PACIFIC STUDIES

Vol. 16, No. 4 December 1993

RIVERS (W.H.R.) REVISITED: MATRILINY IN SOUTHERN BOUGAINVILLE

PART 2: THE NASIOI, THE BUIN, DISCUSSION

Douglas L. Oliver
Honolulu

Nasioi

In 1963, when the central dialects of the four languages comprising the Southern stock of Bougainville's non-Austronesian languages were compared, that of Nasioi was judged to be the one most closely related to that of Nagovisi, with which it shared 50 percent of its test-list cognates (as compared with 27 percent shared with Siwai and 20 percent shared with Buin). At that time the Nasioi language was found to have eight subdivisions.[19] Basic reasons for the Nasioi people's greater linguistic heterogeneity probably lay in their widely scattered distribution over an extensive and exceedingly diverse terrain. During some periods of their precolonial history, more of them had resided on or near the coast, but by the beginning of this century most of the coast dwellers had moved inland--partly, no doubt, from preference and partly as refuge from the Austronesian-speaking Shortland Islanders, who were raiding and sometimes settling along the coast.

During earlier periods it is likely that some Nasioi had retained fairly frequent contacts with some Nagovisi, as evidenced by the close similarities of their languages, but during the first third of the twentieth century the uninhabited mountainous terrain between their and the Nagovisi settlements isolated them from the latter as effectively as similar terrain isolated them from the Buin. I mention these circumstances in order to contrast the Nasioi's isolation with the closer relations that

prevailed, at least during recent periods, between Nagovisi and Siwai, and between Siwai and Buin. With that said, I must indicate the extent of the Nasioi's contacts with *non*-Bougainvillians, up to and during the era that is the focus of this study.

There is credible evidence that Austronesian-speaking indigenes from the Shortland Islands had been canoeing along, sometimes settling down upon, the Nasioi coasts for decades, even centuries, before Europeans began to trade and recruit there (Terrell and Irwin 1972; Parkinson 1907). Then, in 1902 the Catholic Society of Mary established a mission station on Bougainville near present-day Kieta; a few years later they set up another station south of there at Koromira Point (Laracy 1976). In 1905 the German Colonial Administration, headquartered at Rabaul, established a post at Kieta, and at about the same time Europeans set up coconut plantations and trade stores at several places on the island's eastern coast, including some in the Nasioi region.

Thus, by the 1930s many of the Nasioi had been in closer and more frequent contact with Europeans than had the Buin, the Siwai, and, especially, the Nagovisi. Moreover, some of the coast-dwelling Nasioi had actually been residing for several decades, and probably longer, in close proximity to settlements of Shortland Islanders, a circumstance that had given rise to an exchange not only of objects and ideas but of persons as well. Similar exchanges took place between the Buin and Alu (Shortland Islands), and between the Siwai and Mono (Treasury Island), but in more episodic, less continuous ways.

The first, and up to now only, comprehensive published accounts about Nasioi indigenous society are those of anthropologist Eugene Ogan (1966, 1971, 1972), who carried out field studies there during the period between 1962 and 1978, twenty-five years after my study of Siwai. Prior to Ogan several persons, including anthropologist Beatrice Blackwood, had visited the area and written about some Nasioi "customs" (see the bibliography for works by Blackwood, Frizzi, Rausch, Parkinson, Chinnery, and Schlagenhaufen), but none of their published accounts contains information sufficient or credible enough to suit the purposes of the present study.[20]

Ogan's field studies and his resultant reports refer specifically to one portion of the Nasioi-speaking people: four Administration-created villages situated in the Aropa Valley, about four miles from the coast and at altitudes ranging from 700 to 900 feet above sea level. At the time of Ogan's initial fieldwork, the population of those villages totaled about 2,000, which comprised about one-fifth of all Nasioi-speakers.[21] In Western terms the Aropa Valley residents were at the time more "pro-

gressive" than, say, those of southeastern and western Nasioi and less so than those to the north--that is, those nearer the commercial and administrative center, Kieta. However, in line with the general purposes of this comparative study, I shall focus on Ogan's reconstructions of the earlier, more "traditional" features of Nasioi society.[22]

Ogan distinguishes three eras--stages?--in his generalizations about the history of Nasioi society during a period that ended about 1971 and that had been in existence for a few centuries. The first of those eras, which he labels "aboriginal," existed not only before any contact with European agents and goods, but even before any Austronesian speakers (e.g., Shortland Islanders) had begun to introduce new cultural traits into their lives and before the latter had begun to make piratical forays against their coastal settlements. The second era, which Ogan labels "traditional," reached its culmination just prior to World War II, after Shortland Islander and European settlements had become well established along their coasts and after their "aboriginal" economy --and society--had become more complicated as a result of the introduction of steel tools, shell valuables, and so forth, but before the extensive practice of cash cropping and the widespread acceptance of Christian doctrines concerning marriage and supernaturalism--that is, before the "modern" era during which his field studies took place.

In keeping with the time frames fixed on in the résumés of Nagovisi, Siwai, and Buin (see below), the focus in what follows will be on Ogan's "traditional" era and on those "traditional" forms of Nasioi institutions still prevailing in the Aropa Valley.[23]

In "traditional" times the Aropa Valley Nasioi resided in widely scattered settlements--hamlets--containing from one to no more than a "few" households each. Food getting was virtually identical to that of the Nagovisi and the Siwai: the growing of taro, plantains, and sweet potatoes (a recent introduction that seems to have superseded yams); the collection of sago, coconuts, almonds, and leafy edibles; some stream fishing; and occasional hunting (mainly feral pigs, opossums, and flying foxes). Because of a near-stationary population size (due to a high rate of morbidity and stringent restrictions on postpartum copulation), there still remained much uninhabited, even unclaimed, land. And because of the outlawing of warfare--lethal hostility having come to be expressed mainly by sorcery or murder--people did not find it necessary for self-defense to form larger, more closely knit political units. Correspondingly, it was not unusual for single households or small groups of them to move residence--to improve subsistence on

more fruitful land, to avoid stressful conflicts, to escape from sorcery-ridden settlements, and so on.

Marriage

As elsewhere in southern Bougainville, each Aropa Valley household produced its own food and was composed in most cases of a nuclear family. Moreover, marital residence was normatively uxorilocal and modally so as well--despite (?) the convention and the usual practice that the goods exchanged at marriage were about equal in value (Ogan 1972:15). Exceptions occurred when goods from the husband's side so exceeded the customary parity that he was privileged to "pull" his wife to the place of his choice, usually to his own premarital hamlet. (Such was especially the case with polygynous marriages, which although infrequent, did occur.)

Community

I referred above to "hamlets'‘--which, according to Ogan, rarely consisted of more than three households during the "traditional" era. From his reconstruction of that era, it seems that there may have been cooperation among the households of any hamlet in several economic and social respects (e.g., land clearing, fence building, and feast giving), but it is not clear to what extent neighboring hamlets were united into multihamlet communities. Notwithstanding, there were ideological values that encouraged and well-known practices that enabled some men to raise themselves above others in influence and perhaps also in authority over hamlets in addition to their own.

Wealth and Renown

As in Nagovisi and Siwai the principal kinds of articles that enabled adults to maintain or better their social statuses were pigs and shell valuables. Here is Ogan's statement about numbers of pigs:

> The need for abundant vegetable food implied a limitation on the size of a herd. Normally a couple could not hope to keep more than five adult pigs; a single man would be lucky to keep two. This consideration affected family organization: a man who wished to raise pigs in a big way would prefer to have

> many wives but few children, since the women could thus maintain a large supply of pig fodder. (Ogan 1972:26-27)

Other than the above figures on pig-feeding limits--no more than five adult pigs per married couple and two per unmarried man--no figures are provided on the actual number of domesticated pigs extant.[24] It is clear from other passages in Ogan's monograph that the principal, indeed about the only, use made of pigs was for festive meals and exchanges culminating in such meals. In other words, pigs were rarely killed for ordinary household consumption--except, for example, when a man killed another's pig found destroying his garden. And pigs were not commonly used for barter--as were pots, weapons, coconuts, garden produce, and fish.

Turning to shell valuables, the only type mentioned by either Ogan or Frizzi is *makutu,* about which Ogan writes as follows:

> *Makutu* consisted of seashells strung in varying lengths. (The example I saw during fieldwork was composed of a single variety of shells approximately [one and a half] inches in length making up a string about two feet long.) Although Rausch [1912a:110] glosses this term 'Muschelgeld', Nasioi informants were remarkably explicit and insistent that *makutu* was not like European money. Whereas anyone might possess the latter, only older men, especially *oboring* [see below], had *makutu.* Nor was *makutu* employed in all sorts of exchanges. Those specifically described as involving *makutu* were: *makutu* for sorcery; *makutu* presented to a deceased spouse's matriclan as part of 'remarriage feasts'; and *makutu* presented to the bride's clan in 'marriage feasts'. I recorded only one case of the last-named; it is probably significant that the groom had worked outside Bougainville. Other testimony implied the use of *makutu* in 'growing-up feasts'. (Ogan 1972:39-40)

Ogan continues: "The origin of *makutu* was even less clear in present informants' minds than the details of traditional exchange involving these 'valuables', but there is general agreement that *makutu* came from islands other than Bougainville" (1972:40).

In comparison with the variety of types and functions of shell valuables in Nagovisi and Siwai (and, as we shall see, in Buin), the Nasioi parallels appear exiguous, to say the least. It is possible that they were

much more numerous, in types and function, during the "traditional" times of the 1930s and that their paucity during the times of Ogan's visits had resulted from a rate of Westernization--including monetization --that was much faster than in Nagovisi and Siwai (and Buin). I find that explanation difficult to swallow, however--which leads me to believe that shell valuables had never been as numerous or as widely functional in Nasioi as throughout the rest of southern Bougainville.[25]

In any case, although we are not told how many *pigs* were actually being kept by the Aropa Valley Nasioi in Ogan's time or how many were likely to have been kept there during "traditional" times, we *are* informed that their transactional uses were manifold, including some that were carried out with shell valuables in other societies of southern Bougainville.

In practices similar to those of the Siwai *mumi* institution, one or two male members of nearly every Aropa Valley hamlet (or community?) elevated themselves to the leadership status of *oboring*--partly with the voluntary assistance of kinfolk but principally through their own industry and managerial ability (that is, in persuading others to assist them and in planning and coordinating their assistance). The intended product of that industry and assistance was the giving of feasts, which consisted mainly of acquiring and dispersing pigs: acquiring them through the husbandry of themselves and their families, and through "loans" from other kinfolk; dispersing them on the numerous kinds of occasions on which pig feasting was required (e.g., growing-up ceremonies and funerals; and labor in clearing the host's land and in fabricating slit-gongs for his clubhouse). On most such occasions the "giving" of pigs or pork was requited by allegiance-winning renown, but for two occasions the returns were much more tangible. One of those was the mortuary feast for one's own father: if the son of a deceased man donated a much larger than usual number of pigs for the occasion, he thereby inherited his father's individually owned property (in matrilineage land rights, pigs, and shell valuables, for example), which otherwise would have devolved to the deceased's uterine kin. Thereafter the pigs and shell valuables were used by the son for his own individual purposes, but the land rights were added to his matrilineage's estate.

The second such occasion had to do with marriage. As noted earlier, the exchanges that formalized *most* marriages were about equal and the resultant residential changes usually uxorilocal. If, however, the groom's prestation was much larger than that of the kin of the bride, the groom gained the right to reside with his bride wherever he wished, which was usually in his own hamlet--an option that also facilitated his

acquisition of additional wives (which brought, among other advantages, more domestic labor to produce more pigs and more affines to increase his network of followers and allies).[26]

Matriliny

Anchoring and crosscutting the above patterns of residence, marriage. and leadership was the institution of matrilineal clanship. Every Nasioi belonged to the *mu* of his biological mother, and nothing, including adoption, could change that affiliation. According to Ogan, "I found that *mu* affiliation is one piece of kinship information every normal Nasioi over the age of approximately eight years has at his command. All persons belonging to the same *mu* are regarded as being related even though the specific [genealogical] connection [may not be] known; this relationship is sometimes symbolized by such descriptive expressions as *narung ereng* ('one blood')" (1972:95) (also, "*narung kede,* 'one belly, one womb' " [Ogan, pers. corn., 19921). The names applied to the various *mu* appear to have no other denotations.

At the time of Ogan's fieldwork seven *mu* were represented in the Aropa Valley; there may have been more, or less, in that area in "traditional" times.[27] In the absence of a Nasioi-wide census it is not known how many *mu* there were in Nasioi as a whole during those times--nor where each one's members were numerically preponderant. Moreover, except for two tales, referred to but not recounted in Ogan's writings or elsewhere, no accounts have been published detailing the origins and "histories" of *mu* or of the foundations of their totemic connections. Correspondingly, there is no mention in the ethnographic sources of the existence of clan shrines.[28] Mention is, however, made of the existence of clan-associated heirlooms.

According to Ogan, shell valuables were inherited, usually through uterine lines, "and may even have been, in a sense, matriclan property which one man held for all," such men having been "older men, especially *oboring*" (1972:40) Continuing Ogan's account:

> Transmission of *makutu* from father to son necessitated a return feast by the latter to his father's clan. While such a feast might have been part of a [mortuary] feast, some informants indicated that a 'big man' [i.e., *oboring*] might decorate a small child with *makutu* at a 'growing-up feast'. If the child were a uterine kinsman, such display would not have changed ultimate ownership. However, if the child were the 'big man's' son,

> or namesake from another clan, the child's clan would be obliged to 'balance the books' with a return feast. (Ogan 1972:40)

Turning now to growing-up ceremonies (that is, to the Nasioi versions of Nagovisi *mavo* and of Siwai *maru*), they did in fact exist and were labeled, generically, *bauta.* Moreover, according to Ogan, "most [of them] involved the child's [own] matriclan rather than that of the child's father" (1972:34). However, Ogan characterizes such occasions as "feasts," and neither his nor any other writing I have seen mentions any accompanying magical ritual, clan-associated or otherwise.[29]

Before considering other aspects of Nasioi clanship, it is pertinent to summarize how clans were subdivided. For this I draw on Ogan's remarks about "modern" clanship in the Aropa Valley, which, he says, has not changed much in the lifetimes of his oldest informants (1972: 14). Each of the seven clans represented in Ogan's Aropa Valley study area had members resident elsewhere in Nasioi, and each was divided into named "subclans" (also labeled *mu*). (Three of the seven clans were represented locally by one subclan, one by three subclans, one by five, one by six, and one by seven.) Moreover, most if not all of those subclans were associated with one or two totems (e.g., eel, eagle, cockatoo, bamboo, almond, ocean) in addition to the one or more associated with each one's encompassing clan. No stories are recorded concerning the process of clan subdivision, nor would it seem that subclanmates knew or displayed interest in the genealogical basis of their purportedly distinctive common descent. In fact, except for respect for their distinctive totems, the only peculiarity of subclanship lay in the widespread opinion that sexual relations with a subclanmate were even more socially reprehensible and supernaturally dangerous than sexual relations with a more "distant" clanmate.

Regarding the totemic aspect of clanship, there is little reported about it in the sources known to me.[30] Even Ogan's summary is very brief:

> Associated with each *mu* are certain natural phenomena. Some of these phenomena are alleged to be prohibited (*meeka,* 'tabu, sacred') as foodstuffs; however, only Tankorinkan *mu*'s avoidance of 'eel' was consistently observed, and many older people of other *mu* were equally scrupulous in avoiding this delicacy. Such basic foodstuffs as coconuts and canarium almonds [which are totems of one or another of the *mu*] are enjoyed by

> all, regardless of *mu* membership. By relating the associated phenomena of their native kin categories or groups, immigrants of different linguistic affiliation (e.g., Nagovisi, Siwai) can adjust to the Nasioi *mu* system. (Ogan 1972:95)

Continuing Ogan's résumé of Aropa Valley clanship:

> Despite the fact that every Nasioi has a lifetime clan affiliation of which he is early aware and which has significance for many of his daily activities, neither clan nor sub-clan constitutes an action group. . . . In other words, *mu* and sub-*mu* constitute categories which 'function to dispose [their] members to group formation and relationships [although their] total membership does not thereby constitute a group'. (Ogan 1972:97; the included quote is from E. Goffman, *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* [Englewood, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, 1964])

The activities that served to transform *mu* categories into *mu*-based "action groups" were as follows:

> The meaningful Nasioi interaction group formed on the basis of *mu* and sub-*mu* categories consists of those members of a *mu* who are co-resident, or at least in frequent face-to-face contact, and who share rights to a given area of land. These individuals form what is called here simply, to avoid cross-cultural connotations, a *mu*-group. I was able to discover no term in the Nasioi language for the *mu*-group. When asked, for example, to clarify *niikana kantsi* ('our land'), informants might reply in Pidgin, "Graun bilong mipela Batuan bilong [the village of] Rumba." (Ogan 1972:97)

Continuing Ogan's résumé:

> Some contexts in which members of a given *mu*-group were seen to co-operate are here offered as examples . . .
>
> --provision of food and betel for guests from distant hamlets, at the funeral of a *mu*-group-mate;
>
> --allotment of land on which coconuts might be planted by the husband of a *mu*-group-mate;

> --collection of coconuts belonging to a *mu*-group-mate and transport to his smoke-house [i.e., for making copra--a "modern" activity];
>
> --verbal support of a male *mu*-group-mate in a charge of slander brought against a female of another *mu.*
>
> Thus an action group may be formed on the basis of *mu* affiliation to carry out production, life cycle rituals and settlement of disputes. However, . . . *mu* affiliation is not the only basis for formation of such groups. Insofar as I could infer from informants' replies to such hypothetical questions as 'What if a Batuan *[mu]* man comes from far away and wants to make a garden at Rumba?', the greatest potential significance of the *mu*-group lies in its control over a tract of land. (Ogan 1972:98)

The members of what Ogan labels a *mu*-group--that is, a *mu*-based action group--were drawn from a whole clan and not exclusively from one or another of a clan's subclans. This feature of Nasioi clanship differentiates it sharply from clanship in Nagovisi and Siwai, where different kinds of activities and different kinds of property were allocated to different levels of clan subdivision.

Finally, there is the question of *mu*-group leadership. As we have seen, distinctions were made in both Nagovisi and Siwai between descent-unit "elders" (*tu'mele* and *simiri,* respectively) and community-wide leaders (*momiako* and *mumi,* respectively). What was the situation in Nasioi, where *mumi*-like *oboring* had influence and perhaps authority in hamlet and communitywide affairs? We depend again upon Ogan:

> Any adult member of the *mu*-group has a voice in decisions of the group--women make their opinions known indirectly--but *de facto* leadership is assumed on the basis of both ascriptive factors (age, relationship to previous leaders) and demonstrated achievements (industry, approved personality traits). Thus, all the *mu*-group leaders in Rumba were over forty-five years of age, maintained substantial gardens as well as stands of coconuts, displayed generosity, calmness and helpfulness, and were related in some way to Maura, the *oboring* of the pre-World War I period. (Ogan 1972:98)

Some resemblances as well as differences will be noted between this type of clan leadership and the types that prevailed in Siwai and

Nagovisi--where qualifications of seniority, both in age and in genealogical level, were more influential and more highly institutionalized.

We turn, finally, to the Buin, whose northwestern residents interacted quite frequently with their Siwai neighbors and resembled them closely in their beliefs and practices respecting matriliny, but whose central and eastern residents practiced a form of matrilineal clanship that was "dilute," to say the least.

Buin

The people now known as the Buin inhabit most of the southeastern corner of Bougainville throughout an area of about 200 square miles, extending from south of the crests of the Crown Prince Range almost to the sea. The Mivo River forms a natural boundary between the Buin and the Siwai on the west. Some of the Buin's western, specifically northwestern, settlements are near and easily accessible to those of northeastern Siwai, but high crests and deep gorges separate them quite effectively from their Nasioi neighbors to the northeast. In the mid-nineteenth century, when their existence was first recorded in European accounts, all Buin settlements were inland--north of the wide, crocodile-infested swamps that lie behind the island's southern coast. The sea-going, Austronesian-speaking Shortland Islanders therefore labeled them, disparagingly, "Terei" (bush people). Those same islanders were in the habit of visiting Buin--first to capture "bush people" for religious sacrifice, drudgery, or sexual use, then in the course of time to trade with them (for example, to trade shell valuables and ornaments for Buin weapons and pigs). After trading had replaced raiding, many Buin moved nearer the coast; some even adopted canoeing and themselves went to Shortland Island to trade. Through those coastal Buin, Shortland Island goods were traded farther inland, so that even the most remote of the Buin became engaged in trade. Then, beginning around 1840, European goods--metal axes and knives, cloth, and other goods in exchange for Buin-produced dried coconuts--were added to the trade.

In 1884 Germany took possession of Northeast New Guinea plus the Bismarck Archipelago and Bougainville-Buka. In 1901 the first Europeans--Roman Catholic Marist missionaries--established a station in Buin, and German colonial officials from Kieta began to visit there, first to stop feuding and protect the missionaries, then to consolidate hamlets into "villages" and to collect revenue in the form of German currency or compulsory labor (for example, to construct wider trails).

In 1908-1909 the German ethnologist Richard Thurnwald spent ten

months in south-central Buin engaged in research. By that time many Buin males were working on European plantations, on Bougainville and elsewhere, but *pax Colonialis* was not effectively established in Buin itself until the late 1920s by which time Australia had succeeded Germany as the colonial authority there. In 1929 the official anthropologist of the Australian Administration, E. W. P. Chinnery, visited southern Bougainville, including Buin, and carried out a cursory survey of demographics and social organization. In 1933-1934 Thurnwald returned to Buin, where he and his wife, Hilde, spent ten months, again mainly in the south-central area. Five years later I carried out an anthropometric survey in southern Buin and made several visits to the northwestern Buin settlements that bordered those of northeastern Siwai, the area of most of my own research. The present account, however, is based largely on data collected by Jared Keil, a Harvard-trained anthropologist, during his two-year study (1971-1973) of communities in northeastern Buin, where, he informs us, much of the "traditional" culture persisted--more so than in south-central Buin, where official administrative and private commercial influences were more prevalent, and different from northwestern Buin, where I had found many cultural similarities with nearby Siwai. The communities Keil studied between 1971 and 1973 had also undergone some Westernization (including missionization and involvement in cash cropping and wage earning--and of course adoption of European tools, cloth, and some trade-store foods) but had retained enough of the "traditional" culture of the 1930s to permit Keil to compose a reconstruction of parts of it--which I now summarize.[31]

Even after colonial officials had succeeded in requiring them to reside, at least some of the time, in line villages, the Buin lived most of the time in small, dispersed hamlets of one to six or so households, similar to those of the Nagovisi, the Siwai, and the Nasioi. And like them the Buin subsisted by growing root crops, mainly taro, raising pigs, collecting wild and semiwild food plants (e.g., sago, canarium almonds, greens), and doing a little hunting (of opossums and feral pigs, for example) and stream fishing. The residents of each of their hamlets comprised what Keil labels an "agnatic core group," typically made up of two or more adult male agnates together with their wives and unmarried sisters and offspring. (Unlike in Nagovisi and the Aropa Valley, where marital residence was normatively and statistically uxorilocal, and unlike in northeast Siwai, where choice was flexible and residential practice more varied, in northeast Buin virilocality was emphatically normative and nearly invariably so in practice.) Such "core

groups" were not individually named, having been referred to as "the men of X" (i.e., the name of the tract of land they jointly resided on and exploited). Although not expressly stated by Keil, it may be safely assumed that the head of each agnatic core group was its eldest non-senile male--the (untitled) parallel of the Nagovisi *tu'meli* (female first-born), the Siwai *simiri* (male or female firstborn), and the Nasioi *mu-* group leader--who exercised authority over joint hamlet activities (e.g., garden clearing and house building).

In Keil's 1972-1973 census of Mogoroi 1 line village, its 175 residents were divided into fourteen agnatic core groups, which ranged in size from one to six households each and which were clustered into six larger units, which Keil labels "*mumira*-groups," each under the headship of a "*mumira*-leader."

The Buin word *mumira* is cognate with the Nagovisi *momiako* and Siwai *mumi,* but what a difference in meaning it had from them during the 1930s! All three words, along with the Nasioi word *oboring,* denoted a measure of authority over local community affairs and a more-than-average influence in neighboring communities; and all four of those titles connoted a control over tangibles of high value--mainly shell valuables and pigs. However, as we have seen, the Nagovisi *momiako,* the Siwai *mumi,* and the Nasioi *oboring* attained their status largely by personal effort and achievement; the Buin *mumira* usually attained his by birth.

Buin society[32] was--still is--socially stratified, with an upper class of *mumira* and a lower one of *kitere.* In most cases an individual was assigned to the class of his or her presumed biological father, exceptions having occurred when a *mumira* man formally adopted a *kitere* boy. And although *mumira* parents preferred their children to marry *mumira*--especially in the case of an eldest son (and principal heir)--marriages did take place across class lines and without any apparent adverse consequences, social or supernatural. Indeed, some *kitere* parents aspired to mate their children with *mumira,* but few were able to do so because of the higher costs of marital prestations. In Buin society at large, *mumiras* in general commanded more respect than *kiteres,* but they did not constitute a distinctive tribewide unit, a group, for any kind of social action--not for feasting or for maintaining order (or, in precolonial times, for fighting). It was only at the level of the local community--and, to a somewhat lesser degree, among neighboring communities--that Buin's *mumiras*--and only some of them--actually led.

Before the colonial authorities, first German and then Australian, had required them to amalgamate into villages, *mumira*-groups were

the Buin's only type of politically autonomous social units. Such units appear to have ranged in membership from about ten to three hundred. Any unit smaller than about ten would have been militarily undefensible and would either be wiped out or obliged to merge with another group. And, I am led to infer, any much larger than three hundred would have eventually split.

As mentioned earlier, in most cases each of the hamlets making up a *mumira*-group comprised a separate "agnatic core group"--one of those having been that of the *mumira*-group's *mumira*-leader and his agnates (*mumira* class), plus their wives. The other hamlets (or agnatic core groups) of a *mumira*-group were made up of *kitere.*

In precolonial times the authority enjoyed by a *mumira*-leader over all members of his *mumira*-group was, ideally, limitless; in practice, however, it was usually subject to constraints. Ideally, or metaphorically, he "owned" all of the lands identified with the several hamlets of his *mumira*-group, and this was betokened by his right to allocate use rights to them and by his receipt of firstfruits from them. In practice, however, every adult male member of a *mumira*-group--or at least the head of each of its component agnatic core groups--possessed firm and enduring use rights to particular tracts of the *mumira*-group's territory, including rights of transmission to his heirs.[33] To forbid a subject such rights would have been tantamount to expelling him--and losing thereby his services in peace and in war.

In precolonial times and in the 1930s a *mumira*-leader was also said (again, metaphorically) to "own" all of his subjects' high-value goods--mostly his pigs and shell valuables. Evidently, this ownership did not usually include arbitrary expropriation of the latter, but it did require that the subject secure his leader's approval before giving, exchanging, or consuming such goods. Also, it was a leader's right to levy a subject's goods for "public" purposes (e.g., his pigs for a feast)--although it was expected that such goods would eventually be repaid.

Similarly, in precolonial times a *mumira* was held to "own" not only his subjects' services, but also their very lives. Regarding their services, he could require them to assist him, for example, in fighting outsiders, in clearing his garden sites, in making his fences, and in building his dwelling and clubhouse (*abaito,* cognate with Siwai *kapaso*)--for all of which services the subjects were usually compensated with food. Also, wrote R. Thurnwald, "the *kitere's* daughters will help the *mumiána* (chief's wife) in garden and house work, and they are chosen to contribute to the men's pleasures when a big feast is going on. All these services, however, including the last, are remunerated, either by meals of pig or by *ábuta* [shell valuables]" (1934a:126).

Regarding their lives, a *mumira*-leader was customarily empowered to kill any of his subjects without concern over revenge from the victim's close relatives and without being required to compensate them. Such killing was done either directly (e.g., as punishment) or indirectly (through giving the victim to an allied *mumira*-leader for sacrifice to the latter's guardian spirit).[34]

The Buin's supernatural universe was peopled with innumerable spirits, including the ghosts of many dead humans plus numerous never-human spirits of many kinds. It is likely (but not reported) that the ghost-ancestors of *mumira*-leaders played active roles in the magical actions of the leader, but it is recorded that the most powerful supernatural helper of a *mumira*-leader was his *oromurui,* a never-human demon that was manifested on occasion either as Thunder-and-lightning or as White-bellied Sea Eagle or a brown tree-snake *(Boiga irregularis).* No *kitere* had an *oromurui,* and only the more affluent and powerful *mumira*-leaders had one. For one who had, his *oromurui* resided mainly in his clubhouse, serving as his protector and policeman at all times and as his helper, during the precolonial era, in time of war. To acquire and maintain the services of an *oromurui,* a *mumira*-leader had to give frequent feasts to satisfy the demon's hunger for the sight and smell of pig blood. Also, in precolonial times, to insure the continuing loyalty of an *oromurui,* it was necessary to engage fairly frequently in fighting, in order to satisfy the demon's desire for the sight of fresh enemy skulls in the clubhouse. When a *mumira*-leader died, his *oromurui* customarily transferred his loyalty to the deceased's heir, but if the heir did not provide enough pig blood and (in earlier times) enemy skulls, the demon forsook him and attached itself to a more "ambitious" *mumira*-leader elsewhere.[35]

To the best of my knowledge, there are no figures available on the number and average sizes of *mumira*-groups throughout Buin as a whole. In that part of Buin studied intensively by Keil between 1971 and 1973, there were six such units for a population of 145 (which represented about one-sixty-fourth of the total Buin population at that time). The sizes of those six groups were 48, 29, 24, 23, 13, and 8. (Two of those six units were characterized by Keil as "sub-*mumira*-groups," that is, as having been only semiautonomous.) It is possible, indeed probable, that in precolonial times the average size of Buin's fully autonomous *mumira*-groups was considerably larger than between 1971 and 1973; because of the pervasiveness of inter-*mumira*-group suspicion or active hostility, it is likely that a greater premium was placed on safety in numbers than on the satisfactions of separatism.

Returning to the class stratification of Buin society (which, as we

have seen, was the principal factor in the organization of *mumira*-groups), figures are likewise lacking concerning what proportion of the total population were members of *mumira*-groups. However, turning again to Keil's Mogoroi village sample, 83 out of the total population of 145 were unambiguously *mumira*.[3 6]

Despite its considerable weight, even in postcolonial times a *mumira*-leader's authority prevailed only within his own *mumira*-group; elsewhere he possessed influence only, and that commensurate with his feast-giving successes. However, Buin *mumira*-leaders are said not to have engaged in the kind of explicitly competitive feast giving practiced by Siwai *mumis;* perhaps because their office was hereditary; they did not need to compete in order to attain or retain it. Notwithstanding, the leadership office of a particular *mumira*-group and therefore the authority of its successive incumbents were subject to weakening and, eventually, obsolescence if the group's membership became too reduced --through emigration or death. And when that happened, the remnant usually joined some other *mumira*-group or *mumira*-groups, either individually or en masse.

Thus, Buin *mumira*-groups constituted the society's only enduring type of political unit and were also the society's only type of supra-hamlet economic unit. They might also be characterized as one of the society's most important types of religious congregation. Reference here is to the religious prominence of *oromurui;* while those powerful and universally feared demons were the personal familiars of individual *mumira*-leaders, they also functioned, as did no other kind of spirit, on behalf of the leader's *mumira*-group as a whole.

Buin *mumira*-groups had little or nothing to do with regulation of members' marriages, but they did take an interest in a member's specific choice of spouse. Nor did the *mumira*-group concern itself with the religious side of a nor-deader's personal well-being. For a résumé of these matters, we turn to Buin's matrilineal clans and *maru* rites.

As was mentioned earlier, each of Buin's *mumira*-groups consisted of two or more hamlets, and each hamlet of one or more households. Also, in most multihousehold hamlets (male) household heads were related to one another by close agnatic ties. (I write "most" and not "all" to accommodate cases in which only a household head's widow and his minor children were resident.) There is no indication that the two or more core groups of agnates that constituted any *mumira*-group were themselves invariably or even usually agnatically interrelated. In some cases they evidently were; in others evidently not. In other words (as Keil points out), Buin's *mumira*-groups cannot themselves be labeled

"descent units." Nevertheless, it may be surprising to some readers that patrifiliation was so important in this society, whose neighboring societies were so preponderantly (but not entirely) matrilineal. Matrifiliation or matriliny did prevail in at least two Buin practices, as Keil succinctly describes:

> A Buin, from birth, traces relationships to others through his mother for the purpose of defining kin ties (that is, for identifying the proper kin term to use for his or her relatives). In addition, all Buin claim an affiliation with a named matrilineal grouping, which I call a matrisib. These matrisibs are named; they are ideally exogamous; affiliation with such a named unit is ascribed at birth, a person being a member of his or her mother's matrisib; all members of a named matrisib have a certain (unclear) relationship to certain natural phenomena and to all other members of the matrisib; it is claimed that members of a matrisib can be identified (even beyond the linguistic borders of Buin) by the nature of the lines on the palm of one's hand--the right hand is identified with one's mother, and is said to be the stronger hand.
>
> Unlike their various counterparts in Siuai, Nasioi, and Nagovisi societies, Buin matrisibs are not local or cooperating groups at any level; there are no named or acknowledged segments of a matrisib. (Keil 1975:93-94)

Regarding the first of those practices--the defining of kin ties through one's mother--that topic may be disposed of by adding the following narrowing qualification: "Whenever a man and wife use non-corresponding kin terms for any person, the offspring of that couple will always follow the usage of the mother" (Keil 1975:125). With that said, we can proceed directly to what can be gleaned from Keil and other sources about Buin matrilineal descent units (which Keil labels "matrisibs" but which I shall call matrilineal "clans," in keeping with the terminology used in earlier sections of this essay).

The Buin had specific words for "my-clanmate," "his-clanmate," "their-clanmates," and so forth, and names for each of their several clans, but no generic word for "clan." Each clan was known by the name of its primary totem, for example, Kaakata (White Cockatoo), Tourikana (Yellow-throated White-eye Bird), Maramo (a variety of eel), and Kenumau (a species of tree). In addition, some clans had secondary totems in the form of animals or plants. Normatively, a person

ought not to kill or eat his or her animal totem or pick, cut, or pass too close to his or her plant totem. Keil added that respect "may also" be accorded to the totem of the clan of one's father, but he did not specify the currency or weightiness of this practice. Apart from the above, the relationship between a clan and its totem(s) was described by Keil as "unclear." He continues:

> Often these birds or plants are prominent in Buin stories of the past, in which they are portrayed as part-animal, part-human, and part-spirit. But they are not said to be ancestresses of the peoples of the various matrisibs. In fact I could discover no stories pertaining to the actual origin of the various matrisibs. . . . There are no shrines or other sacred places identified with any matrisib. There are sacred areas in Buin, and sacred objects, such as large stones or bodies of water, but these are identified with specific culture heroes or spirit beings, not with matrisibs or matrisib ancestresses. Often such sacred stones or areas are associated with a particular man who has "rapport" with some spiritual being who resides there; this rapport is generally passed on from father to son. (Keil 1975:95)

Furthermore:

> [K]nowledge of one's mumira-group, both by the name of the mumira-leader and the name of the ground associated with its members, is at the command of every Buin except very young children. [In contrast, the name of one's matrisib] is not readily elicited from persons other than the older men and women (particularly women). Most other persons could not name their matrisib without asking other people. Often, though, a person could tell me that he or she was a member of the same matrisib as some other, specified individual. (Keil 1975:95)

The most salient aspect of Buin matrisibs (i.e., clans) was their exogamy:

> Matrisibs are ideally exogamous. If a man marries or has sexual relations with a woman of his own matrisib the Buin state that supernatural agents would cause the offending couple and their offspring to be physically maimed or impaired. In addition, the ancestral spirits of the offending couple, if they are angered and

> powerful enough, might add further to their woes. In addition to sexual affairs and marriage, the Buin state that if a member of one's own matrisib (and of the opposite sex) even walks upon or over one's sleeping mat, sores will appear on the body of the offender. In the past, I was told, intra-matrisib sexual affairs or marriage might be punished by the actual killing of the offending couple by their kinsmen, or at least by social ostracism. (Keil 1975:96)

Moreover, "a person of one matrisib may marry a person of *any* different matrisib; there is no evidence of any form of dual organization or any pairing of matrisibs in marital exchanges" (Keil 1975:97).

The sources disagree concerning the number of clans in Buin. In a report on his fieldwork of 1908-1909, Richard Thurnwald wrote that there were only four (i.e., Manugau, Fish Hawk; Tou, a small bird; Uau, a dove; and Ugu, Hornbill)--an assertion that he and his wife were to repeat in reports on their field study of 1934-1935. Chinnery, reporting on his shorter but more geographically extensive survey of 1929, listed twenty-eight "social groups" or "clans," which (according to Keil) may have once been "totemic beings" but during Keil's visit from 1971 to 1973 had no known connection with matrisibs: "Some of the species [listed by Chinnery] are definitely prominent in Buin stories and tales; perhaps they were totemic beings who are no longer recognized by the Buin today, or perhaps they are merely secondary phenomena associated with matrisibs" (Keil 1975:100). Finally, in his account of his 1971-1973 study of northeast Buin, Keil listed names of eight matrisibs--only one corresponding to any of those listed by Thurnwald --and implied that his list was not complete for Buin as a whole.

Thus, on the basis of available published sources, it is not possible to provide a complete listing of Buin clans--or even to state with any certainty that the society's matrilineal clans were alike throughout. My findings in northwest Buin differed from Keil's in the northeast--and both of them differed from Thurnwald's, which were based on his study of the south-central part of that extensive ethnic unit.[37]

There was, however, one aspect of the matriclan institution that may have been the same throughout Buin. Reference here is to the finding, by Keil in northeast Buin, that matriclans were *not* class-stratified--that each of the clans known to him contained both *mumira* and *kitere* --not surprising inasmuch as interclass marriage was generally condoned and widely practiced there.

A description should now be given of the Buin institution of *maru*,

which Keil glosses as "life crisis rituals." As described earlier the Nagovisi, the Siwai, and the Nasioi performed similar kinds of rites--labeled *mavo* by the Nagovisi, *maru* by the Siwai, and *bauta* by the Nasioi. In Nagovisi they were performed on such occasions as birth, an infant's first bathing, first entry into a garden, first eating of certain foods, first entry into a clubhouse, first marriage, and first pregnancy. In Siwai and in Nasioi the occasions for such rites were nearly the same. For Buin, Keil states, the "most important" of the ceremonies involving performance of *maru* were birth, marriage, and a woman's first pregnancy (1975:105). In addition, "There are many other occasions where parents might arrange ceremonies and feasting to 'mark' the 'first' time a child 'sees' something new, and this always involves maru ritual. A child's 'first' visit to the garden is often celebrated in this way" (Keil, pers. corn., 1992).

The rites in question were similar in all four societies with respect both to the characteristics of their practitioners--that is, older females --and to the nature of their actions and materials--anointment or bathing of the subject with "sacred" water, coconut juice or oil, and magically potent leaves; magical incantations; and the sharing of pork by subjects and other participants. They differed, however, in one very significant way. In Nagovisi and Siwai the rites were associated explicitly and exclusively with one or another of those societies' matrilineal descent units. The association is less clear in Nasioi, although, according to Ogan, "most 'growing-up feasts' involved the child's matriclan rather than that of the child's father" (1972:34). In Buin the several different sets of *maru* rites--each of which had a name--had no discernible association with clans or with any other kind of durable social unit.

Every Buin became permanently affiliated with--underwent the rites of--one or another named set of *maru*. According to Keil, the grounds for that affiliation were not entirely "clear." The only points on which most of his informants agreed were as follows: (1) an individual, male or female, became affiliated, permanently, with the set of *maru* that was performed for his parent's marriage and, consequently, for his own birth; and (2) *maru* affiliation had no effect on choice of spouse, SO that it sometimes happened that the set performed for a couple's marriage and consequently for their offsprings' births was that of *both* of them.

More often, perhaps, the couple were affiliated with different sets of *maru*. When that was the case, it was more customary, although not rigidly prescribed, for the marriage rite--and subsequently the birth rite--to be ceremonialized with the *maru* of the mother. It did some-

times occur that the parental marriage rite (and the offspring's birth rites) was ceremonialized with the father's *maru*--in which case the offspring became affiliated with the latter.

In any case, although *maru* affiliation derived from filiation, unlike clanship it appears to have had no effect on choice of spouse. Nor, as far as I can discover from the ethnographic sources, was it in any way associated with upper- and lower-class status.

The total number of Buin's *maru* sets--"denominations"-- is not recorded. According to Keil, only three of them were represented in the northeastern village of Mogoroi 1 (whose population was 149), and three entirely different ones were represented in the south-central village of Mamaromino (population unstated).

To summarize, in northeastern Buin there were three types of residentally localized and fairly durable social groups: (1) virilocally based nuclear- or extended-family households, one or more of which composed, or were combined into, (2) agnatic core groups, some made up of *mumira*-class, others of *kitere*-class, members. Furthermore, agnatic core groups were combined into (3) *mumira*-groups. The two to six agnatic core groups that made up each *mumira*-group were centered on a *mumira*-class agnatic core group whose hereditary patriarch, the *mumira*-leader, was absolute ruler of the whole *mumira*-group. In precolonial times, here and there and now and then, two or more *mumira*-groups became allied to fight against common enemies; otherwise each *mumira*-group constituted a territorially distinct and politically autonomous unit. By the 1930s the political autonomy of Buin's *mumira*-groups had been superseded by colonial rule, and the authority, especially the physically coercive authority, of the *mumira*-leader had been curtailed, but many of the other social functions of such groups and their leaders still survived.

In addition to the above social groups, each resident of northeastern Buin became permanently associated, at birth, with the clan (Keil's "matrisib") of his or her mother--which, however, possessed no jointly held property--not even localized shrines, no shared activities, and few if any shared mythical traditions. In fact, the only things shared by members of any clan were their common respect for one or more distinctive totems and their prohibition against sexual relations with one another.

And, finally, every resident of northeastern Buin was associated with one or another of the society's sets of *maru* (life-crisis, growing-up, and so on) rites--the one that had been performed at his or her parents' wedding. Because it was more usual, though not obligatory, for a wed-

ding to be formalized by the *maru* of the bride, an individual's own *maru* tended to be that of his mother. However, persons having the same *maru* did not necessarily share anything else.

Although the summary just presented refers most particularly to northeastern Buin (the area studied intensively by Jared Keil), it is not unlikely that it applies to some other parts of Buin as well--except perhaps to the northwestern area, where certain aspects of social relations once resembled more closely those of northeastern Siwai.

Discussion

Even allowing for their factual gaps and uncertainties, the foregoing reconstructions reveal some close cultural similarities along with some striking cultural differences among the four linguistically related peoples just sketched. Some similarities are noteworthy. For example:

- their subsistence tools and technologies
- their residential and social intercourse patterns (i.e., households, hamlets, and nonnucleated communities)
- the nature of their most value-laden nonland goods (i.e., pigs and strings of marine-shell beads)
- their religious beliefs and practices--including especially their growing-up rites and their funeral rites and transactions
- their Dravidian-type system of kinship terminology and their norms for choice of spouse
- their ascription of a distinctive mystical quality to matrilineal and matrilateral relationships

In other matters, all four tribes shared ideas and practices in general, but with different degrees of emphasis:

- genealogical seniority as a basis of authority by and stratification among consanguines
- the assignment of initiative and authority to adult males in most public secular affairs
- the incidence of polygyny
- quantitative differences in holdings of pigs and shell valuables

In certain other matters, there were large differences among all or some of the four tribes, namely,

- the frequencies and kinds of contacts with non-Bougainvillians
- political authority and social stratification based on factors other than consanguineal hierarchies
- postmarriage residence

• and the focus of this study--the institutionalization and cultural-societal importance of matriliny

Probably, some of the above differences were interconnected, causally or functionally. Before discussing these connections, though, it is necessary to recapitulate the more salient similarities and differences among the four peoples with respect to their institutionalization of matriliny. Common to all four tribes was the belief that relationships based on matrifiliation, and thence matriliny, differed significantly--one might say, mystically--from those based on patrifiliation, and in a way that rendered sexual intercourse between matrilineal relatives supernaturally dangerous--and therefore socially unacceptable (or, perhaps, chronologically it may have been the other way around?). Also, it was generally held by all four tribes that, other things equal, persons related matrilineally owed one another more mutual generosity in goods and services than was owed to other persons.[38] And third, in all four tribes persons who were matrilineally related were believed to be associated, more or less exclusively and "totemically," with certain animals (and, in some cases, plants).

Those complications aside, the four tribes differed, in some respects widely, in other aspects of matriliny:

• in the spans and subdivisions of the social units (groups and categories) comprising persons of supposed matrilineal relationship

• in the symbols associated with those units and in the nature of those associations

• in the "histories" of those units and their totemic associations

• in the collective functions and corporate possessions of those units

• in the part played by matriliny in each tribe's total social life

Why did these differences exist? No two separate human societies have identical institutions. Why should those of south Bougainville be exceptions to that universal circumstance? The answer to that query is contained in the assumption that most of the ancestors of the four tribes under study once shared a single kind of matriliny (i.e., single in kinds of beliefs and practices) and, furthermore, that that situation occurred relatively recently in the total time span of humankind.[39] The basis for that assumption rests on the close linguistic similarities of the four tribes. However, neither linguistic nor any other sort of evidence that I know of reveals the nature of that single "ancestral" kind of matriliny. Nevertheless, two "logical" possibilities come to mind: (1) that the kind of matriliny ancestral to all four tribes resembled that of Nagovisi of the 1930s, and all clans were categorized into two exogamous units (i.e.,

moieties), or (2) that the single ancestral tribe was divided into numerous discrete exogamous units (i.e., clans). (Neither of these possibilities assumes where on Bougainville that hypothetical ancestral tribe was located. However, in view of the present distribution of Bougainville's languages, I favor the likelihood of its having been in south Bougainville. And because of the routes of the migrations recorded in several Siwai and Nagovisi clan "histories'‘--that is, from near-coastal areas inland--my surmise is that the present Nagovisi area did not constitute the entire ancestral domain.)

In seeking support for possibility (1), we fulfill the promise contained in the title of this essay to "revisit Rivers," who stated: "[I]t is possible to infer with certainty the ancient existence of forms of marriage from the survival of their results in the terminology of relationship" (Rivers 1968:74) and "The scheme of development formulated in the early chapter of this volume rests on the assumption that, at the earliest stage to which the evidence takes us, Melanesian society was organized in two exogamous moieties with matrilineal descent" (Rivers 1914, 2:557).[40] All four of our tribes used--still use--kin terms of the Dravidian type, which corresponds to a two-section (or moiety, or dual organization) social system.

We turn now to possibility (2), namely, that the ancestral form of matriliny of our four tribes consisted of numerous discrete clans--which, among the cultural forebears of the 1930s Nagovisi, became combined into moieties, that is, into two multiclan, intermarrying categories of persons. There is no direct evidence regarding how or when that process *actually* began among the Nagovisi, but there are well-authenticated instances that suggest how it *might* have begun. I refer to fairly recent situations in Nasioi and Siwai, in which members of two adjacent and locally preponderant clans made a longtime practice, almost a norm, of intermarrying (i.e., of "exchanging women"). Various reasons were stated for the practice, especially the desideratum that "land and valuables would stay close together" (Ogan 1972:14-15; see also Oliver 1955:286-287, 292).[41] Moreover, as already cited, there are equally well authenticated instances of segments of "nonmoietized" Siwai clans having migrated into Nagovisi and become "moietized" (Nash 1974:5).

In any case, however much nostalgic contentment one may derive from this archaic debate, the question about the nature of south Bougainville's "ancestral" matriliny is likely never to be answered. More interesting, and perhaps less insoluble, is the question of how matriliny--whatever its "ancestral" form--came to have such different

manifestations in the lives of the four tribes under study during the third decade of this century. Present among all four were social units comprising persons of known or supposed common matrilineal descent--units that were normatively exogamous and intracooperative, and that had totemic associations with distinctive species of animals and plants. But there the similarities ended. Regarding their differences, the extremes were represented by Nagovisi and northeast Buin. For example:

• In Nagovisi, on the one hand, all clans were localized but were combined, in terms of marriage prohibitions and particular myth-sanctioned spirit-ancestresses and totems, into one or another of the society's matrimoieties; furthermore, each clan was subdivided into sharply bounded, hierarchically ranked, and functionally distinctive segments. In northeast Buin, on the other hand, the clans were exogamously and "historically" discrete and morphologically unsegmented, and their respective members widely dispersed.

• In Nagovisi all land and most high-value shell valuables were owned, corporately, by matrilineal clans or clan subdivisions. In northeast Buin all land, high-value shell valuables, *and pigs* were "owned" by (at least, metaphorically) or at the disposal of the hereditary leaders of aristocratic and patrilineally aligned *mumira*-groups.

• In Nagovisi all religious loci and most public religious rites (including growing-up rites) were owned and used by and on behalf of clans or clan subdivisions. In northeast Buin clans had neither shrines nor religious rites of their own; growing-up rites were owned by and used for other, nonclan aggregates of owners.

• In Nagovisi, consonant with the prevailing mode of land ownership, postmarriage residence was normatively, and in practice most frequently, uxorilocal; moreover marital prestations were, during the thirties, mainly in the form of dowry. In Buin, postmarriage residence was normatively and statistically virilocal, and marital prestations were in the form of bride-price.

From all the above and from facts given elsewhere in this essay, it is reasonable to conclude (1) that matriliny played a much larger part in Nagovisi life, including the conduct of individual and public affairs, than in Buin; and (2) that Nagovisi women (through their leading roles in matrilineal-unit affairs) were more socially important than their counterparts in Buin.[42]

It is, I trust, unnecessary to review where the northeast Siwai and the Aropa Valley Nasioi stood with regard to matriliny, between the Nagovisi and the Buin, so I shall conclude this lengthy exercise with some thoughts, first, about the factors that might have initiated the pro-

cesses of matriliny differentiation among the four tribes, and, second about the processes themselves.[43]

Geography

The geographic environments of the four subtribes focused on in this study--central Nagovisi, northeast Siwai, Aropa Valley Nasioi, and northeast Buin--are quite similar: gently sloping plains rising into higher but generally broad and flat interfluvial ridges; waterways ranging between tiny brooks and wide streams (which were normally knee- to waist-deep, except after heavy rains, when they became deep torrents); clumps of primary rain forest surrounded by large stretches of secondary growth and pockets of gardens; scattered patches of swamp; and fairly heavy year-round rainfall, with little or no seasonal variation in precipitation or temperature (Scott et al. 1969:62-70). If such conditions had prevailed throughout the entirety of our four tribal areas or if those tribal areas had been alike geographically in all other parts as well, it would be reasonable to discount environment as a contributing cause. Buin and Siwai were indeed topographically similar to each other throughout, having broader streams, wider valleys, flatter land surfaces, and more and larger swamps than Nagovisi and Nasioi. In contrast, parts of Nagovisi and Nasioi were very mountainous. And whereas some Nasioi settlements were located on or near the coast, all of Nagovisi's were located inland--and separated from the coast by the Siwai to the south and the Austronesian-speaking Banoni to the west.

Therefore, one cannot *logically* discount the role of physical environment when searching for causes of matriliny differentiation. Yet, I am hard put to explain how topography per se could have influenced matriliny--except perhaps in terms of communication. That is to say, for a pair of mountain settlements that were adjacent and relatively accessible to each other but relatively inaccessible to all other settlements, a long-continuing de facto practice of intermarriage between them might have led eventually to a de jure moiety pattern. Such reasoning would, however, have to contain another assumption, namely, that the Nagovisi moiety pattern originated in the mountainous part of the tribal area and diffused to all other, nonmountainous, parts--an assumption for which there is no "hard" evidence.

In contrast, Nagovisi's mountains together with the whole of that tribal area's relatively greater distance from the island's southern coast did serve to preclude direct contact with Shortland and Treasury islanders, and to reduce the number of imports from them. Also, the wide

variety of physical environments occupied by the Nasioi might well have resulted in local specialization of commodities, therefore in inter-regional barter--which, in time, *might* have reduced the acceptance of a general purpose exchange currency (i.e., in the form of shell-valuable money). (See below.)

Race

Bougainvillians are all dark brown to black in skin color but exhibit wide variations in several other genetically influenced body traits, such as stature and sitting height, and shape of head and face (Friedlaender 1975; Oliver 1954, 1955; Oliver and Howells 1957). In broadest terms, three regional extremes have been distinguished: a tall-statured north-central mountain type (best exemplified by the Rotokas), a short-statured southern type (found mainly in the Nagovisi mountain area), and a tall-statured, somewhat lighter-pigmented coastal type (exemplified by the beach-dwelling, Austronesian-speaking Roruana). With respect to the tribes dealt with in this study, the nonmountaineer Nagovisi are somewhat taller than their mountaineer language mates, and both the Siwai and the Buin are taller yet. As for the Nasioi, there is and was considerable variation between shorter mountaineer and taller near-coastal subtypes (which may reflect recent intermarriage between some of the latter with coastal Austronesian speakers).

All very interesting, but not very surprising in view of the vast length of time that the ancestors of many twentieth-century Bougainvillians have been living on the island and the numerous relatively recent immigrations from other islands north and south. But, in terms of intertribal variations in matriliny, the point of interest in all the above racial differences is not whether and how this or that racial feature has had any effect upon this or that aspect of matriliny. Instead, the relevant point lies in what the anthropometric evidence might reveal about breeding relations within, among, and beyond the borders of the four tribes (the assumption being that the sexual relationships involved in breeding were usually accompanied by other forms of relationships, including exchanges of objects and ideas).

Looked at from that point of view, Nagovisi as a whole had been for a very long time more isolated not only from Siwai, Nasioi, and Buin, but from other peoples as well. Moreover, within the linguistic boundaries of Nagovisi there had developed over time a number of fairly distinct inbreeding subpopulations. In contrast, within Siwai and within Buin interbreeding had evidently been less narrowly localized than in Nago-

visi--that is, the kind of marital exchange exemplified and jurally institutionalized in Nagovisi was not prevalent enough in Siwai or Buin to encourage the institution of the moiety pattern throughout those two tribes.

A second matter on which the above-cited anthropometric findings throw some light concerns a hypothetical invasion of Buin by non-Bougainvillians. Here and there in his publications Richard Thurnwald postulated that the differences in social organization between the Buin and other south Bougainvillians were due largely to a successful invasion and colonization of Buin by Austronesian-speaking Shortland Islanders, who--he wrote--imposed their rule over the matrilineally organized indigenous Buin, thereby creating the agnatically biased, class-stratified society described above.

Although some of the differences between the Buin and other south Bougainvillians--in social structure generally and in matriliny particularly--might indeed have been initiated by the Bum's more frequent and closer interaction with Shortland Islanders, those interactions need not have included--probably did not include--a colonizing invasion. There is no evidence for such a colonization from archaeology (Terrell and Irwin 1972), from history (Laracy 1976), or from anthropometry (Oliver 1954).[44]

Demography

It is hypothetically "explorable" that a large preponderance of adult males over adult females in any of the four tribes could have reduced matrilineal continuities to such an extent that groupings and other linkages based on matriliny were thereby diminished in number, size, and function.

Census figures for 1938 do record a preponderance of "adult" males over "adult" females in Nagovisi as a whole (1,078 males:954 females), in Siwai as a whole, including Baitsi (1,621:1,570), and in Buin as a whole (2,812:2,285)--no figures being available for Nasioi[45]--but I cannot conceive of these differences having been large enough to influence the matrilineal institutions of any of those tribes--except as will be noted below.

During his 1929-1930 patrol in south Bougainville, E. W. P. Chinnery collected census data from the villages he actually visited--in Nagovisi, in Siwai (including Baitsi), and in Buin, but not from those visited in Nasioi. His figures also reveal a preponderance of "adult" males over "adult" females in Nagovisi (288:222) and Buin (906:790),

but not in Siwai (880:900). Again, however, I cannot conceive of any connection between those differences and their respective tribes' differences in matriliny, except, perhaps, in the case of Buin, where the relatively larger preponderance of males might reflect that tribe's "preference" for agnation--including perhaps not deliberate female infanticide, but greater efforts to preserve the lives of infant males.

Having narrowed the search through the above circumscriptions, I shall succumb to the urgings of my Tolstoy-an soul and propose what I believe to be the principal factors--or situations, or whatever--that set in motion the events that culminated in the intercultural differences in matriliny herein described.

In a word, I propose that the most effective of those factors were trading relations with Shortland and Treasury islanders (i.e., Alu and Mono), including particularly the importation of enough shell valuables to permit their use as generalized tokens of exchange--that is, money (see also Nash 1981:110). Unlike weapons, pottery, and other objects of short life and limited utility, shell valuables were relatively indestructible, multiutilizable, and capable of limitless accumulation. Even pigs, the most highly valued indigenous Bougainvillian measures of wealth and objects of exchange, were short-lived and, beyond a certain small number, impossible to maintain--and thus to "accumulate."[46]

Some shell-valuable imports ended up in the (corporate) possession of matrilineal descent units and served mainly as heirlooms, which did not ordinarily circulate. Moreover, control over their use and disposal remained with descent-unit elders ("Firstborns"), especially female elders. In other words, large accumulations of such valuables brought prestige to corporate groups and influence to their, mostly female, leaders (as group officials and not as individuals).

The rest, perhaps most, of the shell-valuable imports ended up, however, in the possession of individuals, mostly men. It was individual men who conducted most of the original trading with the foreigners and who subsequently increased--or decreased--their takings through transactions with other Bougainvillians. Prior to the import of shell valuables, individual men had been able to achieve personal renown, social authority, or influence by raising or exchanging pigs (in the form of feasts, interest-bearing gift-loans, funeral "donations," war financing, and so forth). However, as noted above, compared with shell valuables, pig-based wealth (and renown and influence) was far less accumulable.

Thus, individual men (and in Nagovisi a few individual women) were enabled to accumulate more wealth and to achieve more (local) authority and wider (multicommunity) influence than previously--released,

as it were, from the quantitative restraints of the pig economy and from some of the moral obligations of matriliny (including, for example, exemption from customary uxorilocal residence and from the custom of bequeathing all or most of one's personal wealth to one's descent unit).

The latter exemption was especially important, inasmuch as some men--in Nasioi, Siwai, and Buin--began the practice of bequeathing all or most of their personal wealth to their sons, thereby serving in large measure to commence the processes that eventually transformed their societies from earlier more-pervasively matrilineal formats to those of the 1930s. Evidently, the numbers of such men varied from one society to another, as did the scales of their activities--and, consequently, the heights and degree of legitimation of their renown (which varied, for example, from the transient prominence achieved by a male Nagovisi *momiako* to the transmissible "chieftainship" attained by the Buin *mumira*-leader).

Such opportunities were available in each of the four tribes, but in different measure. It is my hypothesis that the most decisive determinants of those differences were, first and foremost, differences in the *quantities* of shell-valuable imports; and, second, differences in the numbers of men who possessed ambition for *personal* renown, along with the requisite financial and social skills. The first part of this hypothesis is supported--but only partly--by recorded facts (i.e., Buin and Siwai contained many more shell valuables per person than Nagovisi, the situation in Nasioi being unclear). Regrettably, I can adduce only unsubstantiable circular arguments in support of the second part of the hypothesis and shall not try the reader's patience by attempting to do so.

Several other factors could have, probably did have, some influence on the transformations studied in this essay--by undermining the pillars of matriliny directly, or indirectly by positive promotion of agnation. My contention is that those factors operated with different degrees of effectiveness in the four tribes and therefore produced different degrees of results. (The order in which these factors are listed is not intended to signify the relative force of their impacts.)

1. Wittingly or not, the Administration officials who dealt with south Bougainvillians encouraged not only agnation in general but male chieftainship in particular. Only men were taxed, required to work on government projects (such as building roads and rest houses or carrying cargo for government patrols), and penalized for violating government rules. And only men were appointed to government offices: to the line-village chieftainship *(kukerai),* to village interpreter *(tultul),* to medical

orderly *(doktaboi),* and to the higher office of regional paramount chief *(nambawan, luluai).* Although it is true that some of those appointments were made with popular backing, the very nature of those offices included an amount of coercive authority far greater than that possessed by clan elders or community leaders *(mumi, momiako, oboring)* --though not, perhaps, by Buin's more powerful *mumira*-leaders.

2. By the 1930s Christian missionaries, both Europeans and indigenes, had been active in Nasioi, Buin, and Siwai for at least three decades, and nearly every member of those tribes had been "convrerted," either to Roman Catholicism or to Methodism--or, in a very few instances, to Seventh-Day Adventism. For a handful of intensively trained youths and men (who served as village "teachers"), the conversion may have been relatively deep, but in all other cases known to me conversion served more to add to native religious beliefs and practices than to replace them. (For example, Jehovah, Jesus, and Mary were added to the native pantheons; Christian baptism was added to native birth rites.) A few native practices, such as sorcery and cremation, were censured by one or another of the missions but during the 1930s continued unabated. As for cousin marriage in general and cross-cousin marriage in particular, had the censure been effective, it would have toppled one of the principal pillars of matriliny. I do not know how effective that censure had become in Buin during the 1930s but I know for certain that it was only later that it became so in Siwai (and I suppose that to have been the case in Buin as well). As for Nasioi, Ogan writes in a 1992 letter to me: "I agree that the mission censure against cross-cousin marriage was probably not effective until after the 1930s, and probably not until after World War II."

With respect to Nagovisi, a European missionary (in this case a Roman Catholic priest) first established residence there in 1930. When I became acquainted with him, in 1938, he was continuing to practice his personal policy of proceeding slowly and forbearingly with conversion, maintaining a respectful tolerance of cross-cousin marriage and of matrilineal practices in general.

3. It is also relevant to consider whether the foreign work experiences of many south Bougainvillians affected the matriliny of their tribes.

As noted earlier, even before the turn of the century many south Bougainville males were leaving their homes for one or more years to work on distant plantations owned and managed by Europeans. The first published account known to me giving actual numbers of such "village absentees" was that of Chinnery, who recorded, in 1929-1930, the number of absentees among each village's total number of "able-bodied

males" (from those villages that were included in his census), For Nagovisi the proportion was 30 percent: for Siwai (including Baitsi) 19 percent, and for Buin 23 percent. (Chinnery also visited several Nasioi villages but did not record the absentee figures from them.) In 1938 the patrol officer mentioned above made a similar but more complete census of the Buin subdistrict (which also included Banoni, but not Nasioi). According to his counts, the proportions of absentees (to all adult males) were, for Nagovisi, 30 percent; for Siwai (including Baitsi), 19 percent; and for Buin, 17.6 percent. (No comparable figures are available for Nasioi, all patrol records for that tribe having been destroyed or lost during World War II.) In other words, before and during the 1930s the peoples in this study included large numbers of men who had lived and worked for years in social-cultural settings strikingly different from their own, Could any of those experiences have provided them with the motives or the means to transform the matriliny of their homelands?

I am uncertain about what might have prompted any such motives--or, indeed, what they might have been. A few of the returned workers I talked with expressed some dissatisfaction with the "tedium" of tribal home life--although nothing could have been as monotonous as the daily routines of plantation living. But most of the returnees expressed pleasure at being back home--away from the continuous hard work, the barracks living, the strict and sometimes harsh discipline, and the lack of women, all of which characterized plantation life. As for means, no returned worker could have earned and brought home enough (Australian) money or money-bought goods to have allowed him to embark on an indigenous-type renown-achieving career (which, if achieved, might have weakened his own commitment to some aspects of matriliny). During the 1930s the average wage for plantation work was about seventy to eighty shillings a year (plus blankets, cotton loin cloths, soap, stick tobacco, and keep). Some of those wages were spent on goods to take home (e.g., flashlights, lanterns, storage chests, and canned meat and fish), many of which were distributed among the workers' kin. Moreover, much of what money remained was used to pay the Administration head tax (of the worker himself and of his moneyless close kin). Indeed, in the many cases I recorded, few returned workers had saved enough money to buy more than one or two pigs--not enough to even begin to become a *mumi, momiako,* or *oboring.*

4. Finally, during their plantation years south Bougainvillians came into close contact with other New Guineans, including many from societies unlike their own. Could the latter have persuaded them that patriliny--or ambilineality, or bilineality, or nonunilineality--was su-

perior to matriliny? I think not. On the contrary, the returned workers I knew were unanimous in their disdain for other non-Bougainvillian Melanesian ways of thinking and acting, including patriliny and other ways of grouping or categorizing people.[47]

NOTES

[This is the second of two parts. Part 1 appeared in *Pacific Studies.* Volume 16, Number 3 (September 1993). --ED.]

19. Actually, the authors of this classification distinguished between "dialects" and "sub-languages," but the above characterizations are sufficient to indicate the relative homogeneity of those languages--and of the cultures of the four peoples now being compared.

20. Ogan relies on some published statements of those earlier writers, especially Frizzi, but does so on the basis of his much longer and more thorough field studies of Nasioi institutions, including what he judged, seemingly correctly, to be their "continuities."

21. As far as I know the Australian Administration's official census figures for most of Bougainville did not survive the Japanese invasion of 1942. I was fortunate in obtaining and preserving a copy of the 1938 census figures for the Buin subdistrict, but not for the subdistrict that included the Nasioi. I did. however, obtain and record an estimated head count of Nasioi speakers (including Simiku), a total of about 3,600--which, spread over an estimated "tribal" area of about 500 square miles, works out to a density of about 7 persons a square mile--the thinnest density of the four tribes included in this study. That, of course, represents a "generalized" density. In fact, those 3,600 or so persons were divided into eight dialectally distinct, spatially separated, and ecologically different subtribes.

22. Ogan adds the following, judicious, note concerning the authenticity of his reconstruction: "Clearly my definition of 'indigenous' or 'traditional' behaviour must be arbitrary. Today there are, for example, no Nasioi alive, or at any rate capable of being interviewed, who were full-fledged adult members of society before Europeans arrived in numbers on Bougainville. Yet the effort is necessary, not least because present conditions are obviously causing modern Nasioi to distort descriptions of past customs in order to achieve new political and social goals. Much of my own material was gathered at a time, and from the kind of responsible, elderly informants, which makes me confident that such distortions were minimal. . . . In this chapter I call 'traditional' those behaviours which were still current between the world wars, often clearly remembered by men living today but evincing continuity with the more distant past. This material is comparable [in degree of Westernization] to that observed at first hand by Oliver among the Siwai" (1972:12).

23. Although Ogan acknowledges some "modern-day" cultural differences between the Aropa Valley and the mountain-dwelling, southeastern Nasioi (i.e, those of the Kongara region), he uses some data on the latter in his reconstruction of "traditional" Aropa Valley culture--because of the less-Westernized state of Kongara culture and because of the availability of the earlier descriptions thereof by Frizzi and others.

24. In a 1992 letter to me Ogan wrote: "In the Aropa Valley in 1962-64, people had temporarily given up pigs in order to expand stands of coconuts. But even in Kongara in 1967-68, where people utilized rough terrain as 'natural pigpens,' I saw no large herds of pigs."

25. Ogan wrote in a letter to me: "I agree that shell valuables were likely to have been less important in Nasioi than elsewhere [in southern Bougainville]. Perhaps this is related to the importance of exchanging produce across ecological niches, or maybe just to the relative isolation of areas like Kongara from the source of supply."

26. On the basis of her two-day visit to "mountain hamlets" southwest(?) of Aropa Valley, in 1929(?), Blackwood wrote: "Certain families are recognized as being of high rank, the rest being commoners. There is an hereditary chieftainship, a man's heir is his sister's son, his own children belonging to another clan, and taking a position corresponding to the rank of their mother" (1931:430). This is the only published mention I have found of "hereditary chieftainship" or "family rank' in Nasioi--except insofar as Ogan's statement about *oboring* (big-man) succession (quoted below under Matriliny) might be so inter. preted. In this connection, Ogan also wrote in a 1992 letter to me: "Despite Frizzi's use of *Hauptling* [chief] . . . I cannot believe that hereditary chieftainship existed. As I have quoted often [in publications], the Germans were appalled at Nasioi failure to grasp the concept of chief. Again, I think the features of scattered, low density population and a lack of pressure on land play an important part here."

27. As mentioned above, some of Nash's Nagovisi informants tended to see their neighbors, the Nasioi, as having matrimoieties like themselves. That may indeed have been the case with their *nearest* Nasioi neighbors--i.e., those of western Nasioi--but there is no published mention of Nagovisi-like moieties by Ogan or any other writer on Nasioi except Chinnery, who wrote: "The Nasoi *[sic]* people appear to be divided into two clans, each of which has numerous subdivisions. My information was not very reliable, but I gathered that one of the clans is called Borapanu, and is associated in some way with Marioi, the eagle, and the other clan is Mantanu, which is associated in some way with Ungtong, water" (1924:71). However, the Nasioi were similar to the Nagovisi--and to the Siwai and Buin--in having had a kin-terminological system of the Dravidian type (i.e., one that classified all kin terms into one or another of two intermarrying categories).

28. The only type of "shrine" mentioned by Ogan (and also by Blackwood, Chinnery, and Frizzi) was that associated with households: "A small house, resembling a European birdhouse, was set on a pole behind one's dwelling, a small fire built inside, and tasty morsels of pig, opossum and other delicacies placed on the fire. This house was the *dopo* where the ancestral 'spirits' dwelt. It is unclear from informants' accounts whether ancestral 'spirits' were propitiated as individuals or groups, or how kinship alignments affected the system. Since the *dopo* was associated with the household as a social unit, it seems likely that each member made offerings to whatever spirits he thought of. [Present-day] Nasioi disinterest in such matters effectively precludes the possibility that this ritual accurately reflected a living individual's genealogy" (Ogan 1972:30-31). In a related footnote Ogan draws attention to a similar kind of shrine, a *lopo,* among the Austronesian-speaking peoples of Choiseul Island.

29. I find this omission puzzling. I cannot help but believe that such ritual once existed, given the role that magic played in growing-up ceremonies elsewhere in southern Bougainville and that it *probably* played in other domains of "aboriginal" Nasioi life. Nasioi growing-up ceremonies did differ from those of Siwai and Buin in at least one other known respect, namely, they, like those of the Nagovisi, included puberty (i.e., first menstruation) rites for girls.

30. Blackwood's description of Nasioi matriliny consists of the following brief remark: "There are five clans *(mu)*. Their names are Mara-owi (Eagle), Lingumbuto (Spring of Water), Mo (Coconuts), Toro (Eel), and Kandji (Ground). There are no subdivisions, but the Eagle clan is regarded as the most important. A man may not marry a woman of his own clan, but can marry into any of the others. The children follow the clan of their mother" (1931:430). For Chinnery's account see note 27 above. Frizzi's account (in my translated version) of Nasioi clans and clan totemism is as follows:

> What little I could learn about Nasioi clans *(mu)* and their clan-totem-related customs is as follows.
>
> A child inherits the clan totem of his mother, and a woman retains her own totemic affiliation after marriage. Persons having the same totem call one another "brother" or "sister" even though they are members of entirely separate local groups.
>
> Marriage between members of the same totemic clan is strictly forbidden. When I asked a person to tell me the name of someone who happened to be a totem-clanmate, he would ask a third person to answer; had he himself uttered the name, he would have become susceptible to some misfortune. Persons having the same totem do not enter each other's house[!: see below]. Likewise, physical contact with a clanmate's blood causes sores, and smoking a clanmate's tobacco pipe cause boils on one's forehead.
>
> During their wanderings outside their home territories, which might last for days, they informed me that they were always put up and fed by totem-mates. To my question "How do you recognize them as such?" the answer was "We just know." (However, only seldom do they go far from home, especially to places entirely unknown to them.)
>
> Almost every kind of animal serves as one or another clan's totem, including snakes, birds, bats, fish, pigs, opossums and locusts--three kinds of snakes being among the most highly respected: the *bogiago* (a very large one), the *kurure* (a small one), and the *eru* (a thick-bodied one). A person is forbidden to kill or eat his own totem. Plants also serve as clan totems and, as such, should not be eaten by their human affiliates. With respect to all such restrictions, however, the prohibition pertains only to the species or variety of animal or plant specifically affiliated--not, for example, to *all* bats or to *all* varieties of taro or bananas, but only to that species or variety associated with one's own clan. (Frizzi 1914:17-18)

31. This reconstruction is based partly on Keil's and partly on my own reading of Chinnery and the Thurnwalds. It should be noted, however, that Keil now professes some misgivings about the reconstruction offered, tentatively, in his 1975 dissertation, In a letter to me of December 1992, he writes, "any reconstruction of the past on my part--in reference to the roles of mumira, kitere, etc.--is uncertain and debatable--and throughout [my dissertation] I discuss processes whereby the neat categories of my analysis have been transformed and changed and blurred. . . . And, perhaps, parts of my [dissertation] relied too much on [the writings of the Thurnwalds and Chinnery], without noting at every part that the Buin at the time of my fieldwork could not confirm or deny every point made in those earlier writings." Therefore, let the reader beware!

32. Henceforth in this essay--unless otherwise specified--all statements concerning "Buin" beliefs and practices refer most directly to the communities studied by Keil (Mogoroi and those nearby) and indirectly to those of southern and central Buin. As mentioned

earlier, some of the northwestern communities of Buin had matrilineal clans that bore closer resemblances to those of the neighboring Siwai than to those of Mogoroi, but I do not know whether that resemblance applied to social stratification as well.

33. Two principles governed the transmission of a deceased's land use rights: (1) that they should go to the individual who had contributed preponderantly to his funeral feast (which had to be sumptuous to insure his spirit's entry into Paradise) and (2) that they should go to the deceased's eldest son--or, lacking sons, to another closely related male agnate, In most cases the recipient was the same--whether or not he had to "borrow" some of the costs from others (including, often, from his *mumira*-leader).

34. By the 1930s the time frame adopted for this study, a *mumira*-leader's power to kill had been curtailed by the colonial authorities. It is mentioned here only to indicate the authority that once rested in the status.

35. For more details about *oromurui,* including their comparison with Siwai *horomorun* and Nagovisi *paramorun,* see Oliver 1943.

36. Such a number of "upper-class" members strikes me as disproportionately large in comparison with figures for other class-stratified societies in Melanesia, but it is the only Buin-related head count known to me.

37. In 1938-1939, during my brief forays into northwest Buin (whose inhabitants were adjacent to and in frequent contact, including marriage, with those of northeast Sinai), I found their institutions to be closely similar to those of the neighboring Siwai--including the presence of the same and no other matrilineal clans and the division of those into subclans and matrilineages (Oliver 1943:62n).

38. In commenting on this statement, however, Keil writes: "I'm not sure that I would agree, for the Buin, that 'other things equal', persons related matrilineally owed one another MORE mutual generosity in goods and services than owed to other persons. I'm not sure it's MORE than what is, or was, owed to agnates, for example. or one's mumira/kitere" (pers. com., 1992).

39. It might be argued that the four tribes had different cultural origins and that their similarities in the 1930s had come about through convergence--specifically, through centuries-long contacts and mutual borrowings. Some such borrowing doubtless did occur--for example, between residents of northeast Siwai and northwest Buin. And, as Nash reported, there are well-attested cases of Siwai individuals having moved into Nagovisi and become assimilated into the Nagovisi dual-organization "mind set." However, scattered instances do not a broad flow of history make. And--with a bow to Friar Occam and his razor--divergence requires fewer assumptions than convergence with respect to the matter at hand.

40. By adding conjecture to "evidence" in order to reach back even further into Melanesian "history," Rivers proposed that that "ancestral" social system was itself the result of fusion between "aboriginal" native peoples and later waves of immigrants from Southeast Asia--the former having been "negroid," "ignorant," "of low culture," and "divided up into small hostile bands"; the latter lighter-skinned, of "higher culture," and superior in "mental and material equipment" (1914, 2:558).

41. Even in farawsay Buka, with its numerous matrilineal exogamous clans, two of the clans were so preponderant, numerically, that there were communities in which they functioned like moieties (Blackwood 1935).

42. For a comprehensive intertribal comparison of the roles and social value of women in southern Bougainville, see Nash 1981.

43. I do so while agreeing with the caveat by Count Tolstoy that the "totality of causes of phenomena is inaccessible to human understanding." I also accept his added observation that "the necessity of finding causes is innate in the human soul" (*War and Peace,* part 13, chap. 1).

44. In one publication R. Thurnwald wrote: "Among the people of Buin . . . you may easily distinguish various physical types since the invasion of this part by the Alumono race [Alu, of Shortland Island; Mono, of Treasury Island] seems fairly recent" (1934b:2810-2811). But in another statement published that same year, he revised his opinion: "The cultural and racial distinction between the 'aristocracy" and the 'bondsmen' seems on the whole to be less pronounced here than in Africa. The chief is housed, dressed and fed exactly like his bondsman. It may be that the fusion between the two is more advanced here" (1934a:125).

45. The census figures for Nagovisi, Siwai, and Buin were collected by Patrol Officer K. W. Bilston, who generously provided me with the copy cited here--which, as far as I know, is the only copy in existence, the original along with most other pre-World War II Administration records having been lost or destroyed during World War II.

46. Pigs could, in a sense, be "accumulated" by lending them out for others to feed, or by "giving" them in terms of collectible debts, but those forms of assets had their social limits --and were much less "liquid" than shell money.

47. A comprehensive report on south Bougainvillian matriliny would include much more than is provided in this essay, such as the stereotypical characteristics of familial relationships in clan origin myths, including the role of the senior and more authoritative, but often wicked, Elder Sister--a kind of Melanesian Cinderella theme--and the overworked and jealous. even vengeful father. However, I leave that task for scholars who are more inventive or perceptive or, in any case, younger than I.

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