodied analytic reflection. More consequentially, White doesn't do enough to critically connect his original material and innovative

insights with the central controversies in the three analytical trajectories I referred to at the start. Quite often he alludes to debates rather than fully engaging with them. Thus, the counterpoint between indigenous and European ways of telling history could have been taken further. For instance, White alludes to Sahlins (1985) in passing, criticizing his "structural history" as disembodied, separated from both political and emotional realities. But White does not vaunt the richness of his own materials sufficiently nor extend this critique. For example, the identification of the speaking subject and the ancestor that Sahlins perceives in "heroic history" could have been productively compared with the more subtle and complex processes of identification and differentiation that White discerns between speaking subjects and listeners, named and valorized ancestors, and unnamed and negated ones. White conveys the sense always of a partial history[2] from the viewpoint of a particular collectivity or person and even a speaking subject, split between their light and dark sides.

Again, the full import of White's argument against the dichotomized language of tradition and modernity, *kastom* and Christianity, might have been better realized if he had chosen to engage with the work of the late Roger Keesing more directly Undoubtedly, such dualisms do pervade the consciousness of *kastom* people more than of Christian adherents. But Keesing tended to rely on these dualisms unduly in his analysis and in so doing could denigrate Christian adherents such as those with whom White worked. White has obviously chosen not to develop an argument with Keesing but in so doing evacuates some of the force of his own analysis. Keesing's last and, in my view, best book, *Custom and Confrontation* (1992), was published after *Identity through History.* But as a pair they offer equally persuasive if different approaches to the salience of colonial history in the present and the dialectic between *kastom* and Christianity in the forging of contemporary Pacific identities. In 1992 Keesing not only reiterated but refined his views on resistance and on the hegemony of colonial discourses, preeminently Christianity, in the lives of contemporary Solomon Islanders. White rhetorically insists that "Christian ideology has not been simply passively recorded on Pacific minds like a tape-recorder left running in the background of a Western conversation" (p. 179). It is unclear to whom he imputes such a view. But he might have strengthened his rhetoric to argue with those who stress hegemony rather than agency in the construction of contemporary identities.

Finally, it may seem strange to say that this book doesn't go far enough in dealing with the problematic relation of person and collectivity. This after all has been the central focus of much of White's other writing within that tradition of transcultural psychology that is highly suspicious of both the epistemological premise and the normative ideal of the individual in Western

psychology. And indeed this book has much to say about the relational form of the Santa Isabel subject in opposition to any who might imagine that individualism automatically accompanies Christian conversion or commoditization. But again I craved a greater engagement with the controversy about the relation between person and collectivity that has ensued since the publication of Strathern's ***The Gender of the Gift.*** This important and influential work constructs the Melanesian person as different from, if not the antithesis of, the Western individual. But the Melanesian person so conceived lives beyond the colonial histories and the collective biographies that White recounts. White finds a similarly relational rather than individuated self on Santa Isabel, but his subject emerges in the context of remembering colonial and postcolonial history rather than one that is detached from or unable to retell such memories.

NOTES

1. I bracket this term since I doubt that it is apposite. Dureau (1994) notes, for example, how many captive "slaves" were adopted by local families and were treated in ways very similar to local children. Some were seen as appropriate victims for the human sacrifices required by the ancestral religion--at the death of chiefs or in launching war canoes, for example. But on occasion, "slaves" became influential ritual specialists and, according to Rivers, on Vella Lavella some were "chiefs" (Dureau, pers. com., November 1994).

2. "Partial" here implies both incomplete and told from an interested viewpoint (cf. Thomas 1990).

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Many ethnographies over the last decade have explored links between iden-
tity and history. The topic is popular and timely, letting us address vital ques-
tions about historical and ethnic excuses for violence, and also offering
rewarding material for new interpretive approaches in anthropology.

Geoffrey White, who has written on ethnopsychology, ethnohistory, and
culture change in Melanesia, puts "narrative texts and practices at the cen-
terpiece" (p. xi) of **Identity through History.** His analysis focuses on key
"meaning-making activities" (p. 13) that he identifies as the best avenues to
understanding how culture--specifically, personal and group identity repre-
sented through shared history--gets made.

White's distinctive contribution is to connect his analysis of the social pro-

duction of meaning with consideration of the person. Although we have a sizable body of literature about the construction of group identity, and we also know something of the politics that produces history, White chooses to explore the link between "selves" and their society, a relatively understudied element of the identity-history interaction. White's previous work in ethnopsychology (for example, 1978, 1985; White and Kirkpatrick 1985) contributed to the current understanding of how personal selves are created in culturally specific ways; in ***Identity through History*** he turns his view outward to ask how culturally constituted selves constitute their cultures. There is a certain inevitable complexity here, bordering at times on the bemusing, but it is a complexity that we cannot ignore: it must simply be slogged through for a few years until, on the other side, we can see some clarity in what currently appears to be a maze of "everything shapes everything."

White chooses to enter the maze by way of narratives. Two sorts of narratives form the "centerpiece" of the book, and both are introduced in part 1, "Orienting." First--the first narratives White encountered on Santa Isabel in the Solomon Islands, the first that older people wanted to tell him, the first chronologically, given his starting point, and the first cultural facts he deals with--are conversion narratives. These are dramatic oral histories of the introduction of Christianity to Cheke Holo speakers, the resistance of chiefs, and their final agreement to accede to and promote Christianity. The second sort of "narrative" is the performance of chiefs, in feasts and anciently in rituals, but most notably in the 1975 installation of the Anglican Bishop Dudley Tuti as paramount chief of the island.

Chiefs are central to Santa Isabel historical sensibility and cultural sentiment. To understand why chiefs hold this important role--one easily ignored in Melanesia, where studies of big-men have focused on economics and coercion--White examines historical tales of famous chiefs, local views of chiefly personalities, and chiefly activities. The political scientist will remain frustrated with the loose structure of local leadership, but it must be admitted, after White's exposition, that there is a lot of "talk" about chiefs. Whatever they do or do not do, they are certainly symbolically vital to local communities. This, White says, is because chiefs "are a focus for ideas about persons, power and political institutions--a site where indigenous and Western practices mutually shape one another" (p. 52).

Much chiefly activity today involves feasts, which invoke two aspects of history and identity: shared descent and shared Christianity. These are explored through conversion narratives, examined in part 2, "Transforming." In these chapters White provides readable narrative of his own about the spread of Christianity. Santa Isabel society was "in jeopardy" from well-armed raiders in the late 1800s. Cheke Holo speakers responded to the vio-

lence by fleeing to the far southeast or to fortified refuges in the interior. It was in the context of sustained violence that wiped out whole communities and left regions depopulated that the Anglican Melanesian Mission mounted its evangelical campaign. It succeeded due to widespread desire for peace and by the emergence of a few relatively powerful leaders who aided the mission after becoming Christians. The few European and many Melanesian missionaries worked through local leaders, providing symbolic support for chiefly power in the form of a novel Christian identity. White details the activities of the early Christian chief Monilaws Soga, missionary Henry Welchman, and the first Isabel priest, Hugo Hebala. He explores how, in the first decades after conversion, traditional magical practice, shifts in residence, church construction, and changes in feasting patterns and leadership were negotiated and transformed as islanders built a society and a way of understanding themselves that they saw as distinct from the violent and "heathen" past. The idea of a "Christian person" emerged in tandem with the fact of a Christian (and, simultaneously, a colonial) society.

In part 3, "Narrating," White looks again at local history, this time with an explicitly interpretive gaze. Isabel people tell and act out stories about conversion and conceive of themselves (in a common conversion idiom) as "new" people. As such, they must remember what "old" people were like and recount how "old" became "new''--thus the centrality of conversion narratives to identity. Since conversion was large-scale and rapid, both "selves" and society were "made new"--so conversion stories have public meaning and are often acted out as skits at feasts. White analyzes both skits and narratives closely, allowing us to see in what terms and with what emphases local constructions of history are presented today. True to his rejection of simple dualisms, tradition is as important as change in these analyses--we see, for example, that descent remains important, as people emphasize the role of particular ancestors in promoting Christianity. In chapter 8, White examines the oft-told story of missionary Welchman's 1890 visit to the hill fort of Chief Figrima to introduce Christianity. White compares several indigenous versions and then adds Welchman's diary to the mix.

These conversion narratives resemble those we know from elsewhere: savage and ignorant heathens concede the power of the Gospel and transform their lives. As White acknowledges, this is how foreign missionaries painted the scene.

> But Christian ideology has not been simply passively recorded on Pacific minds like a tape-recorder left running in the background of a Western conversation. It is instead actively interpeted in local contexts and put to use within culturally constituted spheres of in-

terest and activity. . . . A key ingredient in the success of the Mela-
nesian Mission in Santa Isabel was the ability of local communities
to appropriate Christian symbols and still reconstruct the conversion
experience as one that was generated from within. (Pp. 179-180)

This happens through the symbolic power of chiefs. Thus, White says, as
he moves toward the final section ("Revitalizing"), it is most appropriate that
chiefs are today key symbols for novel explorations of links between tradi-
tion and modernity, **kastom** and Christianity and democracy.

So we come to what White considers a major symbolic event for Santa
Isabel, though it has had little practical import. This is the 1975 installation
of Anglican Bishop Dudley Tuti as paramount chief--a position that existed
at the turn of the century and again in the 1930s both times as a result of
collaboration between an influential Christian chief and a European mis-
sionary. Although Christianity was instrumental in transforming Isabel cul-
ture, it was partly through cultivating chiefs that Christianity succeeded--so
chiefs, now viewed as traditional, were vital to the Christian transformation
(this is one of many ironies White points out, though they are not ironies to
Isabel people).

The church and the colonial state contended over governance on Santa
Isabel, ending for a while in a dual system of secular headmen and church
chiefs. White explores the complexity of various types of leaders today in an
unexpected foray into scaling and clustering techniques that connects ethno-
psychology and social roles. But this is prelude to the description of the
installation of the bishop as paramount chief in "rites of renewal" (chapter
10, p. 209). The idea of paramount chief combines religious and secular
power, the mediation of national with local concerns; it is both a creation of
colonial entities and a "standardbearer" of traditional **kastom** (p. 210). The
odd thing is that Bishop Tuti in his own persona already did all this. The par-
amountcy was a role created for him--or, at least, because he was who he
was. White explores the specificity of time, place, and person coming to-
gether in a discussion leading up to his investiture. The ceremony itself was
carefully choreographed and heavily symbolic--very much a story that
Isabel was telling itself. In the telling, certain links between history and
identity were made explicit. At the same time, the major question--the
political status of the paramount chief, or of any chief--remains obscure.

"The approach taken here," White writes in his conclusion, "suggests that
narratives of the past do pragmatic work as cultural tools building both self-
understanding and sociopolitical realities" (p. 241). Movement to establish
paramount chiefs has taken place on other islands in the Solomons over the
past decades. Although the political role of chiefs remains unclear, ideas of

chiefs as bearers of **kastom** have a continuing and even expanding hold on
national and local consciousness. As Christian chiefs transformed the islands
in the last century, so chiefly Christians provide opportunities for transfor-
mation in this. White sees the establishment of paramount chiefs as another
in an unending set of "meaning-making activities" which "[open] up possi-
bilities for reconfiguring relations between localized identities and the insti-
tutions of church and state" (p. 242).

White explicitly connects the formal ritual of the bishop's installation cere-
mony with "ordinary language and metaphor" (p. 245)--because the story of
conversion, "told' so dramatically in the installation ritual, is also constitu-
tive of very local identities and indeed of personal identities. For example,
the elderly recall the abandonment of sorcery fears in their own lifetime,
and Cheke Holo intellectuals reanalyze traditional beliefs to find precursors
of Christian teachings. Self-understanding and collective representations
are never far apart in White's book; the "socioemotional" and the sociopolit-
ical are mutually constitutive. This approach, White suggests, may be useful
wherever shared histories, formed in colonial context, provide grounds for
sentiments of cultural distinctiveness.

The most profound impression of this book on the non-Melanesian spe-
cialist is how far we have come in rendering explicit and thus complex what
might once have looked like an invitingly straightforward task of "interpret-
ing" culture. Culture, tradition, history, identity--these are impossibly vague
and slippery concepts, yet we have made surprising strides in working with
them. Geoffrey White has written a sophisticated, wide-ranging analysis that
reflects on both the personal and the national, that contributes to ethnopsy-
chology, to regional studies, and to global inquiries into culture change. He
does so without cluttering our path with another unique theoretical model
useless beyond its original application--yet he hews consistently to a line of
thought that shapes new intellectual tools for all those interested in that
mysterious cycle that eternally reproduces both persons and cultural sys-
tems, reproduces them in recognizable form, yet with constant variations.
The book is written in elegant, readable prose, yet it deals with dauntingly
complex content.

Consider: in the introduction we are presented with all the elements en-
tailed in this "ethnography of identity formation" (frontispiece). If we accept
White's plan to set narratives at the center--it is his book, after all--we must
admit that the thicket could equally be entered at any of a dozen points:
selves, community identity, Christian conversion, chiefs, or culture change.
White must deal with them all before he can achieve his goal ("to explore
those processes--both conceptual and social--that make identity and his-
tory out of experience" [p. xii]).

Is it a question of how these elements relate, in some hierarchical fashion? Or could one, really, start anywhere, simply producing a different sort of book if one set ethnicity, or chiefly politics, at the center? Anyone trying to represent local visions of identity or history has to make such choices. One can simplify the picture by focusing on key symbols, for example, or take on the challenge of assigning priority by suggesting hierarchies of meaning (approaches that I used in **The Ngatik Massacre** [Poyer 1993]). Others have proposed models of cultural systems or sought chronological starting points. White has chosen not to make Cheke Holo understandings more manageable by reifying or simplifying them, although he clearly considers some representations more "central" than others. He begins with narratives, not because he is making a grand argument for narrative as the heart of symbolic analysis, but because this was the "talk" in which islanders engaged: "By noting that local traditions and social change are focal topics of conversation in meetings and other contexts, we may begin to ask how culture and history are constituted in subjectivity and social process" (p. 29).

One sort of theoretical writing in anthropology has been the constant antiphony between those who focus analysis on material factors and those who write mostly about meaning. The cry for rapprochement is heard repeatedly, yet when we actually set to work, we usually find it easier to center our efforts on one or the other. White describes both his field experience and the basics of Isabel politics and economics, but he remains firmly committed to a study of meaning rather than sociopolitical action, While acknowledging the complexity of his analysis, and accepting that White has chosen to write a cultural and symbolic study, there is still a nagging suspicion that some material and political underpinnings might make a different picture of much of what happens here. What, for example, is the economics of church-state interaction (in light of the importance of land ownership and commercial development)? Why do politicians--especially national politicians--support chiefs? Just what do actual, specific chiefs actually do? **Cui bono** the establishment of a paramountcy? White does allow for some ambivalence about this innovation (pp. 244-245) but is clearly less interested in whether there might be systematic political interests at play (economic? age? gender? descent line?) than in presenting a broadly conceived vision of Cheke Holo culture. Nor is this inappropriate: if interpretive analysis is to be done, we cannot abandon the idea of shared culture to the acknowledged reality of special interests. Yet, if meaning is made through symbolic representations in stories, skits, and chiefly feasts, it is also made through economic transactions and political deals.

History is made through public representations, and it is no surprise that its meaning in the Solomon Islands is much like that of many other postcolo-

nial Christian societies. White gives us another example of people who talk about "the bad old days," while clinging to certain icons of that time as valuable indicators of "our culture." Do we have enough examples of this--and other, related, ideas of the past--to begin comparative work, to generate testable ideas about differences in visions of history? Or do we continue to interpret each case on its own? I wonder, for example, whether there might be some generalizations possible about a society's vision of its past and the time that has passed since a dramatic shift in lifestyle. (First, soon after the shift, all that is past is seen negatively, "progress" is all. As time goes by, the past becomes differentially valued, with some elements continuing to be disdained while others gain virtue with hindsight. Then--and perhaps contributing to a climate that will produce a new transformation--the past takes on the glow of a golden age.) White does not enter into generalizable speculation either regional or global, although he implies that the case at hand could contribute to both.

Two other topics I will mention only briefly. First, and very important, is the nearly complete absence of women as actors or speakers in this book. White acknowledges their absence in a paragraph in his preface (p. xii), but it must be asked whether this suffices. He indicates briefly the symbolic importance of matrilineal descent (pp. 33-34) but does not otherwise include gender in his symbolic analysis or in his discussion of sociopolitics. An expert in Melanesia may be able to judge to what extent White's analysis, or even the events and stories he recounts, are applicable to women. But those not intimately familiar with the area may wonder whether all this talk of chiefs, politics, and church is not simply "men's business" rather than a central concern of the entire community, A second and related issue is that of life-course. Since conversion was relatively recent here--within the last century--what is the effect of generational shift and the life stage of individuals on interpretations of the past?

White's book is a sophisticated and pathbreaking addition to work in history and identity. By adding ethnopsychological considerations to more familiar ways of studying ethnohistory and ethnicity he has illuminated much more clearly the mechanisms through which culture and cultures are created and renewed. Like all reviewers, I wanted more of topics that interest me. In this case, the chapter the author did not write, to my regret, would have been entitled "Religion," and it would have explored more directly this most important of meaning-making activities.

Religion is curiously understudied by symbolic and interpretive anthropologists, indeed, by all anthropologists, in recent decades. There is no mystery about this, given the pervasiveness of academia's secular orientation. Still, as we seek answers to how meaning is produced and reproduced, it

seems self-defeating to stubbornly talk all around religion without directly engaging it. After all, for many of the cultures we study--and certainly Santa Isabel is among these--a religious sensibility is at the heart of what gives life meaning.

Not that White ignores religion. The transformation from "heathen" to Christian is at the center of conversion narratives, conversion skits, the symbolism of the paramount's investiture ceremony, and the chiefly ideal. White examines all of these--but as narrative, as performance, as ethnopsychology and chiefly representation, not as religion. Santa Isabel is a Christian island; more, it is Anglican. What does it mean to be a Christian, an Anglican? Perhaps White assumes that most readers know. But can we assume that we understand what this religion means to a Cheke Holo speaker? I am curious to know what an Isabel Christian believes, what s/he thinks is distinctive and characteristic of this religion, how exactly it differs from pre-Christian philosophy, how it shapes personal and community life. White includes fascinating discussion of what it means to be a "Christian person" (pp. 48, 128-129), but does this tell us what Isabel Christians believe, and what that belief means for social action?

Most exciting in White's treatment of religion are his ideas for a new approach to what we call "syncretism"--a problematic term, since all religions are in some sense "new" and grafted onto preexisting traditions. Whereas Europeans in Melanesia tended to see Christianity as a substitute for traditional practice, "indigenous specialists see a confluence of models and methods," and Christian practices were themselves transformed as they transformed local life (p. 114). The relationship between ancient priests and chiefs, and Christian priests and chiefs, is one fascinating example.

If Christianity is transformed by being believed on Santa Isabel--as indigenous belief is transformed by conversion to Christianity--why do we continue to be surprised by juxtapositions of Christianity and tradition? Certainly Isabel people seem to understand quite clearly that the two speak to each other--as White demonstrates neatly in his discussion of the difference between the European missionary efforts to destroy ancient ritual sites and the Melanesian Christian actions to baptize spirits and incorporate stones from old shrines into churches (for example, p. 107). Especially in describing Bishop Tuti's investiture as paramount chief, White is struck by the entwinement of tradition and Christian belief. White calls them "these often oppositional facets of identity" (p. 236); "a distinctive feature of the Santa Isabel paramount chiefship . . . is its ability to encompass elements of both indigenous *kastom* and Christianity, providing a somewhat unique set of political possibilities for leaders who combine the authority of church and tradition" (p. 240). Thus, while strongly contesting--and providing good evi-

dence to counter--"inclinations to dichotomize 'tradition' and 'moderniza-
tion' " (criticized by White on p. 29), he himself runs the risk of dichotomiz-
ing "tradition" and "Christianity." Our deconstruction of "modernization"
has been valuable in allowing studies such as ***Identity through History*** to
forge ahead with illuminating the processes of social change and the prac-
tices of cultural creation. One next step is the deconstruction of a relatively
unexamined concept of religion, opening the door for similarly sophisticated
studies of the role of personal belief and community commitments in histor-
ical and cultural processes.

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Review: PASCAL BOYER
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This is a brief comment, and will end with a request for explanation, rather
than with a critical assessment of White's monograph. ***Identity through His-
tory*** should and will be read from various standpoints, as a detailed study of
representations of conversion and colonization in the Solomon Islands, as a
comment on the chief's role in postcolonial Melanesia, and as an articulate
comment on the contribution of local histories to local identities in the
Pacific. Being unfamiliar with these aspects of regional history and ethnog-
raphy, I will comment on the most general and theoretical points addressed
in the volume. ***Identity through History*** provides a solid description of the
ways in which the local production of history on Santa Isabel is also a pro-
duction of identity Obviously, this description is informed by a series of par-

ticular theoretical commitments, some of which are implicit. Now it seems to me that the connection between these theoretical points and the particular facts White wants to highlight is, in some cases, less than compelling. At some junctures, the general framework actually stands in the way of a more illuminating analysis. This apparent discrepancy may be entirely justifiable, in terms of particular features of the situation described; hence the request for additional information.

White's book is an attempt to explain local discourse about colonial history and conversion, in a explanatory idiom that would avoid some misleading assumptions conveyed by anthropological categories, for example, the assimilation of the traditional and the perennial. He also wants to avoid dichotomies commonly projected on such societies, such as that between big-men and chiefs. To White, many such anthropological constructs are of little explanatory value, and their denotation in local ideologies is rather problematic. In the particular case of colonial encounter and conversion, it is both difficult and necessary to avoid a description in which Pacific societies are construed as both traditional-perennial and passive, whilst the locus of agency resides solely in external historical dynamics. This is particularly important in terms of understanding the construction of identity: as White demonstrates with great force, no understanding of identity in the Solomons is possible without a detailed description of local histories, that is, of the processes whereby people produce a significant account of the events of conversion and colonization. This is very much in keeping with recent developments in the ethnography of the area, emphasizing history as a local discourse, reactions to colonization as an assertion of identity, and conversion as appropriation rather than mere imposition.

White also mentions a series of theoretical filiations that are important in the construction of his argument. These include a general interest in "meaning-making" activities and in the social processes underlying such activities. Also, White wants to stress the "constitutive" or creative role of these activities, like the telling of personal anecdotes or the elaborate narratives of conversion. As he puts it, such narratives "do not simply represent identities and emotions. They constitute them" (p. 13). This is consistent with White's insistence, throughout the book, that the inhabitants of Santa Isabel are creating local understandings and forcefully reconstructing conversion to Christianity. Finally, a proper description of such activities requires that we go beyond the implicit methodological individualism of much anthropological theory. Personal narrative on Santa Isabel often takes the individual as a metonym for constructing group identity, what White calls the "communal self-hood" of historical narration.

These assumptions, in my view, might lead to some paradoxes and at

some points hinder a satisfactory description of local historical dynamics. For instance, let me briefly consider the installation of Bishop Tuti as a new "paramount chief" in 1975. As White shows convincingly, this event is emblematic in that it combines the idioms of **kastom,** in which chiefs are conceived as protectors in the islanders' dealings with the external world (including the spirits), and that of "modern" structures of power: church and administration. Moreover, the fact that the event pertains to an "invented tradition" is clear to all participants, yet this does not in any way undermine the significance of the ceremony. The central message of the event is that of the general reinterpretation of conversion, found in historical narratives. Preconversion times are characterized by violence and magical power, and conversion brings peace and somehow recruits the potency of former chiefly authority to that renewed social order. As White himself points out, there is no need for subtle interpretative techniques to extract such meanings from the ceremony: "Invented ritual tends towards self-conscious sophistication, leaving little to the interpretative imagination. In the gift-giving sequence [in which various dignitaries presented the new paramount chief with symbolic gifts], each presentation framed its own significance with an accompanying utterance to the effect: 'Take this symbol of activity X.' The gifts of government and indigenous leadership were even labeled 'symbols' in the written program" (p. 229).

This description is the source of my uncertainty, and in my view raises a question that could be addressed to White's volume in general (in much the same way as the installation of a new "paramount chief" is emblematic of local understandings of conversion). The particular meanings conveyed through historical narrative, skits, and anecdotes are very clearly displayed in the situations described by White. So much so, in fact, that at some points it seems that we are dealing with some form of forcefully constructed and displayed ideology, which presents itself as the only natural, plausible, and meaningful reading of the history of the island. Indeed, this is what most historical ideologies do or try to do. However, to the extent that this discourse is presented as constructed, as a manifestation of agency, it is difficult for the reader (this reader at least) not to wonder by what processes or in what ways it actually gains preeminence. That is to say, one wants to know what agencies are involved here, and in what manner their particular understandings become authoritative.

At this point, it seems to me that White's theoretical commitments are damaging. "Agency" has been conceived at the level of the islanders as a whole, trying to produce some collective identity. This assumption seems dangerous in that it tends to obfuscate questions of legitimacy and author-

ity in an idiom of participation and "communal self-hood." Obviously, this is the idiom in which the local understanding of conversion is presented. But it is not necessarily adequate to its explanation. In other words, we know that local historical discourse produces a particular description of the conversion. But it also produces a particular description of itself, which we may not want to take at face value. If we do, we run the risk of giving a paraphrase of the ideology, rather than an explanation of its occurrence. Here I am not alluding only to the dynamics of domination, although they must be important in the constitution of such crucial discourse. I am also concerned with what one could call the cognitive dimension of these narratives, skits, and ceremonies. Not all narratives or performances are equally relevant or salient; not all of them are perceived as inherently "traditional" (that is, inherently pertinent to present circumstances). White himself addresses questions of categorization and salience in his description of the various categories of authority (pp. 202 ff.), and one might perhaps need a similar attention to individual representations in the description of historical discourse.

The installation of Bishop Tuti as the new paramount chief on Santa Isabel is presented by White (and by the participants) as a powerful symbol of unification, perhaps even identity, between artificially separated sources of legitimacy. To the outsider, however, the ceremony may seem to celebrate the fact that *kastom* authority, once perceived as competition or danger, has become for the "real" authorities, church and administration, so unimportant that participation in its rituals can be used as an innocuous political gimmick. Obviously, I am not entirely serious about this suggestion; all I want to say here is that White's theoretical stance makes it difficult to evaluate the relevance of such alternative, perhaps caricatural readings of the situation. Emphasizing "communal self-hood" may lead to neglecting the tensions on which it is built. Also, White's insistence on the "construction" of cultural "meanings" leads to blurring the distinction between what happens to local political dynamics by virtue of people's understandings and what would happen regardless of those understandings.

This very limited discussion cannot do justice to the number of crucial theoretical and ethnographic points raised by White's book. As I said above, this is mainly a request for clarification. Can we assume in this case that the self-image of a constructed ideology is a good index of its actual constitution? Can we explain its occurrence and success by the communal process of self-persuasion it depicts? These are naive queries, but they are legitimate ones, in that White's book deserves to be read outside the limited readership of Pacific studies and will therefore raise questions of this type.

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Anthropology's History and Other Good Stories

The reviews of ***Identity through History*** by Pascal Boyer, Margaret Jolly, and Lin Poyer offer a welcome opportunity to reexamine some of the books aims and approaches. Given that issues of history and identity are even busier sites of anthropological activity today than they were five years ago, this is also a chance to reflect on problems that beset work in the area generally. Each of these reviewers offers perceptive comments that do as much to articulate as to critique. In addition, Jolly and Poyer give significant comparative perspectives from their own substantial research in the Pacific.

Jolly locates ***Identity through History*** at the intersection of three trajectories in contemporary anthropology: indigenous and European historical practices, the interrelation of custom and Christianity, and the ethnography of person and collectivity. This is an astute summation. One could rephrase these themes either upward in terms of the book's general concern with identity formation or downward toward more particular problems of Melanesian ethnology, such as leadership (big-men, chiefs) or social movements (Christianity, cargo cults).

The tension between these rephrasings marks the book's attempt to reach multiple audiences. In the end, however, it is clear that the audience is primarily that of professional anthropology. How could it be otherwise, for a volume presented as number 83 in the "Cambridge Studies in Social and Cultural Anthropology"? In retrospect, however, even a volume published in such a comfortable academic niche could have benefited from more attention to the problems that now arise in the more complex publics of contemporary ethnography.

A Genealogy

A brief biographical note about the advent of my research on Santa Isabel may help to locate the book within the longer sweep of anthropology in Melanesia and the Pacific. I first traveled to the Solomon Islands in 1974, with my entry made easy by British administrators working at the end of the colonial era. After previous fieldwork assisting Theodore Schwartz in Papua New Guinea, I had selected the Solomons as a good site for dissertation research based on advice from Harold Scheffler and Roger Keesing. Keesing had made a brief trip to Santa Isabel, where no anthropology had been

done previously, and had noted the Maringe area as an interesting location for future research.

At that time, the possibility of doing primary documentation in an anthropologically "unknown" area had strong appeal, even though I had originally planned to work in a community where I could draw on prior research for a more focused study of social cognition. Numerous projects had been undertaken in the Solomons by such notable anthropologists as Ian Hogbin, Raymond Firth, William Davenport, Torben Monberg, Roger Keesing, and Harold Scheffler, as well as Douglas Oliver and Eugene Ogan on Bougainville. Yet Santa Isabel had been overlooked. The overlooking is revealing. Whereas the small and remote Polynesian outliers within the Solomons archipelago had been extensively studied by Firth, Hogbin, Monberg, and Richard Feinberg (to be joined later by William Donner on Sikaiana), major islands such as Santa Isabel and Makira had been bypassed.

One reason for this is that Christianity was generally not regarded as a relevant subject for anthropological inquiry. To the extent that anthropology defined itself in terms of the study of difference, and specifically of non-Western difference, Christianized islands were regarded as less important sites for ethnographic work. Postwar anthropology in the Pacific was primarily interested in the study of **traditional** culture, accessed through the unconverted or the memories of the old. None of the essays in the book **Gods, Ghosts and Men in Melanesia** (Lawrence and Meggitt 1965), for example, dealt with Christianity as a primary focus. With the exception of Hogbin's **Experiments in Civilization** (1970), the only major works focusing on Christianity in the Solomons were produced by missionary scholars (for example, Tippett 1967; Whiteman 1983). And the aim of the latter to provide enlightened advice to the missions and churches tended to remove them from mainstream theoretical debates.

Let us hope that in some not-too-distant future an intellectual historian will chart anthropology's ambivalent treatment of Christianity in Pacific cultures. Recent work in the Solomons shows a sharp turnaround in this respect, with Burt's ethnography of the Kwara'ae on Malaita focusing on local Christianity (1993), as well as the recent dissertation by Christine Dureau on Christianity in women's lives in Simbo in the western Solomons (1994). Within the last twenty years, the field has moved from deliberate avoidance of Christianity as a form of Westernization or contamination to focused research on Christianity as a site of transaction between indigenous and foreign meanings, or local and state interests and so forth (Kaplan 1995). Seen as an **indigenous** religion, local Christian practices are increasingly interpreted as modes of resistance to the state and global development (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991). Inverting the old modernization/assimila-

tion paradigm, interpretations of local culture as resistance are now practi-
cally de rigueur in anthropology and cultural studies.

While I can't say that my initial interest in Santa Isabel had much to do
with the significance of Melanesian Christianity, once I began fieldwork on
the island it was unavoidable. The salience of Christian identity and of col-
lective memories of conversion asserted themselves in a variety of ways. But
there is more at issue here than the discovery of what is relevant, locally.
More important is the recognition--now widely acknowledged--that cul-
tures are not bounded systems, but processes of meaning-making that medi-
ate both understanding and power in everyday life. In light of this, the focus
for extended fieldwork has shifted from the explication of discrete cultures
to the analysis of cultural encounters and transactions where meanings and
truths are produced--however problematically--in public discourse.

Anthropologies of Conjuncture

Jolly notes the contrast between my account of Santa Isabel society and
Roger Keesing's writing about the militantly pagan Kwaio of neighboring
Malaita island. Although Keesing's book **Custom and Confrontation** had not
yet been published, the Kwaio politics of custom he describes represents an
important set of contrasts with the Isabel situation. Jolly is correct in sug-
gesting that I could have exploited this contrast more effectively, not only to
highlight differences between a society that incorporated Christianity and
one that resisted it, but also for the purpose of sharpening a theoretical
argument about how to study identity formation under conditions of coloni-
zation, decolonization, or globalization.

Identity through History argues that moments of cultural encounter,
such as the arrival of missionaries and subsequent conversion to Christianity,
constitute particularly salient points of cultural production, especially in
regard to the formation of collective identities. In other words, such mo-
ments offer a strategic focus for understanding understanding, for cultural
analysis. Talk of identity tends to bubble up in the spaces between cultural
systems, where transactions in objects, emotions, and ideas may unsettle
established orthodoxies and create new possibilities for social life. As other-
wise solidified categories jostle against one another, they may be reformed
in attempts to accommodate new social, political, and economic conditions.
In the case of Santa Isabel, to be a "Christian person" in the mid-twentieth
century was to open up a set of potentials for positioning oneself and one's
community in relation to wider regional, national, and global horizons.

In Melanesia, one of the indexes of the salience of cultural production in
spaces-in-between is the use of pidgin terminology in colonial and postcolo-

nial societies. Pidgin originates precisely between groups who lack shared communicative knowledge, expressing ideas that become relevant in the borderzones of intercultural relations. Words such as **kastom, kalja** (culture), or **sif** (chief) in particular point to understandings of self and other that mediate relations between indigenous and Western, local and foreign, and so forth.

One of the liabilities of the metaphor of "pidginization," however, is that it connotes simplification. If anything, Christianization adds greater complexity to both local and foreign cultural forms, producing transformations of indigenous practices that remain situated in local institutions while linking them to new fields of meaning and power. To interpret them requires knowledge of a broader range of contextualizations, to be explored through vernacular languages **and** newly emergent formations.

Jolly perceptively notes that there is an undeveloped argument between my analysis of the active way in which Isabel people have appropriated Christian practice for their own purposes and the commonly stated view that Christianity tends to overlay, suppress, or otherwise erode indigenous religion. Both Jolly and Poyer cite the sentence that criticizes analyses of 'Western" ideologies as impositions on non-Western minds: "But Christian ideology has not been simply passively recorded on Pacific minds like a tape-recorder left running in the background of a Western conversation" (p. 179).

As Jolly surmises, Roger Keesing's writing on the Kwaio was one of the targets of this assertion. Given his role as an advocate for the pagan Kwaio in their efforts to resist the colonizing forces of church and state, it was inevitable that he would focus on the corrosive power of the colonial government and Christian missions. As a result, he tended to paint the remainder of the Solomons with the broad brush of cultural invasion and hegemony. But such interpretations tend to foreclose possibilities for comparative analysis of other kinds of localized negotiation and appropriation (cf. Thomas 1991), including comparisons between varieties of Solomon Islands Christianity.

In focusing the book on constructions of identity, other, more traditional subjects of anthropology get dispersed in the writing. This may be the reason for Poyer's comment that the book fails to deal directly with religion. This is somewhat puzzling, given that the central trope is that of a religious identity--the Isabel "Christian person." What, then, might constitute a more satisfying ethnography of religion? The question raises the perennial question in comparative studies: is any generic English-language concept (in this case, that of "religion") a good point of departure for the investigation of non-Western knowledge practices? Ironically, Keesing, in his book **Kwaio Religion** (1982), answers in the negative, suggesting that the global category "religion" may get the ethnography of spirit practices off on the wrong track.

But Poyer's comment does raise an important aspect of the book's treatment of Isabel Christianity. That is, the book could do more to explore the personal meanings and conflicts associated with Christian norms for individual islanders. More attention to the experiential dimensions of Christianity could illuminate the negotiation of Christian forms across generations, genders, or ideologies. Narrative passages such as that of the Isabel man relating his harrowing encounter with bush spirits help to break up the kind of generalizing that presents a seamless picture of communal identity as monolithic, untroubled, and easily internalized by an entire population.

My interest in the emotional meanings of Christian identity **is** concerned with exploring the personal significance of cultural practices such as church rituals or mundane talk of being a "Christian person." The personal and pragmatic dimensions of such cultural constructions are particularly evident in activities where emotions are close to the surface, and even the subject of active manipulation. For example, fears of sorcery and forest spirits are the context for many of the Christian practices discussed in the book. Persistent attempts to cleanse the environment of malevolent spirits represent a religious discourse that combines moral, emotional, and spiritual dimensions.

Person / Self / Identity

A central problem running through the book is the significance of core metaphors of the person, primarily those expressed in identities such as the "Christian person" **(naikno Khilo'au)** or "paramount chief." The argument is that such constructs do not gain their significance from structural relations with other, contrastive categories (such as "heathen" ancestors), but from moral discourse on a wide range of subjects, from sexuality to illness to social relations. Poyer alludes to this when she notes that "self-understanding and collective representations are never far apart" in the book.

Historically the kinds of social theory that inform anthropological inquiry have tended to split the social universe into opposed realms of personal-individual-psychological and public-collective-social. The argument of **Identity through History** is that public culture in general, and historical discourse in particular, mediate these realms. By focusing on historical practices and narratives, the book shows how statements about the past locate the self in social time and space, at the same time as they create collective identities in wider arenas of intergroup politics.

Conversion narratives are about the transformation of an imagined community of local Christians from heathen to Christian. Such stories remain salient for most people and communities in Santa Isabel today (more on this

below). They are histories **of** and **in** conjuncture that not only **represent** moments of encounter, but may **re-create** them in acts of retelling. In other words, this is a kind of living history, or a way of reliving history, where the identity and authority of speaker and audience are reconstructed in moments of performance.

Jolly's attention to my own arrival story is relevant here. My presence in the Maringe area of Santa Isabel re-created a set of structural relations between insiders and outsiders, natives and Europeans, that is also the subject of conversion stories, concerned as they are with transactions between local and foreign actors. The fact that a new, somewhat anomalous foreigner can be brought into the very same spaces where first encounters with missionaries took place and regaled with stories of that time works not only to reaffirm those categories, but also to domesticate the foreigner according to locally-authored scripts.

This bit of reflexive storytelling is a strategic section of the ethnography. But it is one that I only added at a later stage of writing, having originally regarded the events of arrival as too obvious and preliminary to be of much importance. Rather than distorting the cultural order, however, my presence turned out to be a useful example of precisely the sort of situation that evokes identity talk, where local and foreigner negotiate their mutual relation. And what better type of foreigner than an anthropologist with a declared interest in custom to provide an audience for stories about the transition from native past to modern present?

The book is also concerned with "why" questions. Why are conversion stories so compelling for certain people and communities at particular moments in time? Why are they repeated? These questions raise competing theories of power and person, calling for choices among varieties of discourse analysis and theory. Acknowledging that structures of power determine who may speak about what when, and hence what subjects gain space in the collective consciousness, such regimes of authority do not account for the interests, emotions, and desires of everyday experience.

Even in such an abstract exercise as the school essay quoted by Jolly, the object of memory is the subject of history. History is not only a topic, but the medium for articulating a culturally constituted subjectivity. The imagined subjectivity of the boy's ancestors, projected into the past, works to represent affective dimensions of the self. By attributing emotions of fear to the past and love to the present, the essay formulates a sense of self-understanding that is not only understood, but desired. In this way, historical discourse presumes more complex forms of agency and subjectivity than is often the case in theories of discourse as power.

Cognition / Narrative / Memory

Boyer comments that I have avoided making the book's methodological commitments explicit. To some extent the book is captive to the very subject of narrative with which it is concerned. Written in conventional ethnographic style, it works at smoothing over disparate types of cultural, linguistic, and cognitive data, weaving together local voices and historical narration in a more-or-less continuous stream. Another approach would have been to exploit such disparities, drawing attention to the multiple agendas at work here. Fracturing the writing in this way might have had the effect of opening up more discussion of issues of agency and hegemony.

As written, it is still possible for Boyer to conclude that the book conceives of agency "at the level of the islanders as a whole, trying to produce some collective identity." To the contrary, *Identity through History* attempts to go beyond the binary of individual/communal and conceptualize the self and agency in more transactional and mediational terms. It does this by focusing on communicative practices that make up social identities and cultural selves. As noted by Boyer, such a focus requires rethinking the tools generally associated with "methodological individualism." Individualism begets psychologism in its drive for "underlying" or "inner" realities as the ultimate source of agency and motivation. At the risk of oversimplifying, the book argues that analysis of individual thought and action cannot be adequately served by a theory of agency confined to internalized cognition and motivation. Such individualism is particularly inadequate in societies where subjectivity is constantly constructed within intensely interpersonal social environments.

The attempt to complicate the binary of individual and society is supported by recent developments in the study of cognition that show everyday mental processes to be embedded in loosely structured contexts of talk and interaction (for example, Hutchins 1995). The theory of self that looks to transactions in meaning as a critical process in identity formation builds upon a parallel shift in approaches to cognition generally. Cognitive anthropology has evolved from an early interest in mapping concepts and categories (a tradition now partially reincarnated in schema theory) to an interest in practices of representation that mediate comprehension, thus linking cognitive process to social activity and history.

Traces of the earlier lexical-semantic approach to cognition are evident in the books analysis of leadership categories using techniques that represent key terms by mapping them in spatial diagrams showing semantic similarity. It is surprising that none of the reviewers for this forum chose to evaluate this aspect of the books methodology--what Poyer mentions as its "unex-

pected foray into scaling and clustering techniques that connects ethnopsy-chology and social roles." It may be that this part of the book is passed over because the data are presented only as "heuristic" and not representative of anything inside peoples' heads. It may also be that these methods are just unfamiliar and anomalous enough to resist easy characterization. Whatever the case, the book does argue that these findings reinforce arguments about the centrality of identity models made in other, more discursive ways throughout the book.

The diagrams of similarities among words such as "chief," "priest," or "headman" may be imagined as a set of family resemblances among related categories. Such data demonstrate a degree of cultural coherence and, yes, of psychological reality, for concepts that are otherwise dispersed across a complex terrain of situations and genres. Boyer is correct in pointing out that the book does not develop the implied argument: that conceptual models inform, and are informed by, public negotiations of culture and identity. However, the short lexical foray into an artificially constructed semantic space does serve an expository purpose. It draws attention to the need to relate conceptual process to social-historical process--an issue that has been perhaps the central problem for Vygotskian psychology. Whereas Vygotsky and others articulated theories of mind as mediation, there have been few attempts to locate cultural models in the ***longue durée*** of a particu-lar community's social history. By focusing on the middle ground of public constructions of identity, rather than on the personal negotiations of individ-ual careers, the book asks, "How does mediated understanding affect the outcome of political process?' and, conversely, "How do political relations constrain the production of understanding?'

As noted by each of the reviewers, my approach to these questions focuses particularly on efforts to define (or "revive") traditional chiefs. Talk about chiefs, whether in the form of conversation, narrative, or ceremonial activities, turns out to be particularly salient for the negotiations of power and authority that occur at the intersection of nation-state and local polity. One of the difficulties with such an approach, however, is that the ethnogra-phy itself becomes another vehicle for reproducing local hegemony.

The Conditions of Culture

Noting the book's constructivist bent, Poyer asks what happens when one gives up the solidity of positivist readings of person or culture for an inter-pretive never-never land where "everything shapes everything" or, to para-phrase the old woman who argued epistemology with William James, where "it's interpretations all the way down." Whether one seeks explanation or,

more modestly, interpretation, choices ***do*** have to be made about how to ground readings of culture. Poyer's "nagging suspicion" that the volume has somehow skimmed over the material and political underpinnings of all this elaborate identity work is made increasingly relevant by the rapidly devolving demographic, ecological, and economic trends in the Solomon Islands. One does not have to go far to find this materiality. Her question, "Why do politicians--especially national politicians--support chiefs?" is much to the point in light of the fact that chiefly revival is overtly aimed at seeking the recognition of central authorities within the state.

The book argues that chiefs have enjoyed renewed currency in the imaginary of the postindependence nation-state because of their structural position mediating local and state political systems and, more specifically, because of their role as arbiters of descent and land ownership. As is common in the development picture for many small, non-Western nations, the Solomon Islands' economy after independence has been marked by increasing debt and dependency, offset only by massive resource extraction. The current resource crisis is caused by a rapacious multinational logging industry that has rapidly become the biggest earner of foreign revenue. As logging has increased at a breathless pace, widespread corruption and ecological degradation have come with it.

There is abundant irony in the postcolonial predicament of the traditional chief. Chiefs, regarded as the embodiment of local community by many, are legitimized as authorities over land matters within the apparatus of the national political system and so become a possible means for the type of privatization and commodification requisite to contractual arrangements with multinational corporate interests. Recognized by national law, traditional chiefs provide a channel for foreign capital (and its connections in national government) to tap desired resources in island economies.

Whereas this interpretation captures the macropolitical context for reviving traditional chiefs, it tells very little about how and why the traditional chief becomes a meaningful or desirable figure within ***local*** social worlds. The analysis of chiefs as nodes in relations between inside and outside, local and state, or indigenous and foreign, makes it possible to examine chiefly identity as a point of mediation that both draws upon and transforms enduring themes in Isabel society. Talk of chiefs invokes something old to make something new--and something useful--in an evolving contemporary world. This has been the cognitive/cultural/political work of the category "chief" throughout colonial history Indeed, much of the book deals with interactions between the colonial centers and rural peripheries that make up the shifting contexts for local movements.

The paramount chief is the most prominent, and densely coded, example of this process. Here the metaphor of "invention," as in the "invention of tradition," fails to capture the more complicated processes of accommodation and incorporation that are always bound up in such transcultural mediations. As Jolly notes in her comment on my description of the ceremony to install Bishop Dudley Tuti as paramount chief, "This retelling of the early events of conversion legitimated the installation of Tuti and condensed the connection of person, power, and local identity." The book attempts to explore the personal and emotional significance of chiefs without losing sight of the fact that they are embedded in global transactions of nation-state and world church. The seductive aspect of work on dominant symbols, however, is that they are likely to appear as "given" or natural, rather than as constantly constructed or negotiated.

The problem of focusing on the most prevalent, public histories, such as the chief-centered, church-centered constructions of the paramount chief, is that they obscure other formations. I am more acutely aware now than I was when I wrote the book of the silences that surround the resonant voices of storytellers talking about Christian conversion and the rise of priests, catechists, and Christian chiefs as the focal point for the island's "new" Anglican society.

Poyer makes the point that the stories that occupy me in this book were the stories that I encountered first and most often. There is good reason for this. My own efforts to discover and record were directed by people who not only had the authority to speak to me as a relatively high-status outsider, but who were themselves actively working at reproducing a desired discourse of local identity. What is left unstated is that dominant histories are not the only histories, that they succeed by virtue of solidifying particular views and marginalizing others. Although these histories may mask some of the uncertainties and contradictions that underlie Santa Isabel identities, they are never finally victorious, they never achieve complete hegemony. If they did, history would stop and we would not see today the kinds of innovation that are transforming the island in ways that make the neat picture of an indigenous Christian chiefly identity almost nostalgic.

This issue of cultural hegemony is related to the question that Poyer raises about the differentiation of multiple politics of culture. Poyer wonders whether there might be "systematic political interests at play (economic? age? gender? descent line?)" in the "broadly conceived vision of Cheke Holo culture." There certainly are such interests; and the book deals directly with only one: descent. In working with people from several distinct lines of descent, I examine the ways multiple identities, positioned within a

hierarchy of social categories, may express both difference and commonality within a single context. Narratives of conversion are not simply texts, they are grounded histories of specific descent lines. The book argues that such histories can simultaneously represent the distinct identities of localized descent groups while affirming the basis for shared identity in a common Anglican Christianity.

Other dimensions of Poyer's question merit examination. Of the various internal relations and tensions that might complicate the overly neat portrait of Isabel identity painted in the book, such as between men and women, young and old, or those in the cash and subsistence economies, the most obvious absence is gender. Poyer calls this as it is: "the nearly complete absence of women as actors or speakers." Despite my attempt to rationalize this silence, women's voices are muted here. In part, this is because the book focuses on the type of male-centered heroic narratives that are produced repeatedly as collective history.

The point that Poyer and Jolly raise, however, is worth underlining. From a methodological perspective, a cultural analysis of dominant narratives **requires** attention to the margins and silences, so as to illuminate the contexts in which dominant forms do their work of naturalizing meaning and power. Such an analysis would focus on the tensions that arise between dominant images and the experiences of others, such as women, youth, or in-marrying spouses, who find them to be less relevant or satisfying to their lives. Another source of variation that deserves mention is that of regional difference. It is important to keep in mind that the book is based on intensive work in only one locale--a portion of one linguistic / geographical area. Similar work undertaken elsewhere would produce alternative perspectives on identity formation in Santa Isabel. These qualifications should not, however, overshadow the observation that the prevailing, chief-centered narratives of Christianization in Santa Isabel have enjoyed monumental success during the mid-to-late twentieth century. The mythic stories discussed in the book represent a kind of "consensus model" shared by a remarkable cross section of the islands diverse population.

Possible Futures

What type of theory might emerge from this book (and others like it) to take on questions about self-understanding and the historical conditions of political and economic change? Poyer raises the intriguing possibility that historical ethnographies such as **Identity through History** might work toward generalizations about historical narrative and its relation to the dialectics of

meaning and politics. On the one hand, such generalizations are capable of informing current work on the role of narrative in mediating cognition and self. On a regional basis, we now have enough materials to embark on more deliberately comparative work, with future studies to aim at identifying the direction of particular historical formations.

From my vantage point in Hawai'i, where colonial history has become the principal framework for the movement for Hawaiian sovereignty, one could hardly ask for a more contrastive set of cultural histories than that typical of Santa Isabel in the 1970s and that taking root in Hawai'i during the same time period. Whereas both represent narratives of colonial encounter and transformation, with missionaries and chiefs as central actors in the drama of change, one offers a narrative of incorporation and progress while the other is a narrative of subjugation and ethnocide. Although these seem so remote from one another as to make comparison impossible, they can be usefully compared as narratives that utilize common conceptual and rhetorical strategies, yet support distinct types of cultural politics. The comparison of multiple historiographies can open up new questions about the role of history in mediating the culture and politics of identity.

With regard to this book's ethnographic concerns, what can be said about the future. of the forms of collective identity dominant in the Santa Isabel of the mid-to-late twentieth century? Given that the book portrays the chief more as a topic of ambivalent and contentious talk than as a solidified category, it would be mischievous to attempt to forecast the political futures of chiefs on the island. The position of chief harbors a number of potential trajectories. On the one hand, it is capable of exerting real influence on the course of sociopolitical change. On the other hand, if circumstances push in other directions, chiefs could become a kind of folkloric relic, touted in governmental rhetoric but marginalized in the realpolitik of state-sponsored development. But as long as there is talk and rhetorical attention given to chiefs, they will remain relevant to self and community.

To return to the theme raised at the outset, the salience of chiefs and the shape of Isabel identity generally will not be determined within bounded cultural systems, but in the borderzones between local and state, indigenous and foreign. Although it is important not to overlook the power of the local and the mundane, it is the transactions and transmigrations of Isabel men and women moving across the borders of island and nation that are stimulating much of today's cultural innovation. New evangelical churches and local adaptations of reggae music are good examples of the kinds of cultural formation now emerging in the quickening pace of mass-mediated images traversing the island's borders.

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REVIEWS

Roger Neich, ***Painted Histories: Early Maori Figurative Painting.*** Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1993. Pp. xii, 330, with foreword by Cliff Whiting, maps, figures, tables, color plates, appendixes, bibliography, indexes. NZ$79.95 cloth.

Reviewed by Toon van Meijl, University of Nijmegen

THIS BOOK WILL UNDOUBTEDLY become a landmark in the study of Maori art. The New Zealand anthropologist and art curator Roger Neich has documented in great detail the remarkable innovation of figurative painting that emerged in the decoration of Maori ancestral meetinghouses during the second half of the nineteenth century. The importance of this book, however, reaches beyond figurative painting per se, since the author relates in a comparative analysis the forms and semantics of this new Maori art style to other Maori art forms and the changes they were undergoing in colonial circumstances. Furthermore, he situates the development and the demise of figurative painting against the contemporary sociopolitical background. By doing so, Neich provides penetrating insights, not only into figurative painting but also into the art forms from which it emerged and to which it was related, directly or indirectly, in the context of the decoration of Maori ancestral meetinghouses. His analysis of the history and the changing symbolism of Maori meetinghouses, as embodied in their constitution and decoration from approximately 1880 onwards, is no doubt the most comprehensive and most profound study of the subject to date.

Over a period of twenty years Neich documented and meticulously examined eighty-five different meetinghouses that contained figurative paintings;

an overview of his survey is incorporated in appendix 5 (pp. 249-307). He
visited all houses that have survived and spoke to descendants of the artists
involved in their construction and decoration. In addition, he traveled all
over the world to search in museums and archives for detailed information
about the history of those meetinghouses and their artistic expressions. His
research shows that Maori figurative painting was a much more widespread
and popular art form than has hitherto been assumed. It has been ignored in
favor of woodcarving since the beginning of this century, when orthodox
doctrines regarding Maori traditional arts and crafts were introduced and
became the basis on which figurative painting was generally conceived of as
tainted with European influences and thus degenerate and decadent. Neich
shows, however, that figurative painting not only derived from the naturalis-
tic art introduced by Europeans, but also involved a transformation of tradi-
tional Maori art.

   Neich distinguishes between three different strands of figurative paint-
ing: naturalistic drawing, the painting of figures derived from woodcarving
forms and motifs, and **kowhaiwhai** painting (abstract curvilinear patterns on
canoe paddles and prows as well as on meetinghouse rafters). Of these figu-
rative genres only naturalistic drawing was modeled after the conventions of
European painting and drawing; the other two traditions developed as trans-
formations from indigenous Maori art forms. Apart from a few figures in
archaic rock art, naturalistic designs were not used in Maori art before the
arrival of Europeans. But soon after the beginning of European settlement,
Maori people took up this new mode of artistic expression and gradually
refined it in the course of the nineteenth century. At the same time, how-
ever, a tendency towards a more pictorial representation of figures emerged
in woodcarving, which in the second half of the nineteenth century led to
the transposition of carving figure forms into painting. Parallel to this devel-
opment, **kowhaiwhai** patterns began diverging from the traditional abstract,
symmetrical, repeating, translational designs and developed into figurative,
nonsymmetrical, nonrepeating designs.

   The analysis of the transformation of abstract **kowhaiwhai** patterns into
figurative designs is the most extensive in the book, probably because it pro-
vides a superb illustration of the strength of Neich's theoretical approach. In
his analysis he combines, on the one hand, the contention of F. Allan Han-
son that the study of traditional Maori art should move beyond the recon-
struction of representational iconography and instead locate the semantics
of abstract forms in the formal structure of their design, with, on the other
hand, the semiological distinction set out by Roland Barthes between deno-
tational and connotational meaning. In relation to **kowhaiwhai** paintings
Neich argues, then, that their most basic design element is the **koru,** a curv-

ing stalk with a bulb at one end, the meaning of which in a Maori perspective is strongly associated with the growth of a plant, an unfolding fern in particular. At the level of denotation **kowhaiwhai** designs might seem far removed from notions of growth or development, but given their position within the total scheme of meetinghouses the main connotations of **kowhaiwhai** paintings clearly relate to ideas of genealogy and descent. Following these connotations the later transformation of **kowhaiwhai** design elements into actual figurative representations of ancestors might be seen as attempts to achieve a more literal or denotational expression of the traditional connotations. This interpretation is closely related to other changes in Maori artistic expressions, such as the gradual shift from aspective to perspective representation, which in turn parallels the gradual displacement of traditional, mythological concepts of time and space by European notions of history and change.

These transformations and the way in which they are reflected in nineteenth-century Maori art are all dealt with by the author in a theoretically sophisticated manner, inspired not only by the work of the French semiologist Barthes, but also by that of Uspensky, the influential Soviet semiotician of the visual arts. In spite of the high level of abstraction in his theoretical analysis, I do believe that this book is accessible to nonprofessional readers, whereas professional readers will be interested in Neich's fine theoretical synthesis and particularly in its application to the detailed evidence he provides to substantiate his arguments.

Neich's analysis of figurative painting focuses specifically on the changes it symbolizes, both in form and content, in Maori society in the nineteenth century. Maori figurative painting clearly functioned to come to terms with the rapid changes in Maori society that ensued from colonization. It aimed at metaphorically reordering Maori society in the light of the increasing numbers of Europeans settling in New Zealand and taking control of the sociopolitical situation. At the same time, figurative painting accomplished a role in communicating internal identity differences in Maori society. For that reason, too, it gradually disappeared again in the beginning of the twentieth century, when orthodox traditional Maori woodcarving was deliberately revived to express the emerging need for a national Maori identity in relation to the dominant society of European settlers.

Another important reason why woodcarving was favored to the detriment, of figurative painting in the construction of a national symbol for Maori culture and identity was that the most influential school of carving in the beginning of this century was that of the Arawa tribe, which had fought alongside the European government during the New Zealand Wars in the 1860s, whereas figurative painting was closely associated with the millennial move-

ment of the "rebellious" prophet and visionary leader Te Kooti Rikirangi, the founder of the Ringatu Church. Te Kooti was very influential in the development of the contemporary meetinghouse towards the end of the nineteenth century, fusing for the first time the two functions of church and chiefly meetinghouse in one structure serving the needs of the entire community. In order to boost Maori self-esteem and create a sense of pride in Maori cultural tradition, Te Kooti also promoted the arts of the meetinghouse, including representational **tukutuku** panels (latticework), naturalistic carvings, innovative **kowhaiwhai,** and figurative paintings. The arts in the meetinghouses that were erected in the region in which Te Kooti's influence was most intense covered all aspects of tribal concerns, both regarding the role of ancestors in mythology and in respect of contemporary political interests. The new narrative style expressing the latter, particularly in figurative paintings, was clearly symbolic of the rapid changes sweeping Maori society at the time.

Unfortunately, Neich does not elaborate the far-reaching implications of his analysis for the study of contemporary reifications of Maori culture and tradition and the way in which they are currently represented in the traditional arts, particularly woodcarving. In a seminal paper about the influence of European art patrons on the construction of orthodox doctrines regarding the representation of supposedly "authentic" Maori culture and tradition in woodcarving, he has previously discussed the context in which figurative painting was suppressed as an innovative art form believed to be perverted by European influences (Neich 1983). In his monograph on figurative painting, therefore, I had expected to see a more extensive discussion of why figurative painting was unable to become accepted as a new art form and what the explicit views of the European art patrons, among others, were about figurative painting. Neich's discussion of that topic in this book is restricted to an indirect analysis of the circumstantial evidence that explains the emergence of contemporary forms of woodcarving at the expense of figurative painting. He does not provide data on the discourse of figurative painting in itself, only on the discourse about woodcarving. Neich acknowledges the absence of detailed information on the discourse of figurative painting (p. 197), but in view of his comprehensiveness it is surprising that he does not explain why this is so. Given the popularity of figurative painting in certain regions toward the end of the nineteenth century, it is unlikely that such a discourse never existed. A reconstruction of indigenous as well as European perceptions of figurative painting could have deepened our understanding of the emergence of so-called authentic representations of Maori culture and tradition that are still dominant today.

There are, of course, other criticisms to be made, notwithstanding my

admiration for the interdisciplinary character of this book and the depth of the analysis. The main point I would like to raise in this regard concerns the composition of the book. Although Neich clearly focuses his analysis towards a discussion of figurative painting, this new genre in Maori arts, however, is dealt with directly only in the final three chapters. The first five chapters all contain information that the author provides to analyze figurative painting against a background of changes in other art forms in nineteenth-century Maori society, particularly the role of painting and *kowhaiwhai* patterns, their placement in meetinghouses, and the changes they express therein, such as the new role of space and time. As a result of this composition, issues are raised in the first two parts of the book that leave the reader confused until the final chapters, in which they are comprehensively resolved for the first time. It would have been enlightening had Neich begun with a clear documentation of the subject matter, such as the important distinction between the three different strands of figurative painting (now described in chapter 7), which in subsequent parts he could have unpacked. In such a way, the author would have been able to avoid the impression given in the long chapter on *kowhaiwhai* (chapter 3), for example, that figurative painting emerged primarily from these abstract curvilinear designs. Furthermore, it would have strengthened the role of history in his analysis of change in Maori society and Maori arts. To situate an analysis in a historical perspective it is, after all, unnecessary to prefix a historical sketch. History may well be postfixed to explain issues that do not by definition demand a chronological order.

In addition, I wonder to what extent Neich's empirical analysis has been directed by his theoretical perspective on history as derived mainly from Sahlins's theory of structural transformation. In some parts, particularly when the evidence is mainly circumstantial, Neich applies a rather mechanical model of change. This problem is particularly acute in his analysis of changing *kowhaiwhai* styles, when Neich argues that within the space of a couple of decades the *kowhaiwhai* designs were transposed from canoe paddles onto the rafters of meetinghouses, reflecting the diminishing importance of war canoes as cultural emblems and the increasing importance of meetinghouses as symbols of Maori tribal identity. The thrust of this hypothesis cannot be disputed on the basis of the consistent body of evidence presented in the book, but the exceptional order of the transformation as sketched by Neich does not seem entirely plausible either, in my view. The perfect homology between theory and empirical evidence in Neich's analysis may make readers suspicious; a slightly less linear mode of change would seem more obvious.

Notwithstanding these comments, however, the level of empirical detail

in this book at least leaves the reader the possibility to form his or her own opinion on the subject. In combination with the theoretical sophistication of the analysis, this will undoubtedly contribute to making the book a landmark in the study of Maori art and change in Maori colonial history.

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    1983 The Veil of Orthodoxy: Rotorua Ngati Tarawhai Woodcarving in a Changing Context. In *Art and Artists of Oceania,* ed. Sidney Mead and Bernie Kernot, 244-265. Palmerston North: Dunmore.

F. Allan Hanson and Louise Hanson, eds., ***Art and Identity in Oceania.*** Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1990. Pp. viii, 315, b/w & color illus., bibliography. US$39 cloth.

Reviewed by Alan Howard, University of Hawai'i

In some respects the title of this handsomely produced and stimulating volume 'is misleading. Only two essays in the collection address directly the relationship between art and identity, one by Hirini Mead on the New Zealand Maori, the other by Vincent Megaw on the Australian Aborigines. Issues concerning the individual identity of artists are implicit in a number of the papers, and the role that various art forms play in perpetuating earlier cultural formations is brought out in others. But on the whole, the identity part of the art and identity equation is underdeveloped.

In the introduction, the editors provide a rationale for the title, suggesting the symposium that spawned the volume may have been more interesting along these lines than the book. They inform us that "the self-conscious expression of identity in art was 'in the air' more than any other topic at the symposium," and that a "degree of resentment was expressed by some Pacific islanders present that scholars of non-Pacific heritage living in Europe or North America would presume to identify the meanings and importance of art in Pacific cultures" (pp. 3-4). If the Hansons had not included such statements, readers would be unaware of their significance, for they are not reflected in the remainder of the chapters, with the partial exception of Mead's personal, eloquent, and moving account of the meaning of Maori art to his own sense of identity. I make this point to warn prospective readers that if they are primarily interested in issues of cultural identity they may find the volume disappointing.

Like most volumes that derive from symposia, the chapters are somewhat

uneven in coverage and quality. The impression I received from reading through the volume was more on the order of a sequence of papers in a high-quality journal than reading a book with a coherent theme. However, readers who approach it with a healthy curiosity about the state of the arts in Oceania today may nevertheless find the volume stimulating. Most of the essays are well conceived and well written, and the overall effect can be likened to viewing a set of vivid snapshots (an effect that is enhanced by an excellent assortment of high-quality illustrations and photographs). One gains a good sense of contemporary approaches to Pacific art within the academic community, along with a few hints of issues that concern Pacific Islanders.

Most chapters focus on art forms that reflect important aspects of the cultures in which they are produced. Dirk Smidt, for example, presents a functional-interpretive analysis of carved one-legged figures *(tambaran)* among the Kominimung, in the Middle Ramu River area of Papua New Guinea. The figures represent mythical ancestors who play an important role in male initiation and marriage ceremonies. Smidt provides a detailed account of the production of such figures, a contextualized description of the role they play in male initiation rites, and an iconographic analysis of the figures and motifs associated with them.

Tobias Schneebaum and Deborah Waite both examine the ceremonial significance of carved figures. Schneebaum describes carvings on a variety of artifacts in Asmat, Irian Jaya, named for recently dead relatives, which act as constant reminders to the living that all deaths must be avenged. Waite focuses her attention on the *mon* canoes in the western Solomons. Following a detailed description of canoe carvings, she explores the ritual contexts associated with canoes and fishing, and the ways in which symbolic representations reflect ritual concerns. The carvings, she suggests, "may have evoked the presence of spirits whose protection and guarantee of efficacy was sought through ritual offerings and chants" (p. 59). The metaphoric significance of ancestors, and the role played by artistic productions in ritual performances, are pervasive themes throughout the volume.

A subset of the chapters concerns the problematic origins of certain forms of artistic production. John McKesson explores the origin of New Caledonian masks, which are anomalous objects within the artistic array. Most other art forms are two-dimensional, centered on the decoration of men's houses, and associated with the ancestor cult. Masks are three-dimensional, are not used as decorations in men's houses, and are not associated with the ancestors. They are, however, linked by myths to gods and spirits. McKesson concludes that a foreign origin would account for the enigma and suggests Vanuatu as a likely possibility.

William Davenport deals with the figurative sculptures of Santa Cruz

Island, most of which were destroyed in the course of British colonial pacifi-
cation and conversion to Christianity. Once centerpieces of ritual activity,
most surviving pieces now are in museum collections around the world.
After weighing the possibility of indigenous development against diffusion
from the eastern Solomon Islands, Davenport concludes that Santa Cruz
figurative sculpture was most likely borrowed from the vicinity of Santa Ana
and Santa Catalina islands.

Masked Tamate figures of Vanikoro are the objects of Roger Rose's inves-
tigation. Tamate dancers most frequently perform at maturation rites, repre-
senting characters from a mythical cycle. The chapter includes detailed
descriptions of manufacture from a Tamate costume maker, but the main
problematic of the essay concerns when and from where the Tamate was
introduced to Vanikoro. Rose presents evidence to support a southern
origin, possibly from the Torres and Banks groups, or northern Vanuatu.

Another cluster of chapters explores the contexts of artistic production
and presentation, including changes over time. In a particularly provocative
article, Philip Lewis explores New Guinea art in three different contexts:
tourist settings, museums, and ongoing social contexts. Contrary to common
perceptions, he did not find tourist productions to be inevitably of inferior
quality to items produced for ritual performances. Following Graburn, he
questions the overemphasis that has been placed on "traditional" art forms,
pointing out that our ideas concerning what is "traditional" change, and that
yesterday's junk art may become tomorrow's valuables. We should look
beyond the forms to the multiple contexts of production, use, and meanings
in which the newer arts are made. National and local museums, he suggests,
imbue selected art forms with social value and provide models to artists and
craftsmen; they might, therefore, play a role in stimulating, and setting stan-
dards for, contemporary arts.

Roger Neich discusses historical innovations in New Zealand Maori figu-
rative painting, which is a case in point, insofar as these particular forms,
which supplemented or replaced carvings in meetinghouses, have been
downgraded and are not represented in museums or art galleries. Whereas
"traditional" carvings in meetinghouses expressed the identity of the group
through representations of ancestral figures, after the 1870s the expression
of group identity was based more on recent history, particularly in relation to
Pakeha Europeans. Neich informs us that whereas carving and tattooing
were the two Maori art forms most bound by the laws of tabu, thus stabiliz-
ing conventionalized forms, painting was not so restricted. Painters required
no special spiritual initiation and apprenticeship. As a result, untrained indi-
viduals could practice figurative painting relatively free from the rules of
tabu, and figurative painting was more capable of responding to new social
and historical conditions.

Barry Craig and Jehanne Teilhet-Fisk spotlight contexts of artistic production that are overlooked ordinarily. Craig documents relic and trophy arrays among the Mountain-Ok in central New Guinea. Arrays consist of ancestral relics along with the bones and skulls of various wild animals and jawbones of domestic pigs. These are displayed, more or less symmetrically, on the walls of men's cult houses, where rituals are performed aimed at ensuring the fertility of taro and domestic pigs, success in hunting and warfare, and good health for community members. Changes in the economy have disconnected major sectors of the population from traditional pursuits, however, with the resulting disintegration of relic and trophy arrays, and the occasional inclusion of cassette radios, suitcases full of foreign goods, and empty meat and fish cans appearing as substitutions for relics of the past.

Teilhet-Fisk presents a fascinating account of Tongan grave art, which she effectively relates to changes in social organization. As she puts it, "Grave art transgresses the Tongan system of rank, balances out the inequitable class system, and announces the emergence of a rising middle class among commoners" (p. 223). The incorporation of plastic flowers and of decorations cut from aluminum cans with petals made from multicolored bits of crepe paper, cloth, and candy wrappers is an excellent example of Lévi-Strauss's ***bricolage*** in artistic production. Teilhet-Fisk's analysis is exemplary insofar as she relates the production of grave art to other aspects of social life in a compelling manner. One can see the basis here for a comparative study that could be exceptionally revealing.

Stephanie Reynolds's essay on gender constraints in Tongan dance is less satisfying. This is the only chapter focusing on a performing art, and its inclusion adds considerably to the ad hoc impression the volume conveys. Reynolds's main point is that women's dances and dancing styles have been more conservative as a result of greater cultural constraints on women's actions, which are reflected in dance movements. The paper stands as a mere footnote to the writings of Adrienne Kaeppler, upon whose work the author draws heavily.

Several other papers appear to have been included because the authors were at the symposium rather than because their essays contributed to any central themes. Chapters on salvage art history among the Sulka of Wide Bay, East New Britain, by George Corbin; on the prehistoric sequence of Nendö Island, Santa Cruz, by Lawrence Foanaota; and an interesting historical account of the search for Tasmanian bark art by Edward Ruhe fall into this category.

Three other chapters are of a more general nature. The Hansons provide an account of what has been written about New Zealand Maori art over the years. They provide a quantitative and qualitative analysis of changing topics of concern, aesthetic judgments, and symbolic interpretations of Maori art

as reflected in the published literature. Philip Dark presents a wide-ranging, rather rambling account of the state of the arts in Oceania today Drawing upon his own travels as well as on published sources and museum collections, he discusses various ways in which artistic activities maintain a continuing link with the past, as well as innovations, borrowings, and the development of a pan-Pacific style. More general still is a chapter by Eric Schwimmer on the anthropology of the ritual arts. Perhaps it was the inclusion of this chapter, immediately following the editors' introduction, that led to my disappointment with the remainder of the volume. Schwimmer explores the nature of aesthetic discourse within anthropology and raises a number of key issues associated with iconographic interpretation. I found the essay exciting and approached subsequent chapters with the expectation that these issues would be addressed. If they were, it was only obliquely. Maybe what we need now is a symposium in which the issues Schwimmer raises are addressed directly by artists, aestheticians, anthropologists, and art historians. This would take us beyond mere description and functional analyses, and would aim to "lay bare the processes of poiesis" as they operate among artists (p. 12). It might also provide a basis for generating insights into the message content of whole performances, including redundancies, ambiguities, and contradictions conveyed in multiple channels.

The final two chapters are the only ones addressing issues of cultural identity, consciously conceived. J. V. S. Megaw raises issues concerning who has the power to define aesthetic quality and hence to determine the value of artistic productions. He points out that monetary yardsticks for Australian Aborigine art have been based on the medium rather than the message. Whereas technique and style are privileged among art critics from cosmopolitan urban cultures, it is the content of artistic productions that primarily concerns Third and Fourth World artists. Aborigine art often represents links between specific localities, and the life that inhabits those places, with the Dreamtime and thus lies at the root of Aboriginal claims to the land. "It is clear," Megaw writes, "that for Aboriginals, who claim an affinity with the harsh land of Australia and its living creatures, many of the images they create reflect their sense of a separate identity" (p. 290).

But it is the chapter by Hirini (Sydney) Moko Mead on tribal art as symbols of identity among the New Zealand Maori that brings us to the heart of the issue. He points out that only a few persons who take part in conferences on Oceanic art are associated with it for reasons of cultural heritage. Ultimately, he asserts, it is at the local level, in New Zealand at the level of the ***hapu,*** or subtribe, that art and identity coalesce. He eloquently describes the significance of Maori meetinghouses, and the artworks that adorn them, for personal identity. Commenting on his own experience he

states, "The sub-tribe group, our relatives, the **marae,** the ancestral moun-tain, the rivers, the carved house, and all of the artwork of the group, includ-ing family heirlooms, define us as persons. I cannot be understood as a mere individual who is cut adrift from my cultural roots. The roots help me to stand like a tree" (p. 280). That is what identity is all about. Perhaps that is what art in Oceania is all about. But we will have to await more representa-tions by Pacific Islanders like Mead, who can craft meanings in words we understand as well as in the visual arts, before we can know for sure.

BOOKS NOTED

RECENT PACIFIC ISLANDS PUBLICATIONS: SELECTED ACQUISITIONS, MAY-SEPTEMBER 1995

THIS LIST OF SIGNIFICANT NEW PUBLICATIONS relating to the Pacific Islands was selected from new acquisitions lists received from Brigham Young University-Hawai‘i, University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, Bernice P. Bishop Museum,. University of Auckland, East-West Center, University of the South Pacific, National Library of Australia, and the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau's Centre for Pacific Development Training. Other libraries are invited to send contributions to the Books Noted Editor for future issues. Listings reflect the extent of information provided by each institution.

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