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PRESERVING COLONIAL HERITAGE IN POSTCOLONIAL MICRONESIA

Jon G. O'Neill and Dirk H. R. Spennemann
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Micronesia has a long history of colonial occupation: Spanish, German, Japanese, and finally American. Each power left tangible remains of its occupation and each has influenced the preservation of Micronesian culture. This essay explores the nature of historic preservation of colonial sites and property in a postcolonial world. What are the priorities and what are the constraints for Micronesian countries to manage their colonial past at a time when cultural self-determination has become reality?

HISTORIC ASSOCIATIONS with non-Oceanic civilizations have shaped today's emergent nation-states of Micronesia. Given the vital and dynamic nature of Micronesian societies, it was inevitable that contact between them and shipwrecked sailors, traders, whalers, escaped convicts, and colonial administrations should initiate rapid cultural changes. Whether deliberate or accidental, adopted or imposed, those changes have contributed significantly to the social constructs of Micronesia today.

The terms "colonial," "precolonial," "postcolonial," and "neocolonial" are frequently used as though they have been clearly defined and their definitions widely accepted. This is not the case, and as Gandhi shows, "postcolonialism" is "a diffuse and nebulous term" (1998:viii), a description that may properly be applied to all four terms.

In practice, determining when a "colonial" period ended and a "postcolonial" period began is frequently difficult (Chen 1996; Henningham 1996; McClintock 1993). Decolonization is a complex process. The simplest definition may involve replacing a foreign administration with a form of self-rule. More complex definitions may involve more-radical "social surgery" to remove cultural associations and constructs built by colonial influences. Similarly, national independence is a term that is changing in definition and

application. The forces of international econometrics drive development of a global economy and communications infrastructure, frequently disempowering small nation-states of the Pacific (Suter 1995).

How real can political independence be when its boundaries are set by the hard realities of economic dependence? Blaisdell suggests decolonization in the Pacific is an "unfinished business" (2000). Despite self-government, old familiar forms of colonialism have not disappeared in the euphoria of national "independence"; rather, they have evolved into a neocolonialism incorporating new forms of dependence and control.

Colonial Forces, the Politics of Exclusion, and Independence

Spain was the first colonial power to arrive in the region and remained dominant for far longer than any other. A continuing result is that Hispanic and Roman Catholic influences are particularly strong in those areas Spain physically colonized. Guam, for example, formed part of Spain's geographically vast empire throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries and has undergone significant cultural change as a direct result (Rogers 1995).

Other areas, such as the Marshall Islands, were not at first considered to have significant economic or strategic value and consequently retained their independence until much later. The perception of their comparative insignificance began to change rapidly in the latter half of the nineteenth century. Within a single lifetime, between 1880 and 1950, four separate colonial/imperial powers administered those areas of Micronesia that later became the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands: Spain, Germany, Japan, and the United States of America. Each change in control resulted from military action initiated by nationalistic forces centered outside Micronesia.

Following a devastating loss in the Spanish-American War of 1898, Spain withdrew from the Pacific in disarray. The United States did not take control of all the area Spain had claimed, giving Germany the opportunity to expand its influence in the region and become, if only for a brief time, a significant colonial power. The 1914–1918 World War saw Japan annex most of Germany's Micronesian colonies, a move subsequently confirmed by the League of Nations despite vociferous American objections. Following Japan's defeat in the Pacific War of 1941–1945, the United States controlled the region. As the political and military estimates of Micronesia's strategic value increased, the United States replaced the military administration with a civilian one as America's grip on the region strengthened.

Micronesians were excluded continually from many decisions regarding their own future. Examples include the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494, by which the European powers divided the world between Spain and Portugal.

The Berlin Congress of European nations in 1884 established rules by which these expansionist states divided the Pacific amongst themselves. In 1898 the Treaty of Paris saw Spain surrender Guam and the Philippines to the United States, and in the following year Spain sold its remaining Pacific colonies to Germany. In 1919 the Treaty of Versailles awarded much of Micronesia to Japan, and in 1920 the League of Nations confirmed the area to be a mandated territory (Class C) of the Japanese empire. In 1945 the United Nations ratified America's hard-won military control over the area and established the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands under U.S. supervision.

All of these international agreements were formulated, agreed to, and enforced by powers originating outside of Micronesia. Indigenous Micronesians were denied any significant input in critical decisions regarding their own land, their own cultures, and their own futures.

More recently, direct Micronesian involvement in developing self-government was encouraged by the United States. An important step towards that goal was the Congress of Micronesia, established in 1964. The official American policy, however, was that self-government should be limited and steps taken to ensure that Micronesians "chose affiliation with America," according to Hezel (1995:301). Both Thompson (1994) and Hezel (1995) suggest that American actions at this time undermined the attempt to establish a single pan-Micronesian political union. As a result, several small nation-states with few natural resources and small economic bases have emerged from their common past.

Since the 1970s, America has gradually withdrawn from direct administration and the emergent nation-states of Micronesia have acquired a measure of national "independence." These postcolonial processes did not always go smoothly, and at times conflicts developed within Micronesia and between Micronesians and America (Heine 1974; Hezel 1995). Although self-government was achieved in a remarkably peaceful manner, these small nations remain largely dependent on handouts from previous colonial masters, mostly the United States (Thompson 1994). Associated with the development of self-government, a deep interest in what Micronesians perceive to be their "real" heritage and a realization that they must now manage *their own past in their own terms* is arising. Difficulties are attached to this responsibility, as the great conundrums of historic preservation remain: Who owns it, who wants it, who is responsible for it, and who pays for it?

Tangible Historic Property

Each colonial authority has influenced the development of today's Micronesian cultures and left elements of its own heritage behind as it withdrew.

Tangible historic Spanish property remaining in Micronesia include

churches, forts, monuments, and cemeteries. Several examples have been documented by Galván (1998), including remains of Fort Alfonso XIII on Pohnpei, the tower of the former Mount Carmel Church on Garapan, and Fort Soledad in Umatac, Guam. The Casa de Gobiemo (Spanish Governor's Palace) in Guam was originally built in 1736 and enlarged in 1885. Rogers (1995) and Galván (1998) document how little survived the destruction that occurred when American troops invaded and recaptured the island from Japanese forces in 1944. *La azotea* (terrace) and parts of the *real almacén* (arsenal) wall remain. Situated in the Plaza de Espana, a very accessible section of downtown Agaña only meters from the main Catholic cathedral, this highly significant structure is in poor condition. It deteriorates with typical tropical rapidity as little is done to protect it from the most fundamental processes of natural decay. Timber is rotting and stonework suffering vegetation-induced mechanical decay. Moisture is present in almost all structures, molds and fungi are very active, and insect damage to some wood structures is considerable.

Examples of German-related sites include two significant cemeteries and two churches. One cemetery is the simple, unadorned burial site for the leaders of the 1910–1911 Sokehs Rebellion, who were executed by firing squad after being found guilty of murder (Hezel 1995). This site, located beside a road and between several houses, is in poor condition with no interpretation. The low wall that surrounds the burial site was broken but not repaired, and the mass grave is overgrown with weeds. The second cemetery contains more-substantial and individual memorials to those Germans who "died for Emperor and country" during this rebellion by the Sokehs people and may be compared to the unadorned common grave shared by the executed "rebels." Without appropriate preservation management, these memorials are also decaying. Some headstones have eroded and are now almost unreadable. Others have fallen over. At least one has been broken and the pieces laid as tiles in a path through this dilapidated and overgrown cemetery.

A belltower and apse is all that remains of a large Catholic church built in Kolonia, Pohnpei, frequently referred to as the German belltower. The church was constructed in 1908 to 1911 during the German colonial period, designed and built by Capuchin monks who came from Germany. A German Capuchin, Salvator Walleser, was consecrated bishop of the vicariate, Pohnpei became his episcopal seat, and this church became his cathedral (Hezel 1991). Despite the significant German elements in its history, the church was adopted by Pohnpeians as theirs. Pohnpeian lives from birth to death centered on this church: Pohnpeians worshiped in this church, Pohnpeians were baptized in this church, Pohnpeians were married in this church, Pohnpeians celebrated mass in this church. It formed a central part of Pohnpeian culture

at a particular time and its remains are truly Pohnpeian heritage, showing the great influence Catholic missionaries, first from Spain and later from Germany, had on areas of Micronesia.

Much historic civilian property originating in Japanese times was destroyed during World War II. Some examples remain, however, including a hospital site on Saipan and a memorial to the Japanese emperor on Majuro in the Marshall Islands. An extensive array of historic military property remains from World War II: foxholes, pillboxes, fortified caves and bunkers, and equipment including guns, tanks, landing craft, ships, and aircraft (Denfeld 1979a, 1979b, 1981; Look and Spennemann 1994; Spennemann 1992b, 1992c). Many Japanese vessels were sunk in Micronesian anchorages, such as those of Palau, Truk, and Kwajalein (Bailey 1982; Lindemann 1982, 1991). Hezel and Graham describe those now lying on the bottom of Truk lagoon as comprising an underwater museum (1989). Two Japanese coastal defense guns (200 mm, 12 cal) provide an unusual example of "preservation"—they were removed from their original emplacements to allow construction of the Onwards Agaña Hotel, Tamuning, Guam (O'Neill 2000). Following the hotel's completion, the guns were placed between the hotel facade and swimming pool in replica fiberglass shelters built to represent part of the original gun emplacements (Spennemann 2000). In this unsympathetic act, their historic associations were destroyed. No longer defending the beaches of Japanese-occupied territory against an American invasion force, the guns have become an almost invisible part of the decor of a modern tourist hotel. Mute, corroding, ugly—they squat like fallen gargoyles before the ultimate irony of Japanese and American tourists swimming together in the pool of a Japanese-owned hotel built on U.S. soil.

As so much of the Pacific action of World War II was fought on, over, and under the waters of Micronesia and its scattered islands and atolls, battle relics are widespread. The U.S. government determined that those beaches of Guam by which U.S. forces invaded the Japanese-controlled island should be dedicated as a memorial. The War in the Pacific National Historic Park was established in 1978, and today consists of an integrated array of small parks and reserves throughout Guam. Many private collections of historic property from this period are also held; items collected range from bullets, uniforms, and knives to swords, handguns, and tanks (Spennemann 2000). The floor of Bikini Atoll is the final resting place of warships from several nations that participated in World War II (Delgado, Lenihan, and Murphy 1991). They are often referred to simply as the "Sunken Fleet" but now lie together as a museum, commemorating not so much a dreadful war that involved almost the entire globe but development of a conflict that became known as the "Cold War."

Preservation

Decay is a series of continuous processes whereby tangible cultural property is lost to present and succeeding generations. Although decay cannot be prevented, in many cases its processes may be slowed with effective preservation management (Spennemann 1992a; Look and Spennemann 1993a, 1993b, 1994, 1996). It occurs most rapidly in tropical regions where heat and moisture combine to increase the effectiveness of almost all other elements of decay. Consequently, effective management actions to preserve historic property are even more critical in tropical areas like Micronesia than elsewhere and may be summarized under four main functions: (1) *locate* historic property, (2) *document* historic property, (3) *minimize* decay by devising and instituting effective management processes, and (4) *educate* the community.

Individual processes or factors of decay rarely operate alone; they usually combine in various ways (Florian, Kronkright, and Norton 1990). Issues that may not be direct causes of decay can still contribute to deterioration of historic property by providing enhanced conditions for decay to occur. Under such circumstances preservation management can become a difficult and complex task.

Even when sufficient resources and community interest exist, preserving elements of heritage on tropical islands, particularly low-lying coral atolls, is dependent on two factors: effective management of anthropogenic and nonanthropogenic change, and the uncontrollable dynamics of chance. Natural laws determine when and where earthquakes or volcanic eruptions will occur and which direction tropical cyclones will take and when, where, and how intensely they will develop. It is possible to predict in general terms that an earthquake may occur, but not its magnitude or timing (Spennemann and Look 1998:186). It is also possible to predict other natural disasters such as cyclones and floods, but the dynamics of chance still appear to control. Tropical cyclones regularly ignore the predictions of the yet-flawed science of weather forecasting by changing direction, ground speed, and intensity with deadly effect and rapidity; volcanoes and earthquakes occur with scant respect for seismologists' predictions.

Preserve What?

Like other social groups, Oceanic peoples are genuinely proud of their varied and dynamic cultures. Their pride is frequently displayed in areas that Western cultures may regard as being less important. For example, they do not always value *tangible* historic property highly and have a marked tendency to focus strongly on *nontangible* heritage such as traditional skills, knowledge, and oral traditions. This tendency is very evident in communi-

ties from low coral islands, such as the Marshall Islands. Perhaps this may be attributed to the frequency with which tropical storms cause extensive property damage and the islanders' reliance on less permanent resources for traditional tools and building materials. In contrast, Western styles of cultural preservation tend to concentrate on tangible historic property, a focus that may not be at all appropriate in Oceania.

An alternative form of historic preservation may better suit Micronesian cultures. It involves the sacrifice of physical remains in favor of preserving nonphysical elements in recognition that cultural "connectedness" is not necessarily based on physical historic remains. This alternative avoids the inherent dilemma of a style of historic preservation that is impossible simply because processes as inevitable as aging and decay cannot be stopped. Lowenthal refers to how the Ise Shinto Temple in Japan is dismantled every twenty years and replaced by a replica built of similar materials. His comment that "[p]hysical continuity signifies less to the Japanese than perpetuating the techniques and rituals of re-creation" is a concept that Micronesians are likely to understand implicitly. He further observes that "craftsmen trained in the old skills are themselves designated 'Living National treasures'—prized exemplars of cultural heritage" (Lowenthal 1995:384–385). This is another concept that fits well with traditional Micronesian social constructs of respect.

In the era following the disappearance of most examples of the old form and structure of colonialism, the focus of preservation management in Micronesia has changed from nonindigenous historical property to indigenous. This critical development has increased the complexity of historic preservation management. It may also have triggered "adoption" by local communities of historic property otherwise regarded as being of colonial origins. Historic property associated with the operations of trading companies, such as the Likiep Village Historic Site in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, is an example.

Preservation Resources

From a conceptual viewpoint preservation seems easy. If a people have the right to decide what elements of the past are to be preserved as their heritage, they need only make their choices, allocate resources, and proceed to preserve their chosen elements of heritage. From a pragmatic viewpoint, however, it is considerably more difficult. Effective preservation and management of cultural property is dependent on two critical factors: sufficient community interest and political will, and availability of the necessary resources.

Probably no preservation authority anywhere in the world has sufficient

resources to appropriately care for the variety of heritage material remaining. This situation is particularly true of Oceanic states. They rarely have the trained personnel, and they lack the financial reserves and infrastructure. Unless local communities develop a strong desire to preserve their heritage and are able to convert that desire into sustainable political will, it is doubtful there ever will be enough resources. Not only are funds and equipment scarce, but required skills are frequently also nonexistent or fully committed elsewhere. Chandra highlights the lack of appropriately trained personnel as a major issue in the Pacific Islands (1997).

Decay processes are so rapid and forceful in tropical areas that preservation of historic property involves a constant and expensive fight to delay the inevitable. Governments find it difficult to apportion limited resources among the frequently conflicting interests of developing the national economy, building a national infrastructure, and constructing and preserving a national past.

Interest and Political Will

To be successful, any movement for preservation must develop an interest in heritage issues within the broader community, thus generating political authority. Without such a constituency governments will allocate resources to other areas, and the potential benefits accruing from investment in cultural preservation will never be realized. Are former colonies interested in preserving the physical vestiges of their previous colonial administrators? What do these emergent nations regard as their own national priorities?

Social and political environments where the will to preserve tangible historic property is frequently low, where pressure to provide modern infrastructure is high, and where national resources are limited are not conducive to historic preservation. Such environments are common throughout Micronesia today. Consequently, it is unrealistic to presume that scarce resources will be used to preserve historic colonial property. This is particularly true when previous colonial powers do not show any interest in the property or display any sense of association with it.

Funding

Most Micronesian nation-states have little national disposable income and a steadily declining number of external providers willing to assist. Since the 1941–1945 Pacific War, they have become highly dependent on external funds in the form of international aid (Connell and Lea 1997), most of which comes from the United States. With few exceptions natural resources are

limited, the industrial base is restricted, underemployment is high, and national economies are lethargic (Albinski 1985; Connell and Lea 1997).

Micronesia is in an anomalous situation in comparison with other emergent nation-states. In a speech before the International Monetary Fund, Anton De Brum, then minister of finance, stated that the Republic of the Marshall Islands has "unfettered access to the United States" and a currency that is, by treaty, the U.S. dollar. He also stated that, consequently, the Marshalls does not suffer the same fear of massive currency devaluation as other states (De Brum 1998). These statements are fundamentally true of all Micronesian states. However, as Connell and Lea point out (1997: 85), there is a significant regionwide problem: Micronesian states (including the Republic of the Marshall Islands) import much more than they export, resulting in highly unbalanced national trade figures, restricted national economic opportunities, and poor medium-term economic prospects.

Unemployment is high in most Micronesian states, and as much of it is hidden by other factors, it may be even worse than reported. It is probable that official figures do not show the real levels of unemployment, as existing data preclude analysis for underemployment (Connell and Lea 1997:97–104). Differentiating between real unemployment, underemployment, and subsistence activities is difficult. Compounding the problem of unemployment is the fact that many of those who are employed may be paid at rates below any legislated minimum, an industrial practice permitted by some governments desperate to encourage business development. Low community wage levels in turn contribute to low levels of personal income-tax revenue, little community savings, reduced spending, and an inhibited local economy with less money available for investment. Table 1 compares the estimated per-capita income earned in Micronesian states during 1990 and 1995.

TABLE 1. **Micronesian Income Per Capita, 1990 and 1995**

	Per-Capita Income (US$)		Increase/Decrease	
Nation-State	1990	1995	$	%
Guam	9,928	11,552	1,624	16.36
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	7,199	6,897	(–302)	(–4.20)
American Samoa	3,039	3,270	231	7.60
Palau	2,656	3,526	870	32.75
Federated States of Micronesia	n/a	940	n/a	n/a
Republic of the Marshall Islands	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Source: U.S. Department of the Interior 1999.

In some states, the use of low-wage workers from overseas is reported to have increased markedly during this period (U.S. Department of the Interior n.d.). This practice contributes to generally low per-capita incomes with consequently lower tax revenues. In many states "cash/barter economies" and extended-family obligations further reduce government income from taxation and thus the funds available to finance government activities.

When these factors are combined with relatively low tax rates, national revenues gained from taxation are low. All of these factors contribute to national economic bases that are small enough to cause genuine concern about their ability to fund national development, let alone historic preservation. Essentially, funds for historic preservation must be generated internally or externally. The first requires a population with disposable income and the second an external provider with the ability and willingness to fund historic preservation in another country. In both cases the political will to preserve historical property must also exist.

An Example: A German Colonial Site in the Marshall Islands

Property remaining from the German administrative period in the Pacific is disappearing quickly as the typically rapid decay processes of the tropics destroy them. A general lack of interest is apparent by both Micronesian nation-states and Germany. This disinterest is evident in a lack of funding, a lack of proposals to preserve, and a general and widespread public lack of knowledge of a shared past. Consequently, preservation management strategies and practices that are appropriate to the political and physical realities of Oceania in the twenty-first century are needed if these properties are to be documented.

For example, forty historically and culturally significant books of business records were found in a disused house in Likiep village, where they were decaying in a pool of water and accumulated rubbish (O'Neill 2000). This neglect may indicate a lack of interest in a past the islanders consider unimportant or simply a lack of knowledge of the books' significance. The conundrums remain—whose heritage is it and who pays? Marshallese themselves are very interested, particularly those living on Likiep Atoll. The government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands chartered a not-for-profit organization—the Joachim De Brum Memorial Trust Corporation—to preserve this highly significant site in September 1982. Projects to maintain and restore the house, on Likiep island, were funded by the U.S. National Park Service in 1976 and 1984. Despite close historic connections, no funds have been obtained from Germany to assist with preservation of this site that originated with the German administrative period.

The general opinion of most Micronesians appears to be that satisfying present-day community and family needs is more important than preserving any disused building. A good example of this occurred on Likiep when a severe tropical storm damaged many homes in the late 1980s. The storm also extensively damaged a small, disused building constructed by Joachim De Brum as a kitchen and dining room and situated about fourteen meters southeast of his house. Building material was salvaged from it and used to repair other damaged homes. All that remains today are some badly deteriorated foundations.

This building had high architectural significance, and through its direct association with Joachim De Brum it also had high historical significance. Consequently, it formed part of the first Micronesian site to be included on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places, the Likiep Village Historic Site. Despite this, the kitchen–dining room building had not been repaired during the two earlier U.S.-funded preservation projects of the site and had been left to continue its decay. This action strongly implied the building was considered unimportant and valueless. Thus, when an alternative and urgent need developed for its material to be used elsewhere, it was used without qualm.

The common problem is one of ownership. For example, ex-colonial powers do not appear to be interested in their own colonial heritage and Micronesians do not generally regard remaining colonial property as part of their heritage. They feel little sense of ownership or association and, consequently, little desire to preserve such property. It seems quite certain that no Oceanic nation-state would be prepared to use its precious resources on a heritage with which it feels little connection.

Is It Too Late?

Preservation of colonial heritage in Micronesia depends for the most part on these small nation-states receiving sufficient resources from elsewhere. They simply have neither the finances nor the experienced personnel. If what remains is to be preserved, actions need to be taken now, because deterioration is accelerating in a natural series of aging processes. These processes cannot be reversed, they cannot be stopped, but they can be delayed.

The Casa de Gobiemo in Guam was badly damaged during World War II, and with little effective maintenance since, its continuing decay has been rapid. The mute remains of two Japanese coastal defense guns in the Onwards Agaña Hotel in Guam corrode rapidly as inappropriate preservation leaves them almost unprotected in a saline environment. The remnants of Fort Alfonso XIII on Pohnpei are deteriorating rapidly as is the Catholic

belltower—both have been left unprotected from the destructive decay elements so active in the tropics. Management issues associated with historic "colonial" property in Micronesia revolve around preservation from rapid tropical decay. The examples discussed here are only a few—their story is repeated many times throughout Oceania today.

Is it too late? The highly significant kitchen–dining room of Joachim De Brum's house on Likiep has been all but totally destroyed and is no longer capable of preservation. Will all other historic properties remaining from the colonial era in the Pacific be destroyed too before they can be preserved and documented? Unless "owners" can be found and funding for preservation provided quickly, it seems certain that these bridges with our shared past will soon disappear.

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POSTCOLONIAL POLITICS AND COLONIAL MEDIA REPRESENTATIONS IN NEW CALEDONIA

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The signing in 1998 of the Noumea Agreement on the political future of New Caledonia was of great significance in conferring a limited form of nationhood on New Caledonia prior to a vote on independence in fifteen to twenty years' time. The agreement itself argues that the emergence of a "new sovereignty" requires affirmation of the formative place of Kanak identity and culture in the society. This requirement is particularly apparent within the European community, which has based its opposition to independence on a denigration of Kanak claims to an affirmative identity and peoplehood. This article interrogates whether there are signs that such a valuing of Kanak identity and culture is emerging within this community by analyzing the discourses on Kanak identity and culture in the territory's most influential mouthpiece: the daily newspaper *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes*. I argue that the discourses, though changing, still evince considerable racism and therefore augur badly for the prospects of a genuinely postcolonial future.

THE EMERGENCE OF A CONSENSUAL AGREEMENT between pro- and anti-independence groups on the constitutional future of New Caledonia had been long anticipated, ever since the main signatories to the 1988 Matignon Accords touted the idea in the early 1990s. Nonetheless, the precise nature of the consensus reached in 1998 surprised many, as much for its symbolism as its content. This new agreement—the Noumea Agreement—sketched institutional structures that were to confer a substantial degree of political autonomy on a newly configured government and a more locally sourced bureaucracy. But its attention to the symbolic dimensions of this political shift testified most to the possibility of a "concerted transition towards a new

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sovereignty" (Bensa and Wittersheim 1998:17). In New Caledonia's past, greater political autonomy has been given and greater political autonomy has been taken away.[1] What was fundamentally novel about this agreement was its call for the establishment of a New Caledonian citizenship and a "common destiny" for its citizens, which, the document asserted, must be premised on a "full recognition of the identity of the Kanak people" (Secrétariat d'Etat à l'Outre-Mer:17). This proposition suggested a fundamentally different future for a place that, despite its cultural traditions, geographical location, and the good work of many, has remained myopically transfixed by its colonial relationship with France. Could the emergence of a New Caledonian nationality deflect this tunnel vision? Could a common destiny be forged that is other than its hitherto common destiny with France? In short, could the agreement provide the requisite political and symbolic impetus for a postcolonial future?

The Noumea Agreement has in its sights the radical reconstitution of identity in the new nation, grounded in the acknowledgment and valuing of indigenous culture. This linking of postcoloniality with non-Eurocentric identity is prevalent in many definitions of the postcolonial. It is expressed most directly and uncompromisingly by Simon During, for whom postcolonialism is "the need, in nations or groups which have been victims of imperialism, to achieve an identity uncontaminated by universalist or Eurocentric concepts and images" (1995:125). Postcolonial studies have generally acknowledged the impossibility of achieving such an outcome, viewing cultural encounters as transformative of both dominant and subordinate cultures. What invariably results is a form of cultural hybridity, which, while falling far short of During's prescription, can itself constitute a basis for anticolonial resistance (Pratt:1994). Whatever the spectrum of possibility, however, there is no denying that a significant shift away from Eurocentric identity is part of the postcolonial project. The Noumea Agreement echoes this understanding when it states: "Colonization harmed the dignity of the Kanak people and deprived it of its identity. . . . These difficult times need to be remembered, the mistakes recognized and the Kanak people's confiscated identity restored, which equates in its mind with a recognition of its sovereignty, prior to the forging of a new sovereignty, shared in a common destiny" (Secrétariat d'Etat à l'Outre-Mer 1998:17).

What are the chances that such a restoration of Kanak identity will occur? This question is particularly pertinent for those sections of the population—largely of European origin—who have hitherto been very disinclined to accord Kanak identity any such status. During the 1980s, the main public mouthpiece of this sizeable group was the monopoly daily newspaper *Les Nouvelles Calédoniennes.* At the time the newspaper vested enormous effort

in opposing Kanak demands for independence. Its hostility towards the pro-independence movement, and the racist tenor of much of its reporting, contributed substantially to a polarization of opinion over the question of independence and the emergence of political violence in the period 1984–1988. The Matignon Accords were intended to quell the violence and reinstate a form of respectful dialogue between Kanak and European political groups. After the Matignon Accords, public displays of respect for Kanak leaders featured frequently in *Les Nouvelles.* Was this new style of reporting evidence of an improvement in European attitudes towards Kanaks? Did it augur well for the type of postcolonial future foreshadowed in the Noumea Agreement? Unfortunately, a close analysis and comparison of the discourses in *Les Nouvelles* before and after the Matignon Accords suggests otherwise. Although changes did occur, they were more of form than of substance. Indeed, the discursive shifts that have occurred suggest, if anything, that little progress has been made in advancing the prospect of a postcolonial future based on a positive affirmation of Kanak identity and culture.

The Media, Identity, and Postcoloniality

The investigation in postcolonial studies of colonialism's impact on identity has drawn heavily on poststructuralist notions of identity as discursively constructed and contested. If we are persuaded at all by Stuart Hall's claim that the media hold a privileged place in the discursive construction of our contemporary world (1985), then the media must be fertile territory for interrogating the effects of colonialism on identity. Those who access the media regularly cannot escape a continuous engagement with the various representations of femininity, masculinity, ethnicity, race, normality, and deviancy that they privilege. While the extent to which readers identify with the subject positions constructed in media discourse is always open to question, the particular power of the media must rest in large part in their popularity and everydayness.

Les Nouvelles' monopoly status rendered it enormously influential in the interpretation of the often politically tumultuous events surrounding the question of independence during the 1980s and 1990s. During brief periods in the 1980s, *Les Nouvelles* did have competition from other daily newspapers formed to give voice to more moderate pro- or anti-independence political views. The life span of each competitor was short and prematurely terminated by pressure from the leader of the anti-independence movement, Jacques Lafleur, whose vast business interests in the territory meant that he could enforce a boycott of advertising in these competitors. This fact alone suggests the extent to which *Les Nouvelles'* discourses generally sat

comfortably with the anti-independence movement. Although pro-independence weekly or episodic publications sometimes existed, these tended to be read almost exclusively by sympathizers. In contrast, *Les Nouvelles* purported to be a mainstream, politically neutral publication, and its daily presence meant that it, along with state-owned television and radio, was the means through which residents could know of events in the territory. Within the pro-independence movement and elsewhere, few believed *Les Nouvelles'* assertions of political neutrality. Noumea-based pro-independence activists nonetheless read the paper both to find out something about political developments and to appraise themselves of the copiously reported arguments of their opponents. Neither pro- nor anti-independence supporters denied the influence of this ubiquitous publication. All sides were required to engage with the framing of political events achieved by its discourses on independence as they developed and permutated on the pages of *Les Nouvelles.*

In my reading of the daily, it was apparent that a central aspect of this reporting on independence concerned the issue of identity. Indeed, surprisingly little space was given to discussions of political issues concerning independence per se—such as the economic costs and benefits of independence or governance issues—and much to claims concerning who could be considered rightful participants in the political process and who therefore could rightfully participate in determining the future of the territory. The experiences of colonialism had, of course, resulted in a foregrounding of identity and the subject in the political struggle. Not only had colonialism engendered new subjects and established the institutional bases of new processes of identification, it had, in New Caledonia as elsewhere, sought to eradicate, or at least fundamentally alter, the old. The insecurity of identity within the colonial context made the very issue of identity central to the political struggle. The result was a struggle over identity: a struggle over the meaning that could be legitimately derived from being "Caledonian," "Melanesian," or "Kanak." As I argue, *Les Nouvelles* weighed in heavily and influentially in this contestation.

Identity in *Les Nouvelles* during the 1980s

During the 1980s, *Les Nouvelles* manifested an increasing contempt for pro-independence activists, who were represented as having no rightful place in the realm of legitimate political debate. Indeed, a large part of the rhetorical work done in *Les Nouvelles* discursively constructed this group in a particularly racist, and therefore pernicious, way. Other identities also became the focus of discursive struggle in the pages of *Les Nouvelles.* In the discourses

surrounding independence, to be "Caledonian," "Melanesian," or "Kanak" signified an interestedness in the struggle, but in a place that was forever shifting according to the relations of force at the time. Indeed, the fluidity of the subject positions constructed in *Les Nouvelles* highlights the contested nature of identity in New Caledonian society and the centrality of the struggle over identity to the political struggle over independence. The discursive struggle over identity was a struggle over who could act as legitimate participants in determining the territory's future. It was, in effect, a struggle over who constituted the "real Caledonian," the "real Melanesian," and ultimately the "people" whose right it was to participate in the political struggle. Increasingly, the debate sought to delimit the "real," the "legitimate," and the "true" subject.

Pro-independence Kanaks had considerable stake in this debate. During the late 1960s, pro-independence Melanesians, who by this stage had appropriated as self-identification the hitherto derogatory term "Kanak," began to identify with the internationalist discourse of "the people" popularized in France and elsewhere through the work of such writers as Frantz Fanon and Aimé Césaire. This discourse linked the category of "the people" with discourses of liberation, decolonization, and independence. It was incorporated in various United Nations resolutions, particularly U.N. resolution 1514, which declared the rights of indigenous peoples to self-determination.

This internationalist discourse of the people formed the backbone of Kanak demands for independence until the signing in 1988 of the Matignon Accords, which formalized the cessation of armed struggle between pro- and anti-independence groups. For example, in 1980, pro-independence leader Jean-Marie Tjibaou gave a rare commendation to a piece of legislation passed in the local Territorial Assembly, describing it as "a step in the process of restoring to the only legitimate people of the country, the indigenous people, the kanak nation" (*Les Nouvelles,* 16 May 1980). In the face of such claims to a primordial legitimacy, *Les Nouvelles* stepped up its opposition to this conception of Kanaks as "the people," providing a forum for those who opposed the idea as well as arguing against it in its own editorial content. Discourses appeared in the paper that constituted the people as the entire population of New Caledonia. Others appeared that advanced a conception of the people as those opposed to independence, as in the reference in one political advertisement to "the determination of the Caledonian people in their entirety to oppose every possibility of independence or separatism" (*Les Nouvelles,* 14 May 1983). Ultimately, the paper sought to undermine the claims to a historical and racial legitimacy inherent in the internationalist discourse of the people. The newspaper's editor-in-chief in 1987, Henri Perron, questioned the status of Melanesians as the "first occu-

pants" of the land, arguing that others had preceded them (*Les Nouvelles,* 14 Mar. 1987; see also 10 Sept. 1987). In his editorials, Perron sought to reinvigorate a discourse of pluriethnicity as a counter to the claims of the "Kanak people." For example, in an editorial on a series of weekend sporting events, Perron laments that

> those who cry from the roofs against French Caledonia; those who want the world to believe that Whites exploit Melanesians, that the tribes are confined to their reserves at gun point . . . they would have seen a white, black and yellow people, their hearts beating as one at the exploits of the heroes of the day. They would have seen a pluriethnic or multiracial crowd play, run, dance, sing, share a meal of friendship, commune better in an immense leap of joy and fraternity. (*Les Nouvelles,* 2 May 1987)

The rhetorical strategy of questioning the historical justification for the notion of the Kanak people was accompanied by a strategy of questioning its racial coherence. *Les Nouvelles* reported prominently the claims of one metropolitan French politician that New Caledonians "form only a single community. The Kanak people don't exist. There are only mixed-race" (cited in Barbançon 1992:113), adding that "I am myself mixed-race and proud to be so" (*Les Nouvelles,* 7 Oct. 1987). With no historical or racial legitimacy, the Kanak people constituted a nonidentity within this conservative, anti-independence discourse of "pluriethnic fraternity." In fact, within this discourse they no longer even constituted an ethnic group, for the presumption of some form of racial cohesion is usually required to establish ethnicity (Balibar 1991:99–100).

Kanaks fared no more inclusively in *Les Nouvelles'* consideration of who constituted "true Caledonians," the residents of an "imaginative geography" called the "true" or the "profound Caledonia." This discourse of the "true" was closely linked to that of pluriethnic fraternity. The "true Caledonia" is a type of landscape with a type of people that, together, produce a type of political orientation. It is a place of unfettered harmony, both physical and sociological. In a photo of the "profound Caledonia," a farmer of European descent stands at his farm on a stretch of flat land surrounded by chickens, a deer, and a dog, with a mountain rising in the background. The caption comments on the peacefulness of the scene, which, it suggests, reflects *"la Calédonie profonde."* Mary-Louise Pratt has written of the "fantasy of dominance" inscribed in the panoramic shot, a fantasy inscribed in this scene that depicts the type of unfettered harmony that only complete domination can engender (Pratt, in Mills 1991:7). Harmony and tranquillity were also key

to the discourse of the true Caledonian. In 1984, an article reported on the visit of French Minister for Overseas Departments and Territories George Lemoine to a small remote farm in the mountains. An old woman of European descent, whose husband had died, lived on the farm with her two sons. They lived a poor subsistence lifestyle but professed to be happy. Lemoine was quoted as saying that "Caledonia, it's this house, this old woman who had two children with a *canaque*" (*Les Nouvelles,* 20 Oct. 1984). The simplicity and harmony evoked by this description were echoed in the accompanying photo. The family was not only in harmony with their physical environment but also with their sociological one, reflected in the fact that the woman had had "two children with a *canaque.*" The dream of pluriethnic harmony was as implicit to this conception of *la Calédonie profonde* as were the dominance and domestication of the land, as is evident in anti-independence Melanesian Senator Maurice Nénou's claim to be "the voice of the true Caledonia, of this pluriethnic Caledonia about which some still think that two communities oppose each other" (*Les Nouvelles,* 16 Apr. 1987). Similarly, another anti-independence Melanesian senator, Dick Ukeiwé, described one of his political proposals as "the echo that *la Calédonie profonde* sends to the incantations of the *indépendantistes*" (*Les Nouvelles,* 27 Mar. 1985). Political agitation played no part in this description of the true Caledonia. Kanaks, who sought to disrupt this harmonious social order, had no place as New Caledonians in *la Calédonie profonde.*

In essence then, New Caledonians were constructed as those who opposed independence. The noose of rightful identification around the necks of Kanaks was tightening all the time. Ultimately, they were even denied identification as Melanesians. Prior to 1984 the paper occasionally used the term "Melanesian" to signify pro-independence activists, such as when it commented that the gendarmes had found the "Melanesians" in Temala particularly aggressive (13 May 1983). This mobilization of "Melanesian" to signify pro-independence activists became increasingly contentious as the anti-independence movement sought to give increasing political and symbolic prominence to the small number of Melanesians in their ranks. During Lemoine's 1984 visit to the interior of the main island, the cool reception he received in pro-independence regions led to a front-page headline that declared, "He wanted to find Melanesians; he found *indépendantistes*" (5 Apr. 1984). Corresponding with this juxtaposition, a geographical divide later emerged between what *Les Nouvelles* described as the "good" and the "bad" side of the main island (6 May 1988). At times "Kanak" was juxtaposed with "Melanesian," but the term was generally too charged for common usage. Where avoidance was not possible, as, for example, when quoting from a pro-independence leader's comments on "Kanak independence" at a press

conference, the term was most frequently rendered as "Canaque." There were even some attempts to appropriate "Canaque" as an anti-independence subjectivity, perhaps best exemplified in Henri Perron's description of "true Canaques" as those who attended an anti-independence rally (12 Sept. 1987). Generally, the paper used a rich vocabulary of deviancy to describe Kanaks, which at times bordered on the surreal, as is evident in the description of one Kanak involved in a violent clash between activists and gendarmes:

> But one thing is certain: We are in the presence of individuals ready for anything. The group seems to be under the authority of Camille Maperi, 34 years old, a violent individual without scruples, implicated in several cases of theft, rape, attacks, as well as in several cases of shooting on the forces of order and probably in several other affairs. This person seems never to separate from his weapon, which makes him doubly dangerous. He showed this weekend that he doesn't hesitate in using it. (14 Mar. 1988)

This discourse on the extremism and deviancy of Kanaks, evocative of JanMohamed's "economy of the Manichean allegory" (1985), led to the emergence of a further juxtaposition. This one contrasted the socially and psychologically dysfunctional "Kanak" with the reasonable, well-adjusted "Melanesian." There was a prevalence of representations of Melanesian women and girls in this discourse of the "good Melanesian," in contrast with the general dearth of representation of women in the paper's political coverage. Several photographic representations of "good Melanesians" were published in a special supplement to *Les Nouvelles* in November 1987. In these photos, Melanesian women and girls are depicted in a range of festive scenes associated with anti-independence demonstrations and the greeting of conservative French politicians at the airport, and in a series of quasi-intimate scenes with Minister for Overseas Departments and Territories Bernard Pons during his 1987 visit. One photo shows Pons seated on the ground surrounded by several Melanesian women, two of whom have arms around his shoulders while a third is leaning against his legs. The prevalence of representations of women in this discourse suggests that such women were considered exemplary "good Melanesians," rendered such by their childlike enthusiasm, spontaneity, and adoration. This infantilization of women evokes one of the central tropes of colonial discourse that Thomas argues was important to both missionary propaganda and French assimilationist policy, but which also had more general application: the infantilization of indigenous peoples (1994:133–134). The use of representations of women to mobilize this trope was possible because of their general absence in anti-inde-

pendence media discourses. This absence meant that media images of Melanesian women had escaped the difficult political contestation that had occurred. Women could still constitute a realm of purity, moderation, and bonhomie and could thus, along with children, represent one of the last realms of the "good Melanesian," well reconciled to the assimilationist imaginings of the French colonial project. That such representations were used to lure Melanesian votes by presenting what were considered to be positive representations of Melanesians attests to the prevalence of a deeply entrenched colonial mentality among journalists at *Les Nouvelles.* Not only could these images be read as colonizing indigenous people, they can also be read as colonizing women, thereby illustrating the congruence between dominative relations of power in two realms—the colonial and the sexual.

With the appropriation of the category "Melanesian" to the anti-independence position, the frontiers of exclusion for those who supported independence were pushed to their limits. Within the discourses in *Les Nouvelles* these people were neither New Caledonian nor Melanesian; they could not rightfully constitute themselves as "the people" and had no legitimate place in the notion of Caledonia. This was, in effect, an exclusion of Kanaks as legitimate human beings. Anthropologist Alban Bensa argues that this denial of legitimate subjectivity is a central feature of racism in New Caledonia and explains the extremist forms that racism has taken in the territory. Bensa has written that, within the French empire, the colonial phantasm of a complete disappearance of the colonized people was nowhere better embraced than in New Caledonia, and this explains the zeal with which the theory of the imminent disappearance of the Kanak people was embraced in the territory (1988:190–191). This theory was "less the product of an irrefutable total inquiry than an ideological extrapolation from sparse observations, treated as proof of the inescapable disappearance of the 'inferior races'" (ibid.:191). It was nonetheless, he argues, highly influential, for "[t]his ideology of the extinction of Melanesians defined the very particular form which racism took in this French colony, from 1853 to today: a racism of annihilation that only ever envisaged Kanaks as nonbeings" (ibid.).

Bensa's argument that anti-Kanak racism in New Caledonia in the 1980s renewed the worst of the colonial fantasies of extinction that had prevailed in the earliest decades of colonization is borne out in the discourses on Kanak identity in *Les Nouvelles.* In these discourses Kanaks constituted nonbeings in the sense that their purported deviance disaffiliated them from any legitimate human subjectivity. As in the earliest times of colonization, their status as nonbeings authorized some of the worst acts of violence against them, epitomized in the Hienghene massacre in December 1984 in which a group of Kanaks returning from a political meeting in the town of Hienghene were

gunned down by a group of settlers, resulting in the killing of ten Kanaks. This and other incidents of violence towards Kanaks illustrates the effects of power produced by their discursive annihilation (Foucault 1980).

The Media's Political Resurrection of Kanaks

Under the political settlement expressed in the 1988 Matignon Accords, insurrectionary activity ceased and relative calm befell the territory. The Matignon Accords signified the political resurrection of its pro-independence signatories, in particular the more moderate elements within the pro-independence umbrella organization, the Front de Libération National Kanak et Socialist (FLNKS). The FLNKS was now a signatory to the accords and therefore a "partner" in the future of the territory.

The outward show of calm masked the uneasy and tenuous nature of the political situation. To many, the Matignon Accords signified betrayal of the militancy and political momentum forged throughout the struggles of the decade. There was a dire need to "sell" the Matignon Accords to this disgruntled constituency and this task was largely taken up by the dominant political signatories to the agreement: the French government, the FLNKS, and the dominant right-wing political party, the Rassemblement pour la Calédonie dans la République (RPCR).

This new and fragile consensus had immediate ramifications for reporting in *Les Nouvelles,* which stepped into line with the discursive requirements of the new political program. This immediate transmogrification was still causing considerable grief to journalists in 1989 when I spent a period working in the *Les Nouvelles* newsroom. One can imagine the cultural shock to journalists whose consciences had been at ease with the style of reporting in the pre-Matignon period when they were suddenly confronted with a range of management directives that stipulated, in short, that they were "not to cause trouble for anyone"—particularly the pro-independence movement. They felt resentful and argued that their ability to exercise properly their journalistic duties had been compromised. The end result was a newspaper where *faits divers* were regularly elevated to front-page status, in keeping with the policy to avoid all suggestion of any political contention in the newspaper. Discourses of deviancy concerning Kanak activism gave way to officious discourse on the mundane and uncontentious activities of the FLNKS, which was now beyond criticism.

By the early 1990s, with a widespread appreciation of the political calm and a greater acceptance of, or resignation towards, the Matignon Accords, reporting in *Les Nouvelles* once again came to broach issues and tensions within the pro-independence movement. But by this time, the newspaper's

discourses on pro-independence activism had shifted considerably. Developments and tensions within the pro-independence movement—particularly where these occurred within official party structures—were reported on in a tempered, almost distanced manner that was a far cry from the type of palpable hostility and vilification that had characterized reporting of *indépendentistes* during most of the 1980s. Shortly after the signing of the Matignon Accords, the front-page headline—"'Now build together': Jean-Marie Tjibaou in an exclusive interview with *Les Nouvelles*"—was almost comical in light of the manner in which he had been reported on a short time earlier (1 July 1988). This shift in reporting was no doubt an enormous relief for the pro-independence movement, even if the change disconcerted some of its more radical members who preferred the enemy that they knew. It was tempting to conclude that the leopard had changed its spots and was now ready to accept—perhaps even value—the Kanak people's right to participate in the political future of the territory.

But, while the "official voices" of Kanak political life acquired a respect and status that rendered their treatment in *Les Nouvelles* almost indistinguishable from that of anti-independence politicians, the paper's critical eye was shifting towards other sights. Melanesian cultural practice became the object of *Les Nouvelles'* considerable condescension. Indeed, the denigration and vilification accorded the politically active in the 1980s was directed at the paper's reading of Melanesian cultural practice in the 1990s. Certain ritualistic aspects of Melanesian culture continued to receive favorable coverage in the 1990s as they had in the 1980s. However, underlying this surface respect a discourse developed on the inadequacy of Melanesian culture to respond to the exigencies of contemporary modern life and, even more pernicious, a discourse on the deviancy of aspects of Melanesian cultural practice. Neither discourse augured well for the possibility of postcolonial identity in New Caledonia.

Reporting on Melanesian Culture and Identity in *Les Nouvelles* during the 1990s

Certain Melanesian customary practices regularly received prominent coverage in *Les Nouvelles.* Welcoming rituals associated with the arrival of foreign or local dignitaries, traditional feasts prepared by the Melanesian women of the community, and folkloric occasions including music and dance provided an exotic vision of New Caledonia as a place where tradition and modernity had come to a harmonious accommodation. An example was coverage in July 1991 of a group of New Caledonian students studying in France (the story suggested they were of European heritage) who had returned to

the territory for holidays and were invited to begin a "passionate adventure" that involved three days of encounter with "the Melanesian world and its way of life" (*Les Nouvelles,* 27 July 1991). Their experience is presented as a true journey of discovery for these New Caledonian students who manifest a respectful hunger for knowledge of Melanesian customary practices. At one point they are put to the task of making a *bougna* "under the attentive gaze of the women who lent a hand with the yams to help the apprentice Melanesian cooks" (ibid.). The suggestion is that, after three days, the accommodation between these students of European heritage and Melanesians had become so intimate that the students could be accorded honorary Melanesian status. This folkloric discourse of Melanesian culture offers no barriers with the modern world. Indeed, it exists to enhance a view of modernity as eminently adaptable to the colorful and quaint vagaries of the cultural forms with which modernity has had to contend.

However, this discourse of accommodation is offset by another of juxtaposition and discord. Indeed, this juxtaposition became something of a theme of the paper's reporting on pro-independence politics in the early 1990s, exemplified in *Les Nouvelles'* comment that the "difficult problem of balance between custom and democracy" had become, by 1991, the "news topic of the day" (9 July 1991).

Much of this prominence hinged on a dispute between the customary authorities of Lifou, one of New Caledonia's Loyalty Islands, and its FLNKS mayor, Cono Hamu. The dispute concerned a conflict over land ownership of an area planned for a port. In the face of ongoing disagreement between two clans on ownership rights, Hamu made a decision on ownership that differed from that of the chief of his own traditional district, with the result that he was designated persona non grata in this district. At one point Hamu was assaulted and his house subject to an arson attack (*Pacific Report,* 30 May 1991). This was reported as a situation where tradition and modernity, presented through a discourse on democracy and development, were clearly juxtaposed. A central tenet of the Matignon Accords was a commitment to expedite development in the regional areas of New Caledonia, including the Loyalty Islands, in the face of the economic stranglehold of greater Noumea over the territory's economy. Infrastructural developments such as the port project were important components of this development strategy for the Loyalty Islands that, the reporting suggested, was being jeopardized by traditional disputes. Prominent anti-independence politician Jacques Lafleur was reported in *Les Nouvelles* at this time as saying that he supported the right of Melanesians to maintain their culture but considered that there were greater rights that needed to be adhered to for a society to advance. One of these was democracy. For Melanesians, according to Lafleur, "when it comes

to managing, they have to ask the question whether they trust or don't trust their electorate. If they don't trust universal suffrage and democracy, they'd find themselves back in the situation of clan warfare. . . . For years, the habit was taken of not bending to the rules. But, if you want a modern society that advances, you have to bend to these rules" (*Les Nouvelles,* 9 July 1991).

For Lafleur such advancement was integrally linked to "insertion into economic life" without which "a person isn't complete" (*Les Nouvelles,* 14 Apr. 1990). Within this discourse tradition is not only politically crippling, it is also dehumanizing, a theme that found resonance in other commentary. In an editorial the redoubtable Henri Perron commended Lafleur's comments, observing that the deputy "didn't miss the opportunity to stigmatize the faults of their society," and concluded, "It's a society that desires emancipation but refuses the emancipation of its people, particularly its women" (*Les Nouvelles,* 5 May 1991).

As "good Melanesians," women are represented as bearing the brunt of these dehumanizing practices. The discourse on the poverty of Melanesian culture finds additional fodder in the correctional pages of the newspaper, where court cases concerning acts of violence by Melanesian men against Melanesian women received prominent coverage. In 1991 the paper reported on the "Boula trial" in which a young Melanesian, Henri Boula, was accused of having doused his girlfriend, Gaïmelle Ngazo, with petrol and set her alight while in a drunken rage. The defense lawyer considered that the trial could have been that of alcoholism in the territory, which, he argued, was also present in the European society but which was "more important in Melanesian society, which doesn't have the means of prevention and control. The territory doesn't have the means either to solve the problem" (*Les Nouvelles,* 2 May 1991). The defense saw fit to provide an overview of the history of the introduction of alcohol into Melanesian communities pointing to instances where prominent Melanesians themselves opposed its availability in Melanesian communities. The decision in 1970 to allow its sale constituted, he argued, "a new liberty . . . and as with every new liberty [he suggests not only in Melanesian communities], it was abused because the safeguards hadn't been put there" (ibid.). Boula's girlfriend, who remained conscious until she died a day after the incident, had, according to the defense, become a martyr because she tried to protect him by claiming she had doused herself with petrol. It was "[p]roof of an extraordinary love to forget her suffering and only think to protect him. She has forgiven him. The tribe has forgiven him. He thinks only of making up for what he did. He is faced with his remorse" (*Les Nouvelles,* 2 May 1991).

Boula's forgiveness by Ngazo appears incomprehensible in the face of the manner in which he is represented in the newspaper report. As suggested,

it can only be understood by reference to the divine. The capacity of the tribe to forgive, on the other hand, is not explained, but the inference is that it arises as much from a type of disengagement as from some superhuman capacity; indeed, the suggestion is that the fault ultimately rests with the community for Boula's dysfunctionality. As *Les Nouvelles* reported of the defense argument:

> This society will have to progress when it comes to women and the young. We saw in the witness box women from whom it was difficult to extract a simple "yes" or a simple "no," not because they have nothing to say but because they don't have the right to express themselves in their social group. Boula was criticized for not participating in custom. As a matter of fact, he, like all the young, also had nothing to say in the customary hierarchy. (2 May 1991)

Melanesian custom is therefore responsible for Ngazo's fate, not the structural inequalities inherent in colonial relations of power that continue to disenfranchise Melanesians from productive engagement in the workforce and the Western economy more generally and lead to the overuse of drugs, including alcohol. Youth are presented in this discourse as trapped by a customary world that, because of its rigid fixity and intransigence, offers no functional way forward for young Melanesians to progress in modern life.

The "awful law of silence that up until then bore like a lead weight in the tribal world" was still a topic of journalistic commentary much later in the decade, except now the focus was on the increasing number of Melanesian women who were prepared to speak up and testify before the courts, even in the face of "rejection by their tribe and their clan" (*Les Nouvelles,* 4 Dec. 1998). For proof of rejection *Les Nouvelles* claimed that, every day, "one finds victims strangely alone, abandoned by everyone. Worse, we even saw a whole clan travel from Lifou in order to support, not the victim, but the rapist." The paper discussed the large number of rape cases that had been heard by the court during the session and took exception to the presiding judge's optimism, expressed in his concluding remarks, that he saw in the proceedings "the image of a society that isn't heading the wrong way." For *Les Nouvelles,* the abandonment of the victims by their families and communities demonstrated that such optimism was mistaken. As the paper quipped: "Nice, optimistic words are just that. The reality is as it has always been. That's to say, not very pretty." For the journalist, it was only French justice that gave these women "some dignity" that was denied them in their own society (ibid.). The unusual claim that the courts afforded rape victims

a dignity that was otherwise denied them was the ultimate condemnation of the moral vacuity of Melanesian society.

Within *Les Nouvelles* the correctional system, and particularly cases involving sexual violence in Melanesian communities, become synecdoches of the "true" nature of these communities. Rape is presented as a lens through which the deviancy and dysfunctionality of this society in its totality becomes visible. This forging of an association between sex and society has, of course, a long history in colonial discourse; a history that, as Ann Stoler argues (1995:34), even predates Foucault's identification of this relationship in Europe in the nineteenth century. The prominence of its mobilization in *Les Nouvelles* attests to the relatively unreconstructed nature of much of its colonialist imaginings and the continuing functioning of discourses on sexuality as agents in the subjugation of colonized peoples.

The reporting of comments by accused men that there is no word for rape in their language further underscored the implicit claim that rape was an endemic feature of Melanesian society.[2] In 1992 *Les Nouvelles* reported on the trial of six young men for the rape of a Melanesian woman under the heading "Abused by Six Men ... and It Isn't Rape," evoking the argument in the trial that the act may have had a cultural significance that was not understood by the courts. The journalist summarized the thoughts of the prosecutor thus: "In substance, the prosecutor called attention to the fact that, in Melanesian mentality, victims of rape are not acknowledged, and that, according to their culture, the perpetrators don't consider having done anything wrong, considering their act as something they were naturally entitled to" (20 Mar. 1992).[3] This report precipitated a terse letter to the editor from one Kanak politician who considered its line of reasoning racist in assuming that the activities of a group of young Kanak rapists were somehow reflective of Melanesian culture (31 Mar. 1992). The letter pinpointed a key rhetorical prop to *Les Nouvelles'* racism—what Memmi called the "mark of the plural" under which "any negative behaviour by a member of the oppressed community is instantly generalised as typical, as pointing to a perpetual backsliding toward some presumed negative essence. Representations thus become allegorical; within hegemonic discourse every subaltern performer/role is seen as synecdochically summing up a vast but putatively homogeneous community" (Shohat and Stam 1994:183).

Clearly, a culture imbued with such negative essences cannot constitute a foundation for progress, no matter how vociferous Melanesian demands for development. While the precise deficiencies of Melanesian culture were seldom overtly specified, they were often alluded to. In the reporting on the trial of a Lifou man who had raped a young French teacher, much is made

of the young man's upbringing as a mitigating factor in his criminality (*Les Nouvelles,* 31 Mar. 1995). According to the report the accused, Paul Noa, had been adopted by an uncle when he was five, in keeping with customary practice. The report suggested that his father had been obliged to give him away because he had many sons, to which the reporter added: "What the child thinks about it, absolutely no one cares." Subsequently, Noa "changed not only his name but the tribe. Since then he has been at Canala where he doesn't speak the language. No maternal presence, his uncle being a bachelor" (ibid.). In this instance it is the customary practice of adoption that is the culprit. Rape is never allowed to stand alone as an individualized act of deviancy. Rather, it always functions to encode a repertoire of racist stereotypes and prejudices that are given life by the prominence afforded reporting on sexual violence in Melanesian communities.

The deficiencies of Melanesian culture are also commented on in the newspaper's reporting on issues of development. For example, one prominent European commentator argued that development in the traditional milieu

> seems to require several factors: men and women who are motivated, dynamic, hard-working, informed, capable of projecting themselves into the future and of permanently managing the gap between these projections and the realities. I agree . . . on the fact that, for this to happen, men and women have to have a dignified and positive self-image and be happily inserted into their cultural identity, within the context of a culture that has accepted to evolve. (*Les Nouvelles,* 18 Mar. 1991)

The similarity is striking between these "desirable" characteristics and those considered requisite for traditional societies on the path of development in much of the modernization literature of the 1950s and 1960s. Even the acknowledgment that traditional culture may retain a residual role (if it chooses to "evolve") evokes Schramm's writing of the period, which was more culturally sympathetic but nonetheless advocated the need by traditional people to develop a new "modern consciousness" (1964). Like this modernization literature, the discourse on Melanesian development in *Les Nouvelles* is premised on a perception of the cultural inferiority of traditional peoples who lack motivation, dynamism, the work ethic, and empathy. Women, who as we have seen are presented as the true victims of traditional society, offer the greatest hope for cultural evolution. As one report on the introduction of the first beauty shop in Lifou observed: "The young girls who Westernize without hesitation are the most sensitive to new models of

femininity. Much more receptive and dynamic than men, women from the islands are freeing themselves on every front. It's for them to choose by finding a personal style that also frees them from the Western model" (11 May 1991).

For women, the Western model is, as this passage suggests, the model of personal emancipation even if the end product of its adoption is not a replication of this Western style but, rather, the development of a unique one. The reason why the Western style can't be fully replicated is suggested in a report on a Melanesian woman who had lived in France for twenty-two years after marrying a young French military doctor. No amount of acculturation to metropolitan life had managed to hide her "Kanak origins":

> To see and hear her, there is no doubt as to her ethnic belonging. Medium height, stout, frizzy hair, her strong features reveal her Kanak origins. The seeming severity of her face hides her true personality: in life, Monique is a *bonne vivante,* she lives joking with those around her. The 22 years spent far from her country of birth haven't erased the little signs that betray her Kanak nature: her mimicry, her accent, her gestures, her humor. But after this long separation, Monique is conscious of her uprooting. (*Les Nouvelles,* 25 July 1995)

What is striking about this description of "Kanak nature" is its resort to the bestiary (Shohat and Stam 1994:137), connoted particularly in the references to mimicry and gesture. Thus, even representations of the "good Melanesian" woman—the modernizing hope of Melanesian culture—point to the deeply racist presumption of a nature that will ultimately resist all opportunity for change. In 1996 Lafleur commented on continuing Kanak demands for independence, saying that it would need another generation "to teach Melanesians to manage for themselves" (*Les Nouvelles,* 24 Feb. 1996). At that time they were, he argued, "capable of political management but not economic" (10 Feb. 1996). It is noteworthy that this generous presumption of some capacity to learn—at the level of territorial politics at least—was not accorded Melanesian culture in much reporting in *Les Nouvelles.*

The Continuing Nonexistence of Kanaks in the 1990s

Are the discourses of the 1990s more deleterious towards the prospect of a postcolonial identity and future than those of the 1980s? Certainly they attest to the profound racism that prevails in significant and influential sections of the non-Kanak community in New Caledonia—a racism directed at the very

cultural constitution of the indigenous peoples of this country. Such racist views did, of course, underpin much of the denigration of pro-independence Kanaks during the 1980s and earlier. Their call for a Kanak and socialist independence had always been a call for an independence founded on aspects of Kanak cultural practice, even if there was always considerable disagreement within the pro-independence movement of what this would mean in practice. Implicit, therefore, in *Les Nouvelles'* strident anti-independence of the 1980s had been antipathy towards Kanak culture in all but its ritualistic, folkloric form. The overt surfacing of this antipathy in the 1990s, particularly in the pages of *Les Nouvelles,* showed that the Matignon Accords had done little to resurrect the Kanak people in the eyes of this deeply racist constituency.

Can the mere fact that these views are held by such a significant constituency, and obviously by many journalists working at *Les Nouvelles,* justify their wanton articulation in the paper? The danger is that, once expressed—particularly in a monopoly daily newspaper such as *Les Nouvelles*—they not only reflect the views of this constituency but also lend credence to them, contributing towards the emergence of new generations of New Caledonians who hear in prominent public discourse little to dissuade them from such racist imaginings of the indigenous people of their country.[4]

NOTES

1. In 1963, the French government enacted a new statute for New Caledonia that reduced considerably the powers of local governance granted in the *loi cadre* of 1956 (Henningham 1992:55–56).

2. See also *Les Nouvelles,* 29 Mar. 1995. The article, titled "Ten Years for the Raping of Minors," contains the comment: "On the word 'rape,' [the accused] explained that it doesn't exist in Melanesian society."

3. For another example in this vein, see *Les Nouvelles,* 16 Apr. 1994: "Where does custom finish and a racket begin?"

4. Advocates of postcolonial identity are becoming more vocal and have coalesced in recent years in a couple of small political groups dominated by younger-generation New Caledonians. These groups have had some success in recent local elections and have received a small amount of coverage in *Les Nouvelles.* However, their message of hope is more than drowned out by the paper's litany of disparagement of indigenous Caledonians. The sharp shift in the paper's discourses on pro-independence Kanaks immediately following the signing of the Matignon Accords demonstrates that *Les Nouvelles* is able to curb its tongue, even at the expense of causing considerable distress to its workers. It should do so in its reporting of Kanak culture if its constituency is to outgrow its colonial dependency and if New Caledonia is to have any decent chance at a postcolonial future.

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RASCALS, THE STATE, AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

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This article contends that as conditions worsen in Papua New Guinea's urban areas, it is apparent that the escalating crime and violence associated with rascal gangs are creating new rules of authority. The cumulative effects of criminal activities associated with gangs are negating the existing social order, spreading fear deep within civil society. In so doing, these activities deliver yet another blow to the legitimacy of the state. Continuous migration and the concomitant expansion of the newly urbanized population are defining a new urban landscape. Likewise, the persistent drain of national wealth by pervasive corruption, civil war, or domestic unrest further compromises the capacities of an already weak state. It is within these confines that rascals have direct effect on the state.

THE EMERGENCE OF URBAN GANGS, "rascals," in Papua New Guinea, while surprising to some, nevertheless has been observed and analyzed for more than twenty-five years (Klein 1995:220–221; Clifford, Morauta, and Stuart 1984; Oram 1976; Griffin, Nelson, and Firth 1979; Nelson 1998). As one would suspect, during that time the gangs have changed, as have analyses of their significance. Beginning with the early observations of Nigel Oram, Hank Nelson, and Jim Griffin, to Bruce Harris's groundbreaking work (1988), and continuing to the most comprehensive, up-to-date analyses of Sinclair Dinnen (1998a, 1998b, 1998c, 1999) and Michael Goddard (1995, 1998), much is known about this important phenomenon. But, as the new millennium takes hold, rascals have evolved and so has the state's response to them.

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A few years ago, after tracing the rise of urban gangs in greater Port Moresby, I concluded that the relations between urban gangs and governing institutions were essentially about authority. As such, the emergence of rascalism was not only an urban crisis but a "systemic" crisis as well. That is to say, it appeared that weak state institutions coupled with restricted operational capacities contributed to a breakdown of the moral fabric of the new order (Hart Nibbrig 1992). The inability of the police to maintain law and order, often seen as a sign of the state's weakness, was but one example of the state's operational weakness. Furthermore, I suggested a fatal association between the state's inability to meet the personal expectations of the many people drifting to the settlements and squatter villages of Port Moresby and the rise of urban gangs. Failure on the part of the state to effectively meet the new expectations fed a sense of indignation among the urban poor, especially young, unemployed males. Indignation functioned as the psychological link between failed expectations and an increasingly militarizing police. The rise of rascalism was seen as one of the predictable outcomes of system rigidities of a weak state. Therefore, I believed that much insight could be gained by understanding how rascal gangs adapted to new urban realities. Rather than assuming that rascal "gangs represented something foreign to the development of the new state," I argued that rascals had to be understood as part of that development (ibid.).

The burdens faced by the state have increased over the twenty-seven years since Papua New Guinea gained independence from Australia. These burdens include a continuing rise in crime and violence; a prolonged "civil war" in Bougainville; the so-called Sandline Affair; pressures from the International Monetary Fund, Asian Development Bank, and World Bank forcing more controls and limitations on the national government; and deep corruption in the highest circles of government. These circumstances constitute the backdrop to the further growth of criminal gangs and how they redistribute opportunities through gang activities (Kavanamur 1998; May 1998).

By most accounts, the first signs of gang activity began sometime in the early to mid 1960s and the first use of the term "rascal" occurred shortly afterward. What appeared to be random break-ins and occasional assaults largely involving native groups were not initially worrisome, especially among the almost ten thousand or so expatriates, most of whom were Australian. It is instructive to read some of the accounts describing Port Moresby in the sixties as a "peaceful town" with houses running off Boroko and Angau drives without fences, barbed wire, or watch dogs (Nelson 1998). Within this context the term "rascal" had the connotation of "scallywag," not the present fear and apprehension the term generates in the minds of people today. Hank

Nelson, one noted historian of the period, suggested that most reported crime, especially by locals, was considered minor while most serious crime involving substantial amounts of money was usually committed by whites against other whites (ibid.). For the privileged few 1966 represented the "golden era of civic peace," an era to be remembered with distant nostalgia.

By the late 1960s residents in Horse Camp, Hohola, and the Goilala Camp at Three Mile were beginning to deal with increasing violence and theft. As historian Hank Nelson recounts (1997), the total number of homicide cases coming before the courts throughout the territory had grown to around two hundred. With dispatch the courts handed out light sentences for those convicted of murder, which signaled that such acts, especially those committed by locals in the newly pacified territory, were not considered the work of "violent criminals." The "expat" community generally accepted the new legal order, viewing most of the emergent crime as remnants of traditional enmities associated with traditional obligations as well, and exhibited little alarm about lawlessness. Indeed, it was a golden period of civic order. As Nelson observed (1998), an Australian family could picnic in the most remote area and be safer than in most of Australia.

That golden time is gone for those who now live in the growing National Capital District. Today, Port Moresby has become the poster child for what can go wrong within a country negotiating its way through the early years of independence. It does not take long to get the impression that Port Moresby is under siege by criminals, its wealthy inhabitants locked behind doors protected by razor wire, alarms, watch dogs, and private guards. Such is the state of civic life in the National Capital District and other parts of Papua New Guinea. The same fears are expressed at the village level in certain other areas and towns, especially Lae and Madang. Additionally, rampant violence has been reported recently associated with the illegal use of alcoholic products called O.P. rum and Gold Cup; these two strong spirits are being smuggled into "dry" (alcohol-free) regions in the Hagen area of the Western Highlands. Not surprising are reports of increased violence and drunken brawls that sometimes end with the rape of women (Stewart and Strathern 1999).

New Landscapes of Despair

Port Moresby at the turn of the millennium is a transformed city. Although no place remains the same, what has occurred in Port Moresby and its nearby suburbs has been startling. To begin with, the noncitizen population has declined from ten thousand in the 1960s to seventy-five hundred today, twenty-eight hundred of whom are Australian. Underlining this change is the

fact that noncitizens from the Philippines now equal those from Australia. Gerehu and Waigani, suburbs of Port Moresby, now contain populations larger than all of Port Moresby in 1966. Even more dramatic is the transformation in the composition of the populations of Boroko and Korobosea, suburbs once predominantly white. What was once a one to one ratio of white to black is now fifteen to one black to white. These ratios reflect the character and breadth of the demographic shift. At the beginning of the 1990s, for every one white Australian there were one hundred Papua New Guineans. That ratio changed to one to one-hundred-fifty at the end of the decade. New Guineans from the Highlands are on the verge of becoming the dominant native population group, displacing Papuans. These changes prompted Hank Nelson to suggest that Port Moresby has become a city in which both Australians and Papuans have become minorities.

Radical population changes signal deeper social, political, and economic changes as well, which have profound implications on the growth of crime in general and rascalism in particular. Port Moresby in the 1960s was a white Australian town with all of the privileges associated with colonial domination (Oram 1976). Some might say that it still is a town dominated by a new elite, both native and foreign. Regardless, profound changes have occurred in the composition of both Port Moresby's general population and the country's elite. In the 1960s there were no rich Papua New Guineans who lived in the hills of the colonial capital. Rather, white Australians observed the kind of social segregation and race-caste boundaries reminiscent of the American South. Much has changed in this respect. Today, native Papua New Guineans live in the nicest sections of the town and travel conspicuously to Australia, the Philippines, and Hong Kong. There has also been an authority shift in the highest echelons of government administration, the political system, and the upper reaches of the business community. At the end of the 1990s more foreign business interests controlled more of Papua New Guinea's resources than in the decade preceding independence (Nelson 1998:5).

The national government of Papua New Guinea, like many postcolonial entities, is of recent vintage, having achieved independence from Australia in 1975. As a young nation and as a country where more than seven hundred indigenous languages are spoken, Papua New Guinea shows many of the difficulties and problems we have come to associate with other countries that are trying to bring about a sense of national coherence: how to forge new governing institutions, create a sense of legitimacy about both the institutions and processes of governing, and survive the powerful pressures stemming from national and institutional interests hell-bent on exploiting the country's bountiful natural resources (Strathern and Stewart 1998:8). These struggles constitute the larger setting for an examination of the role of the

state as it attempts to hold itself together while affecting the course of internal development within Papua New Guinea's rapidly growing urban areas, especially the National Capital District.

Changing State

Most observers familiar with the problems of governance in Papua New Guinea describe the state as weak and severely handicapped in its ability to effectively manage the profound changes the country has been undergoing for the last twenty-seven years (Dauvergne 1998a; Larmour 1998). My focus here is to underline the significance of the relationship between the state and the various social enclaves developing within urban areas. Among the state's roles in this regard is to remedy societal disorganization by recombining the discrete and often contentious fragments of society that are often present during periods of rapid, fundamental change. From this perspective rascal gangs represent one of those fragments. It is the state's ability or inability to deal with growing migration to urban centers, especially the National Capital District, and the resultant social problems that rightfully call into question the very authority and legitimacy of the state. Whether the state will collapse under the burden is not the focus here, but there is reason to believe that claims of its imminent demise have been vastly exaggerated. In this respect Papua New Guinea's resilience, largely neglected, appears stronger than has been expected. There are too many forces that augur for a more realistic appraisal of the country's future (Migdal 1998).

My argument here posits that the state, imperfectly organized, represents the strongest, most comprehensive set of institutions in this country of competing and defiant authorities (Strathern and Stewart 1997:687–690). Within the context of rapid, uncontrolled urbanization the state will continue to be a defining player in the development of what constitutes civil society within the National Capital District. But it will not do this alone.

It is the dialectical relationship between the state and new social entities such as urban gangs that will shape the urban landscape in the future. In other words, the forging of civil society, even a nascent civil society, at its root deals with how the state interacts at the national, regional, and local levels with competing and opposing enclaves of authority. The relationship is dialectical in that it involves opposites. But that opposition would not be sufficient. The state's public policy, its public transcript, suggests its opposition to criminal activities. Its hidden transcript is to somehow render the opposing authority, represented by rascal criminal organization, inert. Given its already discussed weakness, the state is hampered in its abilities to deal with these problems. What is striking is that the state with fits and starts continues to

gather its "bits of authority" and appears to be engaged (Filer 1992). What other set of institutions commands a semblance of a national constituency, a forum of international transactions? The metaphor of poker is applicable here. Among all players holding cards, the state has the big hand. But like poker, the winner is determined by the ability to play those cards, not in merely holding them.

The state with all of its "bits of authority" continues to have more potential than competing enclaves to create new identity formations and shifts more in line with its interests. As this happens we have to look for transitional markers, signs indicating that enclaves are being redefined in new political contexts. Rascals in this context are seen as carriers of dispersed values; left to their own devices they would contribute to the erosion of state authority. Enclavism is an adaptation, a reaction, to transformation by global forces through the mediation of the state (Stewart and Strathern 1998). In this regard the state and civil society are linked, albeit crudely. How this transformation plays out will be determined largely by the state's capacity to penetrate, absorb, or marginalize competing authority systems. In other words, the state and rascals are referential within this transformation process. As the state increases the process of capital accumulation, it is responding to the dominant interests within and outside the society. At the same time it will attempt to "restructure" the opposition between public and private spheres. The mechanism compelling this adaptation to new structural arrangements is economic integration.

Rascals and Civil Authority: A New Social Order

In this section I examine rascal gangs and rascalism as a site of emergence of a recent urban social order. While rascals do not constitute urban civil society in Papua New Guinea, gangs nevertheless can be associated with a growing and parallel form of civil society (Putnam 1993). As already noted, even with limited authority the state attempts to establish social order and public safety as well as suppress gangs (Dinnen 1998b). The dissipation of traditional infrastructure for male socialization has changed the very foundations of social relations in the urban subsystem. In the reciprocal interactions between rascal gangs and police authority, gang activities (auto theft, robbery, assault, drugs, rape) along with gang members' utter defiance at times of police authority forces the state to revise and adjust strategies of apprehension and punishment and to seek ways to depoliticize gangs.[1] In so doing, the state implicitly acknowledges that gangs can and do assume protopolitical forms as groupings of individuals able and willing to defy and confront police authority. In many cases the police are afraid themselves of rascals,

partly because of the gangs' putative possession of powerful weapons. One observation is that rascalism constitutes not just an effort to reinvent social structure but represents an emergence of an incipient political order. While the state in Papua New Guinea has been described as weak and possessed of limited capacities to suppress insurgent challenges and civil strife, its power to remake civil society is even more politically limited. This is because the formation of civil society occurs slowly through the development, formation, and integration of social capital into networks of civic tradition, something that takes not only time but extraordinary political will (Putnam 1993).

While severely limited, the state in Papua New Guinea continues, albeit with mixed results, to foster civil society. In this context the development of civil society does not depend entirely on the state but in the final analysis is influenced by state policies for good or ill. Weak or not, the state is crucial even with its limited capacities to affect outcomes. For example, government policies determine directly or indirectly the concentrations of migrants entering the urban social system, their locations, and conditions under which Papua New Guinea's emergent urban underclass lives. The state and those myriad decisions that constitute economic policy determine the social forces acting upon the development of civil society. The institutions of the state create what amounts to social capital, or the institutions of social interaction that facilitate some measure of political and social cooperation. For example, government and corporate policy decisions in mining, forestry, and so forth set the conditions of urban employment and thus the extent of urban class formation. These social processes, determined by government and industry, profoundly condition Papua New Guinea's growing urban poor as to whether they perceive themselves as having access to employment, education, and other necessities. As I have stated elsewhere, a sense of injustice and indignation will grow even stronger out of the violation of expectations as underclass numbers increase (Hart Nibbrig 1992).

In precolonial Papua New Guinea civic traditionalism was vested in the various microsocieties that still comprise more than eighty percent of the population. What amounted to social capital was located within the tight bonds of tribe and clan, which constituted the natural order for most people. As the urban push and pull deepened more people, especially males, were attracted to Papua New Guinea's small but growing cities. Throughout Australia's dominion over Papua and New Guinea the cities became the repository largely of men who felt the need to seek new ways of living. They came, redefined the urban landscape, and established new bonds that were more appropriate within an urban setting. New social networks necessitated ways of communication and cooperation in the new social and economic spheres. The result was that new urban identities were being developed and the mix-

ing bowl was the helter-skelter urban context. New patterns of social engagement developed among this emergent urban subaltern class. In the village setting the dominant ethos was defined by communal norms. The new urban setting changed that. As noted earlier, continued migration since the 1960s to Port Moresby and its suburbs has fundamentally transformed the urban setting and created the conditions for the development of an emergent urban underclass.

Conduits to Consumption Culture

The new urban context—with its rapid flux, continuous migration, and resultant displaced social norms—gave rise to an emergent urban underclass and became a breeding ground for the development of urban gangs. It should be mentioned here that rascals also exist outside urban areas, and not everyone who is unemployed turns to gang life. But for those who do join a gang there exists an ethos of adventure, mystique, and prestige associated with being a rascal in a mobile, multiethnic context of fluidity and generational difference (Goddard 1995). Nevertheless, as Sinclair Dinnen noted (1998c), growing unemployment constitutes the "primary context" for explaining rascalism. "Urban underclass," as used here, refers to the growing numbers of people collecting at the bottom of the new, urban class system. Their life chances are severely limited even in the best of circumstances: These people are socially isolated, that is, not part of what constitutes the mainstream; their activities are disproportionately labeled criminal; and in many places they are defining new, parallel social institutions, often in conflict with formal society. The concept describes an emergent status group in and around the National Capital District. Something new and quite portentous has occurred during the last ten to fifteen years, and that development will one way or another define the very nature of state authority in a country struggling to survive the profound changes being forced upon it.

As seen from these landscapes of despair, crime has become an accepted avenue to surviving the pressures stemming from the urban economy, even the preferred way of generating income for many. As Theodore Levantis wrote recently (1997), "Crime is now so well established [as a source of income] that, despite the extraordinary level of participation, it could hardly be thought labour in excess of supply to the formal labour market." Within the confines of the new urban context many who are undereducated and underemployed are pulled into criminal activities and some find a home, temporarily or otherwise, in criminal gangs. Gangs under these circumstances are not simply criminal organizations but increasingly must be seen as one of the conduits pulling those from the bottom into the urban con-

sumption culture (ibid.:83). Criminal acts and the benefits perceived to come from them will increasingly define the mechanisms of identity, status, income generation, and, ultimately, mainstream civil society. Who better prefigured this process than the former prime minister, Bill Skate, who openly claimed past and current rascal connections.[2]

As the situation now appears, the state will do little to meet the challenges of urban growth and the escalating needs for urban infrastructure, educational opportunities, and an economy that can absorb those whose poverty, literally, is changing the face of urban Port Moresby (Dinnen 1998b). As social needs mount and the state remains unable to meet those demands, one can reasonably expect that the informal economy will expand, at least as a parallel structural reality, at worst as the dominant source of employment within the National Capital District's lower strata (Levantis 1997). Under these circumstances the furthering of civil society remains residual: Consumption and consumer goods are what is valued and little suggests that urban youth will place high value on civic obligations. There is not much here affording a future.

If urban youth leaving school early with scant prospect of entering the developing formal economy were not enough, urban violence associated with rascal activities will further remove these young people from civil society. Likewise, if nihilistic violence, so apparent in underclass populations in other parts of the world, continues to develop, the structuring of lives beyond the mainstream will be all but sealed, their social isolation all but complete. At this point rascals do not recognize any right of the state to control their activities or demands (Strathern 1993; Strathern and Stewart 1997:689).

Rascal gangs have become societal agents operating according to nonlegal rules, rules they are creating with the partial acquiescence of governments in Papua New Guinea (Dauvernge 1998a). Their criminal behavior for years has forced parts of the urban community—not just the constabulary forces but civil society itself—to behave as if deviant social norms simply existed, thus furthering the gulf between society, the state, and its emergent underclass. Regardless of intent, the state's responses appear to be counterproductive (Dinnen 1998c:271). The urban experience of those pulled and pushed to the urban center only got worse in the 1990s. At the same time, the list of demands escalated: education, employment, roads, sanitation, and more.

The urbanization process has brought about new modes of communication and organization, one possible outcome of which is the emergence of an underclass, one that defines the urban turf. The breakdown of social cohesion associated with life in the village, a by-product of urbanization, already reveals the nuclearization of the urban setting. That is to say, we see the coupling of a newly emerged spatial ordering of the urban landscape and a cor-

responding spatial organization of a more complex system of values, norms, and behaviors.

Social cooperation, the outward expression of a civil urban culture, becomes more difficult. The urban basement of the National Capital District will become more dangerous not only for those who have responded to urban violence with an architecture of security, but to those who live daily in the throes of urban poverty. More youth are likely to be drawn to rascal gangs, and in response to ever-escalating violence those very gangs are expected to become more reliant on firearms. Again, as Hank Nelson reminds us (1998), the murder rate in Port Moresby has increased since 1966. There is little reason to believe that the more-militarized police forces will have much effect on those rates (Strathern and Stewart 1997:688–690).

Increased violence and reliance on weapons will only create the illusion of security to those drawn to gangs for protection from either rival gangs or the police, who have shown a penchant for targeting presumed gang members. Armed violence spiraling out of control is not a farfetched outcome in a country that has been grappling with a civil war on Bougainville and the near rebellion of armed forces as a result of former Prime Minister Julius Chan's hiring of outside mercenary troops to put down a rebellion (Dinnen 1998b). These circumstances encourage new forms of mutual protection among gangs as new fears, anxieties, and threats of death drive the development of new modes of self-protection. Within this expanding urban substratum unregulated self-interest will diminish social returns. That world will become more dangerous and competitive. The "juvenation" of urban crime will produce youth with few social controls and a psychological detachment from traditional ties (Dinnen 1998c). The loosening of traditional controls has created a perverse outcome: The urban setting has elevated male youth to prominence over the elderly. This setting demands new survival skills, and youth socialized to new urban realities have become the new "big-men" in many situations. This authority shift within the emergent underclass has profound implications for the social ordering of underclass life. Faced with diminished adult authority on the one hand, and the state's incapacity to construct new, viable social structure on the other, urban youth will undoubtedly choose retribalization and self-help through gang association.

Regardless of the various descriptions of changes in the National Capital District, the burden, if not the responsibility, to socialize urban youth has been transferred to public authorities, schools, and the police. As discussed above the state, while limited in its capacities to respond effectively to challenges, nevertheless has demonstrated more resiliency than had been expected. From this perspective the very limitation of the state's authority—not its overbearing presence—has highlighted the reconfiguration of urban society in Papua New Guinea. In effect, in a seldom discussed role, rascal

gangs are providing a mechanism for the redistribution of labor within newly defined informal labor markets, in the absence of opportunities in more traditional labor markets that are largely out-of-bounds for those who make up the underclass (Hart Nibbrig 1992; Levantis 1997). As anger, social despair, and a powerful sense of grievance among rascals and nonrascals alike continue to grow recent observations suggest further decline, further disintegration, and increased poverty. Begging, which was absent from the streets of the National Capital District in the 1970s and 80s, is now commonplace, as are daytime assaults in Boroko's main shopping area (pers. com., Sinclair Dinnen, 2000).

Previously I linked a sense of anger, frustration, and indignation to rascal violence. I also argued that much of that sense of having been wronged derived from the country's colonial past and the creation of the formal economy.[3] Here I place less emphasis on the colonial legacy of domination and more on the inability of government to live up to high expectations, which, according to one observer, further contributes to the disappointment and anger found among urban youth (Dinnen 1998c). Today, there seems to be ample evidence that much of the anger and frustration underpinning rascal attitudes and correspondent activities draws from a deep well of contemporary resentment focused less on the past and more pointedly on the corrupt practices of those who govern at the national, regional, and local levels. The "real" rascals are asserted to be not on the streets but in the corridors of government. Indignation deepens. In part, understanding the development of an underclass involves understanding the normative shifts that occur as marginalization and social isolation deepen. The frustration and anger noted by Sinclair Dinnen among the newly urbanized poor will not only increase but also become part of the cultural mix that defines a new status group less by ethnic affiliation and more by common experience as subalterns in the urban class system.

This normative dimension of underclass development has less to do with encounters with the police and more to do with what is happening to the state. Put another way, what appears to be driving this development is the systemic changes occurring throughout Papua New Guinea, as those who govern and those who influence that process struggle to avoid some of the pitfalls of a new country born into a complex, global world. There is ample evidence that the economic, social, and moral underpinnings of traditional life in Papua New Guinea are undergoing profound change, and those changes are reflected in the increasing level of violence throughout the country. The changes in the character of violence seem to be systemically linked (Strathern 1993). Newly emergent social realities are forcing the state, as well as nongovernmental agencies, to define new ways to create alternative, legitimate institutions.

Rascals, the State, and Civil Society: Three-Way Tango?

The developing urban subaltern class is not, and will not be, monolithic in its social composition or social inclination. In other words, one should not be inclined to assume that one set of social attitudes and beliefs reveal the hidden pool of values of the poor. For example, several close observers of criminal gangs have noted that one of the strengths of rascals is their ability to disappear within the population of settlement villages and thus avoid apprehension by the police (Goddard 1995). This protection exists based on a common bond nurtured by experiences in an urban settlement village and on intimidation. Intimidation and otherwise preying on "homies" may further differentiate rascals from others.

What is interesting about the development of rascal gangs and their organizational changes over time is that the gangs constitute institutions and organizations that parallel and intersect with civil society. As early as 1988 Bruce Harris noted the development of organizational complexity over time and associated that complexity with function, that is, with specific gang activities (Harris 1988). Although serious questions have been raised about some of Harris's conclusions about gang structure, those questions and concerns do not undermine the point being made here: Rascal organizations are complex and represent development of subaltern institutions that are growing more viable, not less (Goddard 1992, 1995). In this connection violence is associated with the demands of economically and socially marginalized youth for money, status, and identity. Illegitimate uses of force come to be viewed as acceptable and further remove these youth from social cooperation.

Sinclair Dinnen described and analyzed the elaborate "ritual" of some gang members giving up their arms to the police, as well as the limitations of this as an effective way to "defang" rascal gangs of their arms (1998a). The results were mixed, at best, and the method is not considered to be viable for disarming rascal gangs in the future. Reality dictates that it would be naive to assume that youth socialized in this subaltern stratum are inclined to override self-interest in order to realize the tangible and collective benefits of group association. That group association is likely to be rascal association one way or another.

Final Words

As conditions worsen in Papua New Guinea's urban areas, the escalating crime and violence associated with rascal gangs are creating new rules of authority. The cumulative effects of gang-related criminal activities negate the existing social order, spreading fear deep within civil society. In so doing,

these activities deliver yet another blow to the legitimacy of the state (Strathern and Stewart 1997:689). Continuous migration from rural areas and the concomitant expansion of the newly urbanized segment of the population define the new urban landscape. Likewise, the persistent drain of national wealth—by the pervasive corruption of those who govern, by civil war, by domestic unrest due to the wanton exploitation of the country's abundant natural resources—further compromise the capacities of an already weak state. Within this context rascals have a more direct effect on the state.

In the course of countering the activities of rascal gangs state officials formally and informally perceive that rascals do perform certain functions normally associated with legitimate nongovernmental institutions. That is to say, the gangs provide mechanisms for obtaining status, identity, food, clothing, and security. With employment opportunities swamped in urban centers, criminal activities constitute an alternate source of generating income (Goddard 1995). In this, gangs constitute an important mechanism to redistribute the labor of the underclass.

We cannot assume, however, that the informal and parallel civil redistributive functions will be the norm in the future. Underclass organization lacks the persistence, associability, and mutuality of civil society. Gangs create diffused forms of civil structures. In their own eyes rascals constitute "authority domains" that exercise coercion and organize relations of social exchange. Bruce Harris understood some of those exchange relationships when he described rascal linkages with political and government elites at the national and regional levels of government (1988). Those who engage in crime, especially nihilist, violent crime, exercise a genuine measure of power. Government officials, via the police and military forces, along with nongovernmental organizations have projected onto rascals an imagined political capacity. This view is reinforced as rascals show disdain for the police. On its face, open defiance of the moral authority of the state and a disregard for the abilities of the police cement in the minds of the public the notion of power.

This presumption of power and granting of urban space to rascal criminal gangs may be manifestations of the urban trauma of significant numbers of newly urbanized people confined to the bottom of an emergent class system. The trauma suffered by recent arrivals to urban slum living, caused by the absence of the social cohesion found in village life combined with frustration and anger, produces fantasized images of power as a response to police authority and the corruption of government leaders and their business associates. Rascals construct a cultural frame of interests, desires, and symbols that involves a potential for political authority. Again, Harris understood this potential when he indicated that rascals prefigured one of the few interethnic organizations forming in the National Capital District (1988).

The state's role in this developmental process is evident as it delimits and expands the objects and domains of criminal behavior and punishment in order to depoliticize this threat to its authority. Predictably, state officials can be counted on to further militarize their responses—even develop new discourses and punishments—in an attempt to reassert the authoritative boundaries of the state amid social disorder (Foucault 1979). It is within this dialectical dance that the state implicitly acknowledges real challenges to its authority. Likewise, the very dialectic in which the state acknowledges threat inspires recognition of the potential of a new authority. As this process of asserting competing authorities continues, the rest of civil society has breached the gap by constructing an elaborate architecture for private security, itself a testament to the power of that challenge.

Crime as a way of life is being integrated into civil society. One reason is the difficulty in putting hard and fast boundaries between those who commit crimes and those who do not. Likewise, as Bruce Harris and Michael Goddard noted early on, stolen goods pass easily into the legitimate economy and the benefits are shared by all involved, directly or indirectly (Harris 1988; Goddard 1995). Even prison boundaries do not preclude the exchange of gifts and goods, legally or illegally acquired. Serving time in Bomana has achieved a cachet and is perceived by some as a rite of passage.[4] Prison time is widely accepted, especially among hard-core criminals, as not necessarily an unpleasant fact of life for those who see their horizons dimmed by life in settlements and squatter villages (Goddard 1995; Borrey 1993). As more males are incarcerated, prison will provide an even more important thread linking criminals to others. In this way the noncriminal parts of these emergent subaltern environments are linked to violence, drug dealing, assaults, and killings. Goddard is correct when he emphasizes the difficulty in erecting boundaries between legal and illegal, criminal and noncriminal (1995). In sum, the rise in urban crime and violence constitute the growth of a new surface emergence. In this evolving social order the state with all of its limitations has responded with a revised regime of punishment. In effect the state, or "bits" of it as Colin Filer suggests (1992), is used to establish a custodial presence in a context where civil institutions are barely emergent and hardly viable. This presence is a difficult burden for institutionally strong and viable governments, a Herculean task for a state so challenged as that in Papua New Guinea.

Changes in this complex relationship between shifting norms of civil society and the profound economic shifts affecting the political economy of the state are also causally connected with the "juvenation" of crime. These forces are understood at some level by the people who live at the bottom of the urban system, albeit imperfectly. As a result the ordinary urban dweller can

identify with the economic pressures operating on those who are jailed. The ordinary person and the jailed criminal share a perspective on the realities that limit life chances within this emergent underclass. Under such circumstances the effectiveness of the state's use of its ultimate sanction—imprisonment—is undermined. If the social stigma attached to being imprisoned no longer holds sway, then its capacity to deter crime has been severely compromised. This is the treadmill that the constabulary is forced to run in light of the magnitude and complexity of the social changes faced by the state.

Conclusion

Rascal gangs indicate the surfacing of a still emerging urban infrastructure for male socialization that is a manifestation of social changes and new patterns of cohesion. In this connection rascals reflect protopolitical formations of subcivil society. This process constitutes a new political condition: the reassembling of a shifting social structure and political resistance to it by the state through militarized police authority. As an evolving form of civil society, gangs and the violence associated with their activities create new rules and operate beyond the existing social norms, and as such they directly challenge the authority of the state.

In reaction to the defiance from below, the political authorities engaged in combat with rascals are formulating alternative rules to suppress, control, and depoliticize gangs. Finding alternatives is made more difficult by the reality of no clear boundaries between legal and illegal, criminal and noncriminal. The fact that political leaders have used to one extent or another their association with rascal gang leaders only distorts our perception of this reality. Nevertheless, the state's public transcript will emphasize sterner punishments to intensify the discipline to which young males are subjected.

It is within this context that the state attempts to delimit its authority. Faced with the burdens of paying off international debt and deep corruption in the highest decision-making circles of government, the state presents a public transcript that it will intervene whenever the hidden transcript driving social order is threatened. In the process the state redefines the relationship between government, civil society, and subaltern underclass as it attempts to reassert and define the political boundaries between social order and disorder.

While violence has grown disturbingly over the last ten years in Papua New Guinea, most of the violence associated with rascal gangs has been used to define territorial boundaries or establish a gang's authority. Weapons such as machetes and knives have been replaced by a variety of homemade and manufactured pistols, rifles, and semiautomatic weapons. The increasing use

of guns has manifold effects on the sense of security of a public already living near hysteria. In contrast, more weapons have given gang members an enlarged sense of fearlessness and an increased willingness to defy police authority and intimidate those who would defy their authority. Faced with intimidation new urban dwellers are often not ready to confront the growing lawlessness of young gang members. Within the subaltern life of the growing urban underclass, urban dwellers may react personally to crime; they are often the victims. But at this juncture they are not prepared to assume responsibility individually for arresting crime. Given the circumstance of a severely compromised state, one whose very legitimacy is held in question, the outcome is clear. Because urban dwellers have few real incentives to counter the perceived power of gangs they fail to sustain a sense of a public sphere, a disengagement that leads to further civil distrust. Under these conditions there is little support for intervention.

As the militarization of the police response deepens, the state is forced to invent opportunities to extend the legitimation of its intervention. Again, Sinclair Dinnen's perceptive observations on the elaborate mass surrender of firearms by some members of rascal gangs illustrate the ends that police will turn to to create the impression of effective efforts to stem gang violence.

In addition to the spectacle of the government's revised strategies of harsh regulations on the one hand and a willingness to negotiate with rascal leaders on the other, internal factors inhibit the political economy of urban gangs. As noted previously, imperfect social bonding affects the abilities of young gang members to forge and maintain bonds of solidarity and thus limits their opportunities to extend activities across larger territories. In an earlier article, I took issue with Bruce Harris's optimistic view of the viability of rascal organization and the extent to which it would develop and grow (Hart Nibbrig 1992). With the advantage of hindsight I would add that though rascals generate income from a variety of sources including growing trade in drugs, weapons, and stolen goods, they are apparently unable to generalize their wealth-producing activities. For example, there is little evidence to suggest that rascal leaders are accumulating wealth and acquiring holdings in the mainstream economy in Papua New Guinea or elsewhere. In other words, if wealth is being accumulated it is not done from the bottom. That accumulation is reserved for those who have control of, or access to, decision makers high in government. Rather, gang leaders appear to operate with limited cognitive processes, similar to those associated with "token" economies. In these circumstances wealth production is unconnected to such power-expanding processes as entrepreneurial vision, constrained consumption, or strategic investment decisions (Lane 1992:351–355). This means that whatever we think of the income-producing capacities of rascals, they are confined to

microniches governed by short time horizons and narrowly defined conceptions of self-interest. Given this, their potential for transition to larger domains of economic activities remains restricted.

Politically, rascal gangs, in whatever form they take, reveal something about the shape of the emergent urban system that is developing in Papua New Guinea. Concomitant with this is the disturbing fact that political officials and the police forces around the country lack the wherewithal to articulate a meaningful political vision, to say nothing of the state's eroded legitimacy within the very domains in which it attempts to assert itself. Meanwhile growing numbers of economically and socially marginalized individuals continue to reject the existing social order. Correspondingly, cultural differences spawn deviant and destructive behaviors. The proverbial beat goes on. Seen in this light, rascals are part of a growing, dissonant, angry, evolving political culture spawned by national economic development policies that are fundamentally transforming the lives of hundreds of thousands. This continuing development process powerfully affects the rapid growth of urban social life in Papua New Guinea and is reflected in the social and political culture of urbanized areas generally and the National Capital District particularly. While the old cultural ties to village life remain strong and viable for many, those ties weaken with every generation born within the new urban reality. Something quite different—oftentimes ugly, uniquely urban, too often violent—now shapes the growing underclass segments of Papua New Guinea's poor.

NOTES

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1. Rape is a common form of violence in Port Moresby; elsewhere it is not justified as being motivated by economic deprivation. Analysis of rape requires a separate framework based on the literature of violence toward women and of gender relations in general.

2. Interview with Mr. Skate in 1988.

3. For a different analysis, see Goddard 1995:55–80.

4. Michael Goddard doubts that there are rigorous rites of passage with respect to gangs in Papua New Guinea.

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ON THE LOCATION OF THE PROTO-OCEANIC HOMELAND

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The linguist Malcolm Ross has advanced a series of inferences pointing to somewhere in the Bismarck Archipelago as the probable "homeland" in the Pacific of the Oceanic or Eastern Austronesian languages. This conclusion is not the only one that can be reached based on current linguistic evidence and inference. Reviewing why he has singled out the Bismarck Archipelago as the homeland is advisable, for Ross's deductions have been seen as substantial support for associating proto-Oceanic with what some archaeologists have characterized as the "Lapita cultural complex." We find, however, that social-network models based on alternative assumptions about linguistic variation and the impact of strong and weak ties between language communities lead to more-plausible inferences about linguistic diversity in Melanesia, the convergent effects of geography, and the patterning of language history.

SINCE THE EARLY DAYS of European exploration and colonization in the Pacific, "the intriguing and complicated question" (Handy 1930:3) of Polynesian origins has been an enduring theme in the literature on the islands. As the archaeologist Jack Golson once candidly phrased the issue, "the so-called Polynesian problem" has long been "how to get the linguistically and cultur-

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ally homogeneous Polynesians into the central Pacific without racial contamination from the more diversified and presumed longer established Melanesians to the west" (1972:19).

Even though we are now in the twenty-first century, what is the right answer to this old riddle continues to be fiercely debatable. Nonetheless, today there is broad agreement in the scholarly world that the immediate ancestors of the Polynesians came from somewhere in Melanesia west of the great Polynesian triangle of islands in the central and eastern Pacific (Green 1999). While this conclusion is compatible with linguistic evidence, the archaeological facts and figures look especially compelling. The most distinctive "signature" of the first signs of human settlement in the Tongan and Samoan archipelagoes of western Polynesia is an often highly ornate style of ancient ceramics that is found exclusively in the Pacific and is called *Lapita* (Kirch 1997; Terrell and Welsch 1997). And as Jean Kennedy once remarked, Lapita has "a Melanesian distribution with a Polynesian extension" (1982:24).

Geography, however, is not history. The association between this pottery and the first (presumably "Polynesian") settlers of western Polynesia seems secure, but elsewhere in Oceania—including the Fiji Islands just west of Tonga—this pottery and other ancient signs of human occupation commonly associated with it are found in places where today the islanders are conventionally labeled as dark-skinned "Melanesians," not as lighter-skinned "Polynesians" (Terrell, Kelly, and Rainbird 2001). Does this imply that however different they may look to us, when all is said and done, Polynesians *are* Melanesians?

This may be the right answer to the riddle of the Polynesians, but precisely what such an answer historically implies is hard to say. Seen in global perspective, as Golson said, Polynesians certainly do look like a strikingly homogeneous "people," "ethnic group," or "population." So what remains at issue is precisely *how* Lapita links the Polynesians and the Melanesians. There is a real possibility that we may never know for sure, but it seems revealing, nevertheless, that today molecular genetics research is also showing that islanders in Polynesia and Melanesia share clear ties of biological kinship (Capelli et al. 2001; Kayser et al. 2000, 2001; Kirch 2000; Lum and Cann 2000; Spriggs 1997). Hence we may be closer to a solution to the old Polynesian conundrum than we think, however astonishing such a simple and straightforward solution to (or deconstruction of) the "Polynesian problem" may seem to some. After all, none other than the distinguished physical anthropologist W. W. Howells once wrote, "as physical beings, the Polynesians simply could not have emerged from any eastern Melanesian population; they are just too different genetically" (1973:234).

In any case, genetics is not all that there is to history any more than geography is. One historical question about Lapita pottery that remains unresolved is how quickly and how directly the craft of making this ware was carried from the Bismarck Archipelago in Melanesia—where the oldest Lapita pottery dating to around 3,300–3,200 years ago has been excavated (Specht and Gosden 1997)—to other Pacific archipelagoes as far east in Oceania as Samoa. According to some authorities today, Lapita may have taken at least 450 years to move that far east from the Bismarcks via a clinal progression of exploration and colonization; others think its eastward journey was so rapid that no chronological gradient at all can be distinguished within the radiocarbon record (Anderson and Clark 1999; Burley, Nelson, and Shutler 1999; Sand 1999, 2000). Given this broad range of chronological possibilities, considerably different historical scenarios about Lapita's eastward progression to Polynesia can be reconstructed. Common sense suggests that the longer this pottery took to reach Samoa, the more complicated the story of Lapita—and possibly of Polynesian origins—must have been, especially when we reconstruct its travels eastward not just in radiocarbon years but in human lifetimes.

A second and obviously related historical issue is how singular or "unified" Lapita was as a cultural expression (Spriggs 1997:13, 21). Put simply, is Lapita a story about "one people" who had "one culture," or was this pottery a shared cultural thread running through the local histories of island communities having different traditions and other distinguishing ethnic elements? On this issue, there appears to be growing consensus that a "one people, one culture" reading of Lapita would be too simple. Sand has argued, for instance, that the "Lapita phenomenon" was not as homogeneous as some may think (2000:31; see also Green 1994:35). He has cautioned that we must pay close attention to how Lapita varies geographically if we want to understand "the mechanisms of spread, settlement, and local adaptations of these Austronesian potters."

Sand's reference to Lapita as "Austronesian" introduces a third historical issue. Lapita archaeological sites are found on islands where people today who have plainly dissimilar cultural practices and who are quite diverse genetically (Oppenheimer and Richards 2001) nonetheless all speak languages classified as belonging to the Austronesian family—specifically, to what linguists talk about as the "Oceanic" branch of this great family of historically related tongues. Thus it would seem obvious enough that there must have been some kind of historical correlation, or connection, between this pottery and this particular group of languages. But precisely what was the connection? Or connections, for let us not forget Sand's words of advice or the present cultural and biological diversity of these islanders (Terrell,

Kelly, and Rainbird 2001). Was this pottery at first made by people who all spoke the same early Austronesian—specifically, "proto-Oceanic"—language? If so, were there other communities in Oceania at that time where people also spoke Austronesian? Or were the first Lapita communities linguistically unique in this part of the world, where we know archaeologically that people (presumably speaking Papuan, or "non-Austronesian," languages) have been in residence for something like 40,000 to 60,000 years?

Some archaeologists propose that if both Austronesian and the craft of pottery-making—but not the distinctive Lapita style of ceramic decoration, which many now agree was first created in the Bismarcks—are "intrusive" to Melanesia, then by far the easiest historical explanation would be that both cultural traits were introduced to Oceania from somewhere else (most probably from somewhere in southeast Asia) at the *same* time by the *same* small group of adventurous Austronesian voyagers. In the words of Matthew Spriggs, there must have been a movement of pioneers that "resulted in an Austronesian and Lapita settlement in the Bismarcks by 3500 BP and the break-up of Proto-Oceanic (POC) as Lapita settlements spread south and east through the Solomons and out into the Pacific after about 3200 BP" (1997:97). Indeed, according to Peter Bellwood, equating the introduction of Austronesian with the arrival of Lapita pottery in the Bismarck Archipelago is "so firmly accepted by linguists and archaeologists alike that it no longer needs lengthy justification" (1997:123).

But again, what about Christophe Sand's words of caution, and the enduring historical puzzle that traits of biology, language, and culture—with the exception of Polynesia's seemingly obvious homogeneity—are today so poorly correlated in Oceania? If we accept the conjectured primal unity of Lapita in the Bismarck Archipelago as a cultural, linguistic, and (presumably) biological phenomenon, why did people elsewhere in the Pacific come to make Lapita pottery? And are we to just ignore Lapita's heterogeneity as an archaeological phenomenon from place to place in Oceania?

Not according to Spriggs: "[T]here may have been a moment in the Bismarcks when there was a single people using Lapita pottery, genetically, linguistically and culturally distinct from their neighbours. But this unity and distinctiveness would have been short-lived. Lapita-using populations which spread to Polynesia and those in Island Melanesia subsequently had divergent genetic and linguistic histories" (1997:100). Nevertheless, the chief point for Spriggs and Bellwood is seemingly the idea that the "creolization" of Austronesian and non-Austronesian (Papuan) cultures in western Melanesia only happened *after* Lapita and Austronesian had made their first shared bridgehead somewhere in the Bismarck Archipelago (Bellwood 1997:236).

We think this thesis is too simple.[1] True, there is an undeniable elegance to simple historical scenarios. It can also be claimed that reconstructions of the past should not be made more complicated than necessity demands. And according to the archaeologist Patrick Kirch, "the correlation of the early Lapita phase with Proto Oceanic, and of the subsequent Lapita dispersal with the spread and later break-up of [the] Proto Oceanic speech community, is an extremely robust hypothesis—indeed, the only explanation which makes consistent sense of *both* the linguistic and archaeological evidence amassed to date" (1997:89; emphasis in original). Perhaps so, but we think there are at least three good reasons to be suspicious of what we see as overly simple historical scenarios about how the Pacific Islanders got their first Austronesian language and their first Lapita pots—and by implication, how the Polynesians came to be.

Three Reasons

There is broad agreement today that no one can understand the human diversity of the Pacific in matters of language, culture, and human biology without first understanding the history of the Pacific itself—not just its human history, but also the history of its plants, animals, and even the earth's continental plates. There seems to be far less consensus on what this consensus implies. Some scholars appear to see history largely as a story about crucial turning points in the past, others, mostly as an accounting of the pedigrees of ancient "tribes" or "populations" (Terrell 2001a:216). In our view, however, history is best seen as a contingent story of cause and effect: a concatenation of events, actions, and reactions leading at best to only broadly predictable results or outcomes. And the longer the chain of historical events one is describing, the less certain the outcome.

From this perspective, understanding the history of the Pacific and its people takes more than correlations linking Lapita with the Oceanic Austronesian languages (or linking Polynesians with Melanesians). Yet our first reason for being suspicious of simple scenarios about Lapita, Austronesian, and Polynesian origins is simple enough, and on its own, is perhaps far from compelling. Even some who say that Lapita began as a singular and unitary historical phenomenon somewhere in the Bismarck Archipelago or Southeast Asia also accept Roger Green's suggestion that Lapita culture was not a "package" of entirely exotic elements imported into Oceania from somewhere else (Kirch 1997:46–47, 93; 2000:93). Instead, argues Green (1991, 1994:35–36), only some of the properties of the cultural phenomenon that he calls "the Lapita cultural complex" were foreign imports; other elements instead had local roots in Melanesia and some were innovations created by

Lapita-making people only after their pioneering forebears had arrived in the Bismarck Archipelago.

We think Green's hypothesis about Lapita's trihybrid roots calls into question, perhaps unintentionally, how important it is to see Lapita at first as a historical "unity." As the archaeologist Les Groube wrote years ago (1971:313), it is now widely agreed that the Polynesians, strictly speaking, did not "come from" anywhere. On the contrary, they *became* Polynesians *after* their Lapita ancestors colonized Fiji and western Polynesia (Green 1995). Using the same logic, perhaps it is true that Austronesian was initially brought to the Bismarck Archipelago by only a small group of exotic pioneers; perhaps, too, everyone in this "founder population" shared much in common genetically, linguistically, and culturally. But if we adopt Green's hypothesis, then it was only after this small pioneering band or founder population of human beings reached the Bismarcks that they and their descendants set about creating the "Lapita cultural complex." And following Green, they did so not in isolation from others living then in Oceania but through interaction with their longer resident non-Austronesian neighbors. Under this scenario, the issue of whether "Lapita people" had a "moment" of primeval genetic, linguistic, and cultural "unity" would seem to be little more than a historical red herring. Why worry about whether there was a time of pristine Lapita—and by implication, proto-Oceanic—unity?

This question takes us to our second and third reasons for being skeptical about simple models of Lapita, Polynesians, and proto-Oceanic history. We think there is good reason to question the premise that the first Lapita potters in the Bismarcks were the first and only Austronesian speakers in Oceania (Green 1999:3; Kirch 1997:88–89; Pawley and Ross 1993:445–446; 1995:63; Spriggs 1997:97–98). Furthermore, we think there is little reason to believe that Lapita potters back then were the only people who—had linguists been on the job in the Pacific that long ago—would have been classified as speakers of proto-Oceanic Austronesian languages.

Both of these reasons for being skeptical about the historical value of simple correlations linking Polynesians, Lapita pottery, and proto-Oceanic are chiefly linguistic reasons, as we will now explain.

Oceanic Linguistics

During pioneering research on over 250 Oceanic languages leading to his celebrated study of the Polynesian languages and their position within the Austronesian (Malayo-Polynesian) language family, George Grace found that he could divide the Oceanic languages into nineteen subgroups (1955, 1959, 1961). Relationships among these groupings seemed to be structured by

little more than geography. With few exceptions, each subgroup is noticeably localized, and how similar each is to the others evidently corresponds with how near they are to one another geographically. "This is precisely the sort of situation which we should expect if the linguistic diversity had been produced through differentiation on the spot" (Grace 1964:366–367).

However, Grace was not offering a definitive classification of the Oceanic languages (1968:72). He concluded instead that more research—and a great deal more information—was needed before such a classification would be feasible. The nineteen subgroupings he had identified should only be regarded, he said, as "an approximation of the actual relationships" within the Oceanic branch of the Austronesian family.

Nonetheless, some scholars did interpret Grace's classification as historically meaningful—as showing us that Oceanic speakers must have settled most of western Melanesia quickly, and that while these pioneers were expanding over the Bismarck Archipelago, the Solomon Islands, and into Vanuatu and New Caledonia, they evidently spoke a single language that could be equated with proto-Oceanic (Pawley 1981:280). This inference was not entirely at odds with what Grace himself initially concluded (1961:364, 367). By 1964, however, Grace reported being impressed—as was the linguist Isidore Dyen (1965)—by the apparent language diversity encountered on the island of New Britain and its environs. Grace hesitantly suggested that the homeland of proto-Oceanic had probably been located somewhere in this general region, including northeastern New Guinea (1964:367).

In 1973, the linguist Andrew Pawley and his archaeological colleague Roger Green concurred with Grace's suggestion, which was concordant with their inference that proto-Oceanic had split off from the rest of the Austronesian family following a movement of people from eastern Indonesia into the immediate New Guinea region (Pawley and Green 1973:51). In light of later assessments, however, it should be noted that in 1973 Pawley and Green explicitly added that it seemed unlikely to them that Lapita pottery had been directly associated with this initial movement of Oceanic languages through Melanesia. The dating of Lapita to the second millennium B.C. looked far too late, they said, for the observable diversity of the Oceanic languages in Melanesia today to have developed only since then. Furthermore, it was likely that "the Lapita peoples who arrived in the Southeast Solomons and New Hebrides [Vanuatu] apparently found these areas already occupied" (Pawley and Green 1973:49).

A decade later, however, Pawley and Green had stepped back from these assumptions. They observed that the many subgroups by then recognized within Oceanic were geographically distributed in a chainlike (or "rake"-like) manner from New Guinea in the west to New Caledonia in the east. They

also noted that no single place within this range could be taken as a visible center of language diversity. Consequently, "it is hard to see how Proto-Oceanic could have diversified more or less simultaneously into a large number of branches scattered from New Guinea to Vanuatu unless it was already spoken over a wide area" encompassing most, if not all, of these many localized subgroups. Therefore, "at least in the final stages of its development, Proto-Oceanic was spoken by a widely dispersed population, centred in the chain of intervisible islands running from New Guinea, New Britain and New Ireland in the northwest to Malaita and San Cristobal in the southeast" (Pawley and Green 1984:135, 137).

By this time, too, Pawley and Green had reversed their previous position on Lapita pottery. In their estimation, the association between this pottery and the dispersal of Oceanic languages through Melanesia and as far out in the Pacific as Fiji and western Polynesia seemed much stronger than they had previously thought likely, although they still observed that this dispersal need not have been carried out solely by people with Lapita pottery (Pawley and Green 1984:142).

Ross's Subgrouping Hypothesis

Scholarly thinking about possible associations between proto-Oceanic, Lapita pottery, and the Bismarck Archipelago changed swiftly with the 1988 publication of Malcolm Ross's doctoral dissertation on proto-Oceanic and the Austronesian languages of western Melanesia. Ross's proposed subgrouping of the Oceanic languages retained much of the general rakelike (nonhierarchical) structure of previous analyses (see Spriggs 1997: fig. 1.3). However, he argued, most of the Oceanic languages in western Melanesia could be coalesced into three major linguistic (and geographic) clusters: the Meso-Melanesian cluster, the North New Guinea cluster, and the Papuan Tip cluster (Figure 1).

To achieve this degree of aggregation within the Oceanic subgroup, however, Ross had to relax the methodical prerequisite of family-tree models in comparative linguistics (and in biological systematics; see Clarke 1978; Hennig 1979) that membership in a proposed subset of languages must be based on evidence for a number of uniquely shared linguistic innovations (Ross 1988:7–9).[2] This stipulation is largely what had kept other linguists from proposing higher-order subgroupings within Oceanic (beyond the grouping in remote Oceania for which Grace had laid the foundations in the 1950s and 1960s).

Probably because of Ross's evident willingness to relax this formal prerequisite, there is now wider acceptance that traditional family-tree models

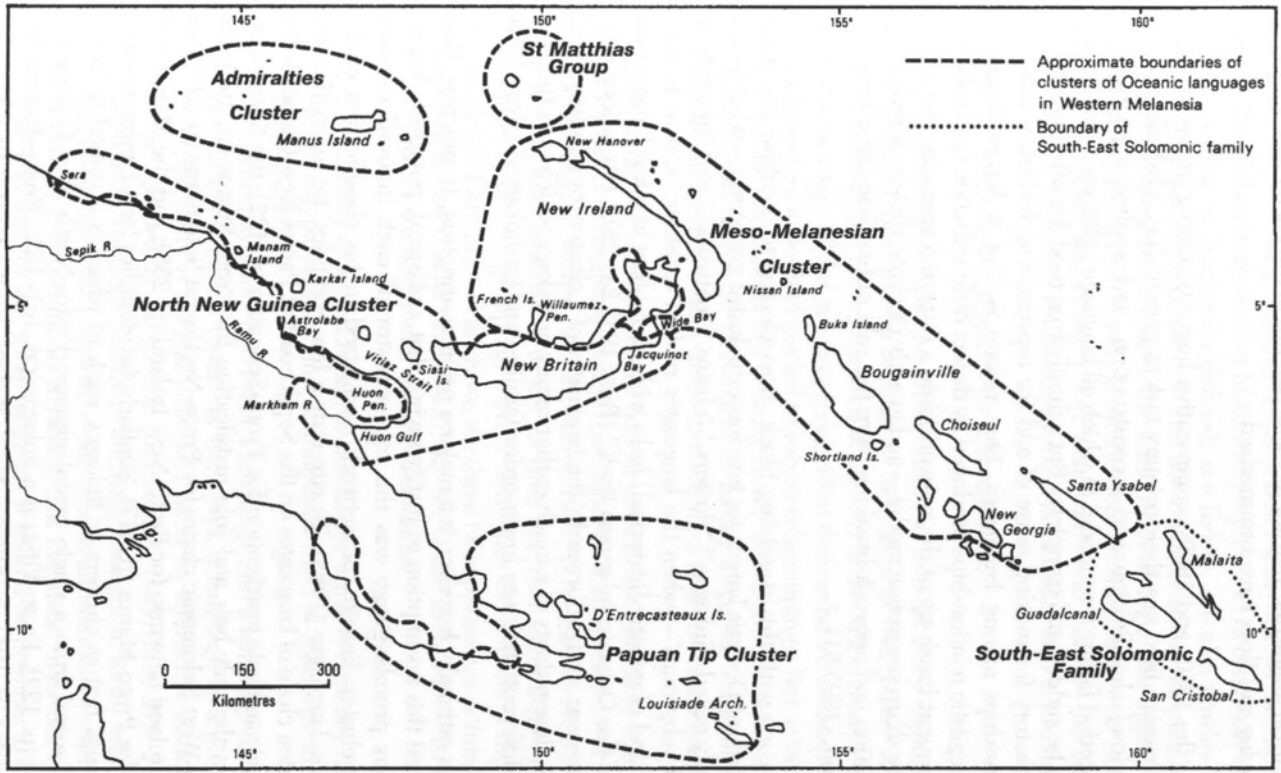

FIGURE 1. **The largest groups of Austronesian languages in western Melanesia proposed by Malcolm Ross.**
(Reprinted, with the author's permission, from Ross 1988:25, Map 2)

in historical linguistics may not fit social realities in the Pacific (Green 1999). As Pawley and Ross have summarized:

> In the 1950s and 1960s, comparative linguists writing in the Austronesian field saw their primary task as genetic [i.e., cladistic; see below] classification and reconstruction, and applied a simple-minded family tree model in which all language splits are assumed to be sudden and complete. But a family-tree model is often unsatisfactory for making sense of and for representing historical relationships among languages. One reason is that it forces those linguistic relationships produced by dialect differentiation (and subsequent break-up of the network) into a distorted scenario, that of the sharp separation model—and in early Oceanic, dialect differentiation and network-breaking were the rule rather than the exception. (1995:51)

To cope with this stumbling block, Ross elected to combine the many hundreds of Oceanic languages into more-inclusive groupings—what he has variously called "linkages," "clusters," "chains," "networks," and "innovation-linked subgroups"—when the languages ranked together "appear to have some kind of genetic [historical] links with each other at a level lower than that of the Oceanic subgroup itself" (Ross 1988:24–25).[3] His rationale for doing so was straightforward: "the languages of a cluster [or a linkage, etc.] are the descendants of a much earlier family or linkage which over time has itself differentiated into lower-order families and/or linkages" (Ross 1989: 137).

This rationale, however, is a major a priori assumption. In practice, Ross has used this assumption to justify saying that a classical, putatively homogeneous protolanguage was the sole ancestor of each innovation-linked chain, cluster, linkage, or network recognized in his classification of the Oceanic languages (1988). To cite only a few examples, he infers that the Schouten chain of languages on the Sepik coast of Papua New Guinea is the only heir and sole justification for Proto-Schouten (p. 122); the Suauic network is the only heir and sole justification for Proto-Suauic (p. 192); the North-West Solomonic chain, for Proto-Northwest Solomonic (p. 217); the New Ireland network, for Proto-New Ireland (p. 258); and the Manus network, for Proto-Manus (p. 317). Similarly, he identifies larger, more tenuous groupings first as clusters or linkages, each of which is assumed to justify and descend from a single protolanguage: Proto–North New Guinea is a cluster (p. 122), Proto-Vitiaz is a linkage (pp. 161–162); Proto–Papuan Tip is a cluster (p. 191), and Proto–Meso-Melanesian is a cluster (p. 258).

We are not, however, convinced that subsets analytically resolved in this fashion should be interpreted as historically equivalent to classically defined subgroups (that is, innovation-defined; see below; see also Pawley 1999). Permitting subsets to be constructed on the evidence of overlapping but not fully shared innovations changes the basic rules of logic that apply.[4] Clusters, linkages, and so forth and classically defined subgroups may not be as different as apples and oranges, but what can—and cannot—be said historically about these differently constructed taxonomic units is problematic.

1. Ross's Subgrouping Hypothesis: Classification

Viewed in historical perspective, Ross's decision to relax a key stipulation of the family-tree model can be seen as an indication of the greater sophistication of Oceanic linguistics research at the end of the last century and perhaps also as a sign of the growing recognition that orthodox assumptions in comparative linguistics had not led to robust subgroupings. But as historical linguists in the late nineteenth century came to realize, this view of scholarly history underplays the drawbacks of basing linguistic subgrouping on innovation-linked rather than innovation-defined traits or characteristics.

Assessment. We wholeheartedly concur with Ross (1997:215) that social-network models of language change have significant advantages over family-tree models (e.g., J. Milroy 1992; L. Milroy 1987; Terrell 1981, 1986). Yet we think it is an understatement to say, as Ross has, that lectal differentiation (innovation-linked subgrouping) merely "stretches the bounds of the family tree models" (1997:212). Frankly we see these two approaches as fundamentally dissimilar (see Clarke 1978:35–37, 42–83; Grace 1985, 1986). To explain why we think so, we begin with these observations.

1.1 The stability of logical types, or taxonomic units, is critically dependent on the parameters and assumptions used to frame them (Atran 1990:47–80).

1.2 It is generally understood that a *language* and a *language family* are two different logical types. As Ross says, a language as a phenomenological unity is normally thought of as an *interactive entity* commonly glossed as "a speech community" (1997:210, 212–214). In contrast, a language family is normally thought of as an ontological unity—a *historical construct*—and not as an interactive entity.

1.3 However, it is commonly assumed that linguistic traits change over time and that for any given language it should be possible to identify a series of linguistic traits defining the transformative historical stages

of development through which that language has passed, that is, how it has actually changed over time.

1.4 Yet despite these trait changes, another common assumption is that the language marked by these changes—that language as a historical phenomenon—has maintained its ontological integrity (Porter 1981: 122–123). Its linguistic traits may change, but not the ontological unity that they define (seen perhaps as a Kantian *Ding an sich*). As Ross has said, there is no "break in linguistic continuity," and consequently the "continuity of the language itself is not in question" (1997:241). For example, the entities called *English* at times T_1, T_2, . . . T_n are said to be ontologically "the same as" the interactive entity defined as *English* at time T_0.

1.5 Yet however substantive we judge the logical types "a language" and "a language family" to be, unlike "languages," "language families" are generally not seen as interactive phenomenological entities. Instead they are historical constructs that *both* define and are defined by the subgroupings they contain (a vexing conundrum in itself; see Ross 1997:250–251).

1.6 Furthermore, if the conventional assumptions and procedures of comparative historical linguistics are rigorously followed, it is generally assumed that the traits used to define subgroupings within a language family will prescribe a branching array (a "cladogram") that also prescribes a nested, or hierarchical, series of subsets, or subgroups (Figure 2).[5]

The critical point here is that when orthodox linguistic assumptions and comparative procedures are followed, membership in one of these subsets (subgroups) is determined by possession of one or more uniquely shared innovations made on the original suite of language traits exhibited by their common ancestor or "protolanguage" (at the base of "A" in Figure 2). Linguists recognize that the estimation error of the fit between any given family-tree model and the data it is meant to summarize cannot be blindly assumed to be negligible. History, after all, is not simple. Therefore, the innovations used to construct family-tree models must have "diagnostic substance" (Ross 1997:220). Ideally, assignment of a language to a subgroup is based on a suite of reliable traits, not just one or two, although achieving this methodological goal in practice is not always easy.[6]

Here it can be seen how innovation-defined and innovation-linked subsets have critically different properties. In the first instance, membership in a subgroup is uniquely defined on the basis of one (or more) exclusively shared diagnostic innovations; in the second, membership in a subgroup is

determined on the basis of some number of traits, none of which is rigorously defining.[7] As Ross has remarked, this distinction has important implications for the reconstruction of protolanguages, a task vital to the definition of subgroups, and for inferring geographic centers of diversity (1988:8–9; Pawley and Green 1984:133; Pawley and Ross 1995:432).

Conclusion 1—About Classification. Orthodox methods of comparative linguistics were designed in the nineteenth century to produce nested subsets of languages that (by definition) may be interpreted as chronologically ordered subgroupings. By relaxing the central stipulation that subgroups be defined on the basis of derivative innovations exclusively shared by all members of a subgroup, Ross has coalesced many of the previously recognized language subgroups within Oceanic into a smaller number of innovation-linked subsets. But these subsets need not be (by definition) consistently nested subgroups; hence their standing as historical higher-order subgroups within the Oceanic branch is problematic.

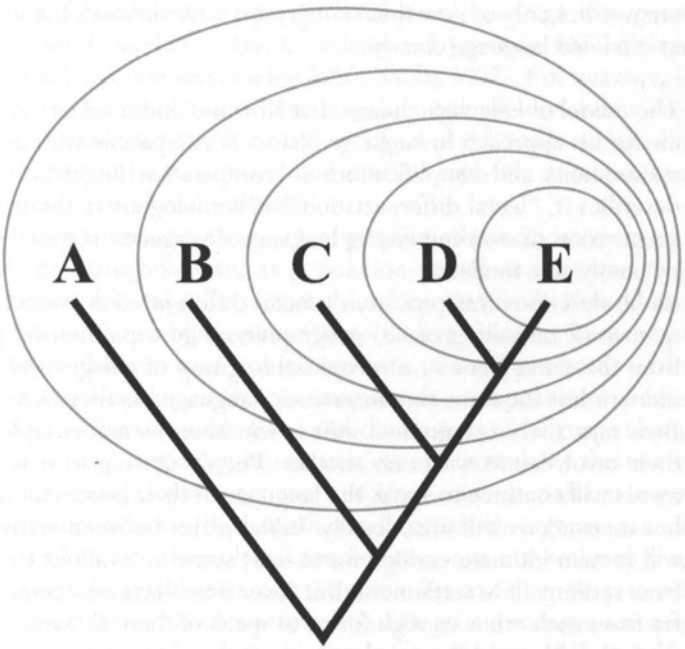

FIGURE 2. **A nested, hierarchical series of subsets.**

2. *Ross's Subgrouping Hypothesis: Change*

In the biological sciences, the formula *divergence = mutation + isolation + time* is perhaps the most basic way of thinking about the evolution of species diversity. Too often the same idea is used in historical linguistics to talk about dialectal differentiation and language divergence, except that the word "change" or "innovation" is substituted for "mutation." While it may be true that languages are changing all the time (they do so even in the course of our own lifetime), it does not follow that languages diverge as time goes by. In other words, *language change* does not automatically lead to *dialectal differentiation* or *language divergence* (although some writers say that any place where people have been living for a long time must be a place where there are many languages; e.g., Diamond 1997, 2000). Change leads to differentiation and divergence only under specific conditions—which in the formula just given have all been reduced to the single variable called *isolation* (Swadesh 1971:26).

Assessment. We think that some of what we see as the historical ambiguity of the higher-order subgroupings within Oceanic that Ross has proposed is an outcome not only of how these subgroups were defined, but also how Ross has modeled language change.

2.1 The model of language change that Ross has endorsed as the rationale for his approach to language history is compatible with orthodox assumptions and simplifications in comparative linguistics. As he describes it, "lectal differentiation"[8] is homologous to the temporal progression of ever-increasing language divergence mapped ideally by family-tree models.

2.2 As he describes this process, dialectal differentiation is one consequence of (usually gradual) geographic range expansion by people from the same place or a recognizable group of villages who speak more or less the same (homogeneous) language. As they move apart, Ross says, there is a gradual shift in the intensity and complexity of their involvement with one another. People moving to new settlements will continue to speak the language of their home community, but innovations will arise locally. Initially, ties between settlements will remain intimate enough for at least some innovations to spread from settlement to settlement. But "over time, lects may come to differ from each other enough for us to speak of them as 'separate languages', [although] the overlapping pattern of innovations remains" (Ross 1997:223–224). When divergence advances to this degree, the

resulting linguistic pattern is what Ross calls an "innovation-linked subgroup."

2.3 Hence, as he depicts them, innovation-linked models are homologous to traditional family-tree models of progressive language divergence. They might even be called "family-tree models in the making." In both models, it is assumed that linguistic diversification is a function of two variables, isolation and time. As Ross describes lectal divergence (1997:212–213), the critical difference between classic language "splitting" (what Ross calls "language fissure") giving rise to innovation-defined subgroups (which can be mapped ideally as family trees) and lectal differentiation giving rise to innovation-linked subgroups (which cannot be so mapped) is how quick and absolute the rupture or "break" is between the speakers of what had been a homogeneous speech tradition.

Conclusion 2—About Change. Our hesitations about Ross's model of dialectal differentiation arise not because we think it is wrong, but because it does not go far enough. Modern dialectology and sociolinguistics have now advanced research on dialectal differentiation well beyond the premise that time and isolation are the primary variables of language divergence (for examples, see Chambers 1995; Coupland and Jaworski 1997; Foley 1997; Holmes 1992; Scollon and Scollon 1995; Sebba 1997). For instance, Chambers notes that "mobility has been sociolinguistically underestimated as a reformative force, just as it has been socially and politically underestimated. . . . It deserves to be recognized and studied explicitly as a social variable with linguistic correlates" (1995:66).

Although we cannot pursue such a complicated issue here, even a variable as seemingly straightforward as population growth is more puzzling than Ross's model of lectal differentiation implies. People in New Guinea, for example, not only establish new settlements, but abandon them: a historical ebb and flow that can lead to such intricate, changing patterns of diversity that Bradshaw has likened the phenomenon to a "population kaleidoscope" (1997, 2001). Characterizing the social dimensions of language change and divergence—and capturing in our models and postulates the active roles that human agents play—is not easy and some might say, all but impossible. It is clear, for instance, that significant linguistic divergence can develop across social fields where local communities are not isolated from one another (Terrell 2001a). As a case in point, the sociolinguist James Milroy notes evidence from his own research that linguistic changes are spreading across physical and psychological barriers from Protestant East Belfast into portions of Catholic West Belfast (1992:185–195). Milroy also cites evidence

from the work of William Labov and others in Philadelphia that linguistic norms are diverging between black and white speakers living there, despite frequent contact between these two groups. In the Philadelphia case, the operative factor is community conflict, not physical contact or isolation.

3. Ross's Subgrouping Hypothesis: Interaction

As Ross has outlined his model of language change, what happens when separate languages are created following the formation of neat cleavages within a previously homogeneous speech community (language "fissure") and what happens when dialects evolve as one consequence of population growth and territorial expansion (dialectal "differentiation") are seen as homologous changes that can be classified alike as *speech-community events* (1997: 210–212). While historians argue about how to define "events" (e.g., Porter 1981; White 1987), we think it is unusual to equate short-term, decisive "events" and long-term event sequences or "processes." We think dialectal differentiation might be better categorized as a speech-community process or class of speech-community events, not as a single homogeneous speech-community event.

Ross cites the sociolinguist James Milroy to support calling language change a speech-community event, but we believe he does not take Milroy's model far enough. In his 1992 book on linguistic variation and change, Milroy devotes an entire chapter to the historical sociolinguistics of English, examining the *time* depth of variability. He cites cases in which nonstandard variants have persisted in parts of a community for a very long time, sometimes even rising to prominence as a new standard for a time before fading into obscurity. Milroy's model not only attenuates the time variable, it also replaces the notion of change as a relatively abrupt mutation with the notion of change as a gradual fluctuation in the relative prominence of competing variants at different nodes within social networks. This approach is much more consonant with models of genetic change that focus on relative frequencies within the gene pools of populations rather than on random individual mutations.

Case Study. We think not equating "events" with continuing "processes" is an important issue. Consider this example. Possibly as many as sixty languages belonging to perhaps twenty-four different language families are spoken along the seven hundred kilometers of coastline between Jayapura in modern Papua (formerly Irian Jaya) and Madang in Papua New Guinea. Since 1987 the New Guinea Research Program at the Field Museum in Chicago has been running a continuing program of ethnographic and archaeo-

logical research on this coast. Our work in this program is confirming that communities there and on the nearby offshore islands are focal points, or nodes, in a vast encompassing network or reticulated "social field" that has enabled people on the coast to share a common cultural complex even though they do not share a common language (Terrell and Welsch 1997; Welsch and Terrell 1991, 1998).

Ross judges all of the Austronesian languages spoken on this coast to be members of what he calls the *North New Guinea* cluster of Oceanic languages. Since he has found that these languages share no linguistic innovations to the exclusion of all other Oceanic languages, he has proposed that they must have "all originated from the same ancestral linkage, which was apparently located in or near the centre of dispersal around the Vitiaz Strait" (Ross 1989:146–147).

The Oceanic-speaking communities on the Sepik coast where the Field Museum is working have been assigned by Ross to the *Schouten* chain (1991), a closely related set of languages distributed between Manam island and Medebur village southeast of the Sepik-Ramu delta and Serra village west of the town of Aitape. Ross argues that all of these languages are descended from a single earlier language, *Proto-Schouten.*

Ross has shown convincingly that the twelve languages in the Schouten chain differ among themselves in a number of ways, both phonological and morphosyntactic (1991: tables 1–2). He considers the Schouten language spoken on Manam island to be the most "conservative" of them all, that is, this language is most like what he has reconstructed as Proto-Schouten. Interestingly, the number of linguistic innovations exhibited by the rest of the Schouten languages increases as you travel west farther and farther from Manam (Ross 1991:438). Ross has argued that this clinal pattern indicates that Proto-Schouten must have spread westward initially as a chain of dialects from (what he believes was) the homeland of proto-Oceanic in the New Britain/Vitiaz Strait area.

Assessment. Ross has found this cline perplexing, and he has offered a theory to explain it that we think illustrates both the strengths and weaknesses of innovation-linked subgrouping.

3.1 There is circularity in his observation that the Schouten language spoken on Manam is "the most conservative" in the chain. This designation means that Manam most closely resembles the other modern Oceanic languages in the North New Guinea cluster used to define the Schouten languages in the first place as a minimal group of languages sharing innovations in common.

3.2 There are well-established ways of explaining why innovations in a group of languages may form geographic patterns. Perhaps the best known explanation is the premise underlying the wave model: "namely that if speakers of related communalects are in contact with each other, it is to be expected that an innovation occur[r]ing in one communalect will diffuse to its neighbours" (Ross 1991:442). Since it is well-known that trade and travel are prominent features of life on the Sepik coast of New Guinea (Welsch and Terrell 1998)—and probably have been for millennia—there is good reason to think that the Schouten languages ought to fit wave models and other ways of modeling speech-community interaction (Bailey 1973; Bloomfield 1933; Hock 1986:444–456; Holmes 1992:218–224; Romaine 1982:252–273).

3.3 Ross, however, rejects the relevance of wave models to the Schouten chain on the basis of an elementary computer simulation showing how (in an idealized case) innovations arising within a chain of twelve language communities (communalects) will lead to a pattern of divergence unlike the clinal pattern actually observed for the twelve Schouten languages. Specifically, his simulation shows that "the communalects at the two ends of the [simulated] chain are least likely to undergo innovations (because each has only one neighbour from which it can receive a diffused innovation) and that the communalects in the middle of the chain have the greatest probability of undergoing innovations" (Ross 1991:443). In short, he says, communities at both ends of the chain ought to be—other things being equal—the most conservative (unlike the Schouten chain), while those in the middle ought to be the most innovative.

3.4 These model-generated expectations, however, are realistic only if we accept that the twelve language communities being simulated comprise a closed system, and distance has no effect on how widely an innovation arising at random in any one of the twelve model communities will be adopted by others in this closed system. Since there is ample reason to think people on the coast have long been trading and communicating with one another at least as far as the Bismarck Archipelago, there is little reason to model the Schouten languages as a closed system or to think that isolation-by-distance (which typically leads to clinal patterns of variation) has had no impact on these speech communities.

3.5 Ross has argued, nonetheless, that the clinal pattern of innovations observed among the Schouten languages not only shows that ancient Oceanic speakers moved east to west along the coast from the direction of the Vitiaz Strait, but also that each of the modern Oceanic-speaking communities on the coast was established in prehistoric

> times more or less where it is located today, one community after another in a step-by-step fashion (1991:446)—and additionally, each subsequently established settlement then became the ancestral homeland of all those established yet farther west (p. 445). Today, however, as we have already noted, all of these communities are each other's neighbors and friends. We know that people and entire communities there move around from place to place. In truth, it is anyone's guess where the first Oceanic settlements on the coast were located. There is little reason, therefore, to think that the present clinal patterning of innovations exhibited by the Schouten languages still maps the ancient steps and stopping places of the first Oceanic speakers on this coast.

Conclusion 3—About Interaction. We concur with Ross that the Schouten languages are a small-scale example of the conundrum of language variation in Melanesia.[9] What is it about these speech communities in northern New Guinea that has given them the linguistic appearance of not speaking with their neighbors despite our knowledge that they are closely tied to one another by culturally structured and possibly quite ancient relationships of friendship, marriage, commerce, and shared social responsibility? Whatever the answer to this conundrum (see Terrell 2001a), we conclude that innovation-linked subgrouping contributes reticulate taxonomic units that may exhibit the properties of both a language and a language family.[10]

Consequently, both the taxonomic and historical status of such entities or analytical units should be seen as unstable. "[T]here is no way of knowing whether an innovation shared by all member languages of the linkage was present in the proto language or has arisen since differentiation and subsequently spread through the linkage. . . . [T]here is no criterion by which to decide which stage of development the term 'proto language' should be applied to . . . [and] if 'proto language' refers to a set of already differentiated communalects, then a unitary proto language cannot sensibly be reconstructed" (Ross 1988:8). As a result, how innovation-linked taxonomic units are to be interpreted historically is acutely dependent on ancillary (nonlinguistic) ad hoc arguments (e.g., his interpretation of Oceanic prehistory on New Ireland; see Ross 1997:246).

4. Ross's Subgrouping Hypothesis: Centers of Diversity

Ross and others who locate the ancient proto-Oceanic homeland in the area of New Britain employ a long-standing rule of thumb that biologists also sometimes use, that "the area of a phylum which shows the greatest [cladistic] diversity is likely to be its homeland" (Ross 1997:255). Within the Oce-

anic subgroup, the primary split appears to fall between the languages of the Admiralties and an innovation-defined group that includes everything else (Blust 1998; Pawley and Ross 1995). This split could argue for an initial dispersal somewhere in the neighborhood of the Admiralties. Similarly, within Austronesian as a whole, the primary split appears to fall between the languages of Formosa, on the one hand, and the innovation-defined Malayo-Polynesian group that includes all Austronesian languages outside Formosa (Blust 1984–1985, 1999; Ross 1997; Tryon 1995). This split has often been used to argue for an initial Austronesian dispersal out into the Pacific from somewhere in the neighborhood of Taiwan.

Ross (1988, 1989, 1991) and Pawley and Ross invoke similar arguments to locate the proto-Oceanic homeland "in the Bismarck Archipelago, where several fairly well-established high-order subgroups meet" (Pawley and Ross 1995:58).[11] These subgroups include the comparatively isolated, innovation-defined Admiralties group and the much larger, more tenuous, innovation-linked Western Oceanic group, which is comprised of the three innovation-linked North New Guinea, Meso-Melanesian, and Papuan Tip "clusters" (see Figure 1, and Ross 1988:382–392), all of which have developed in areas with long histories of human interaction. Such an inference, however, is questionable on both general theoretical and location-specific grounds.

General Theoretical Assessment. Biogeographers studying the distributions of plants and animals have repeatedly tried to advance simple rules for determining the center of origin for any given taxon. Some have said the center of origin should be located where the greatest number of species in the taxon reside. Others have favored looking for where the most derived forms occur. Still others have insisted that the center of origin must be where the most primitive forms are found. Unfortunately, none of these criteria may be correct in any particular case, for the distribution of organisms depends in part on how they speciate, disperse, and interact with their biotic and abiotic environments (Brown and Lomolino 1998:346).

Consequently, scientists studying species diversity normally insist that any rule of thumb is only that and little more. No single criterion should be trusted to tell us the place of origin of a group of historically related species. As Barry Cox and Peter Moore explain in their now classic textbook on biogeography:

> At one time, some biogeographers believed that the area in which a group was represented by the greatest number of species was likely also to be the area from which the group dispersed. This hypothesis, however, assumes that new species will appear at a constant rate, whatever the environmental conditions, and that the presence of a

> large number of species in a particular area therefore indicates that the group has existed for a long time in that area. In fact, of course, the rate of speciation depends mainly upon ecological opportunity. (1980:111)

While here Cox and Moore are talking about numbers of species, and linguists do not normally talk about "ecological opportunity," linguists generally agree that languages do not all change at the same constant, uniform rate, and even if that were so, change and diversification are not two different words for the same phenomenon. However fast, slow, or irregularly any given language changes, few scholars would seriously maintain that change alone leads to language differentiation. Something else is needed—classically, something that puts people out of touch with one another (Swadesh 1971:8–42). Perhaps, therefore, the word "opportunity" does not apply, but the phrase "the ecology of language" may not be a bad way of talking about the variables that contribute to dialectal differentiation and language diversification (Mühlhäusler 1996)—although most linguists may prefer to use a term that sounds more familiar to them, the word "sociolinguistics" (Coupland and Jaworski 1997; Holmes 1992).

Location-Specific Assessment. In a provocative pair of recent papers, Blust has begun to explore a factor that is as important as it is neglected by those who seek to locate original homelands, namely, the possibility of extinction at the source (1998, 1999). At the Eighth International Conference on Austronesian Linguistics in December 1997, Blust presented a keynote address (published in 1999) in which he examined, inter alia, "the relationship between the linguistic and archaeological evidence with regard to the Austronesian homeland" (Ross 2000:385). Blust notes that, while the surviving linguistic evidence points to Taiwan as the Proto Austronesian homeland, it is very likely that "people of closely similar language and culture were found at the same time in coastal regions of southern China" but that the latter "have been progressively extinguished by the inexorable southward expansion of the Chinese" (quoted in Ross 2000:386).

Similarly, Blust notes that the primary split among Oceanic languages is between those of the Admiralties and the rest (1998). He calls the combination of the two groups "Broad Oceanic" (BOC), reserving "Oceanic" (OC) for the innovation-defined group outside the Admiralties.[12] Since the immediate ancestor of Broad Oceanic, Proto–South Halmahera-West New Guinea, is thought to have been located where its name suggests, the assumption seems logical that Broad Oceanic at one time ranged from the Sarmi coast in Papua (Irian Jaya) all along the north coast of New Guinea to New Britain and into the Admiralties. "But the recalcitrant linguistic fact that

remains is that all OC languages from the Sarmi Coast to Polynesia appear to form a subgroup as against the Broad Oceanic languages of the Admiralties. This observation suggests that the linguistic history of AN [Austronesian] speakers in Western Melanesia must have included episodes of extinction as well as episodes of expansion" (Blust 1998:186).

Blust therefore suggests a revised interpretation of the available evidence that spreads the "homeland" over a much broader area.

> Speakers of PBOC [proto–Broad Oceanic] settled the north coast of New Guinea and the Bismarck Archipelago as far as the Admiralties. . . . They had pottery . . . but lacked the distinctive Lapita design elements. The characteristic traits of Lapita were acquired instead by speakers of POC [proto–Oceanic], a community that had undergone certain linguistic and cultural innovations while in contact with Papuan-speaking populations along the north coast of New Guinea and/or in the larger islands of the Bismarck archipelago. The rest is a story of expansion leading to extinction: as POC speakers expanded through Western Melanesia, they replaced the remaining BOC populations everywhere except in the isolated Admiralties group, carrying Lapita with them. (Blust 1998:187)

We present Blust's hypothesis here not so much to endorse it as an alternative to Ross's argument but as an illustration of how ambiguous the evidence for a particular proto-Oceanic homeland becomes once one begins to factor in other possibilities such as extinction at the source.

Conclusion 4—About Centers of Diversity. When there are fields of expertise such as anthropology, dialectology, and sociolinguistics to be drawn on for help, it is difficult to accept statements about ancient human diversity and prehistory that seek to calculate probable homelands on the basis of anachronistic evidence from the modern era combined with simplifying assumptions about single migrations, long-standing sedentary settlements, divergence in isolation, and language preservation. Such determinations fail to take into account extinctions, mobility, enduring social contact, and a host of ecological factors. For instance, just during the past decade, communities along the north coast of New Guinea and in New Britain have experienced frequent earthquakes, prolonged drought, a devastating volcanic eruption, and a recent tsunami that utterly destroyed several coastal villages. Ross's relaxation of subgrouping criteria in this area was not designed so much to take these factors into account as to allow weaker evidence to support traditional branching-migration models. A succession of his works (Ross 1988,

1991, 1997) have maintained assumptions about continuous sedentary settlement and language preservation within those communities that we find strongly questionable.

Alternative Hypothesis

Our purpose here is not to present a "better hypothesis" about where the supposed proto-Oceanic homeland was *really* located. Instead, we suggest that the broad groupings that Ross has identified can be better accounted for using reticulate social-network models rather than branching-migration models of historical change. In our view, innovations shared between two or more socially and geographically linked communities are more likely to count as evidence of diffusion through contact than as evidence that they each participated in a shared migration history in the distant past. As Ross has noted (1997:215), Lesley Milroy (1987) has outlined a social-network model of language change that we think is much more directly applicable to Melanesian communities than isolation-based models. This model has been further developed and applied to historical research by James Milroy (1992). Based primarily on their sociolinguistics research on interaction within and across conflicting but interdependent communities in Belfast, Lesley Milroy suggests (following Granovetter 1973) that strong ties within communities inhibit change, while "weak ties *between* groups regularly provide bridges through which information and influence are diffused" (1987:197–200; emphasis in the original).

Although the Milroys developed their model to account for language change in large urban settings, the same model can yield interesting results when applied to the small, fluid, and diverse linguistic communities so common in Melanesia, as Ross agrees (1997:217). A social-network model would predict that larger linguistic communities in which internal ties are stronger than external ties would be more conservative, while smaller linguistic communities with fragile internal ties that must depend on a diverse network of external ties would be less resistant to change (see Hill 2001). This offers a different explanation for why a fairly large, relatively self-contained community like Manam might be more linguistically conservative than its smaller, more externally dependent neighbors westward in the Schouten chain. The same explanation has been offered for the conservatism of Icelandic relative to Danish or English (Milroy 1993:227). J. Milroy sees weak external ties as "the normal channel for the diffusion of innovations" (1992:189). He focuses less on the role of prestigious innovators at the center of a particular network and more on the role of early adopters of external models who occupy peripheral areas between overlapping social networks.

Another major advantage of social-network models is that they assume that linguistic contact rather than isolation is the norm, and "that linguistic change is one of the things that is *negotiated* by speakers in the course of speech-exchanges" (Milroy 1993:217; emphasis in the original). In place of random mutation or abstract structural pressures, such models explain change in terms of "strong/weak ties, the identity function of linguistic variation, and models of linguistic accommodation and politeness" (Milroy 1992:192). These factors seem much more applicable to real communities throughout Oceania than do factors such as isolation and random mutation.

Conclusions

We argue here that the innovation-linked groupings Ross has proposed within Oceanic are not only polythetic sets (Clarke 1978:36–37), but are also interactive subsets. Since relationships within and between taxonomic units thus defined are not necessarily ancestor-descendant relationships (Grace 1986; Rieppel 1980), they should be treated as cladistic only with great caution. We do not contest that there is observable diversity among the Oceanic languages spoken today on New Britain and elsewhere in the Bismarck Archipelago (as there also is elsewhere in Melanesia). We are skeptical, however, that any historical inferences based on what Ross (1989:140, 1997:255) describes as the long-standing rule of thumb among linguists that the "center of greatest diversity" within a language grouping is also its probable homeland are compelling when the proposed taxonomic units cannot be more rigorously defined and contrasted—and there is little reason to argue that the diversity observed solely reflects the passage of time.

In other words, changing the rules for determining linguistic subgroups as Ross has done compromises whether the units thus delimited can be read as if they expressed family-tree relationships. We think it is more appropriate, therefore, to label innovation-linked taxonomic units in comparative linguistics as interaction-defined subsets[13] and treat such analytical units as areal divisions somewhat along the lines of George Grace's noncladistic "Waveland" model (1962).

We have argued against models of language change in Melanesia based on the formula *time + isolation + random mutation = divergence.* Instead, we favor social-network models of language change with opposite assumptions: *time + contact + targeted change = convergence.* If the convergence effects of geography increase with time, then geographically contiguous subgroups (especially innovation-linked subgroups) in long-settled areas cannot be explained in terms of isolation and random mutation.

We think Ross's western Melanesian subgroups align too neatly with geog-

raphy. They are all contiguous, with none of the countergeographical internal subgrouping that may occur in the younger, innovation-defined, Polynesian or Nuclear Micronesian families (see Rehg 1995). Innovations of a different kind have had far more time to spread across the long-standing, localized, and geographically contiguous social networks of Melanesia, so that any geographical surprises have long since been obliterated (just as they have in Fiji; see Geraghty 1983; Hunt 1987). Bradshaw (1997) and Lynch (1981) have suggested ways in which convergence can still account for much of the greater linguistic diversity in Melanesia. Similar innovation-linked groupings may also confound historical interpretation of the family trees constructed among Polynesian or Nuclear Micronesian languages.

It has been known for several decades that the number of reported languages spoken on any given island in the southwest Pacific is positively correlated with the size of the island in question (Terrell 1974, 1986). Evidently, language in this part of the world has often reached an equilibrium where divergence is balanced by convergence. As noted earlier, divergence leading to mutually unintelligible speech traditions (different "languages") can clearly develop even when communities are not isolated from one another.[14] More research must be done to tease apart the social and situational circumstances leading to such patterned linguistic equilibrium.

Janet Holmes notes that to understand "why we don't all speak the same way, and why we don't all speak in the same way all of the time," scholars first need answers to four basic questions (1992:12): (1) Who are the participants? (i.e., who is speaking and who are they speaking to?); (2) what is the setting or social context of interaction? (where are they speaking?); (3) what is the topic? (what is being talked about?); and (4) what is the function? (why are they speaking?). The sociolinguistic concept of "domains of language use" popularized by Joshua Fishman can also be helpful (1972:43–54). Briefly described, "a domain involves typical interactions between typical participants in typical settings" (Holmes 1992:24).

Terrell recently suggested that scholars interested in what has been routinely labeled "language contact" (Thomason and Kaufman 1988) in New Guinea probably need to study at least these key dimensions of local language learning and use: (1) language acquisition during early childhood, (2) language use later in life, and (3) communicative competence, that is, how well people need to communicate with other people when they are away from home or when people are visiting from elsewhere (Terrell 2001a).

If linguistic diversity in western Melanesia reflects language change in the context of interaction through social networks, then what conclusions can we draw about Pacific prehistory? It should be obvious that we do not think that an Oceanic "homeland" can be securely or discretely located somewhere

on New Britain or even in the Bismarcks. For the reasons we have described here, we doubt that it will ever be possible to use linguistic evidence to locate such a homeland. However, we do think several hypotheses may be worth exploring:

1. We suspect that languages ancestral to those now identified as Austronesian were spoken in Oceania well before the appearance of Lapita pottery in the Bismarcks (as Blust 1998 also argues), although the evidence for saying so is mostly circumstantial. Experts do not agree on the magnitude of the eustatic downdraw of sea level during the last Ice Age, but estimates of 120 to 130 meters are common (Dickinson 1995:2). Whatever the exact figure, much of the northern shoreline of New Guinea, which is the second largest island in the world and is 2,400 kilometers (1,500 miles) long, was probably only sparsely inhabited during the last Ice Age. At that time, there was little suitable land for settlement on that side of the island—and, as a consequence, the northern shoreline may have been then more a barrier than a landbridge between Southeast Asia and the Pacific (Terrell 2002). Around 6,000 years ago, however, the world's sea levels had risen to near their current highstand. Experts are only beginning to document the impact that this new equilibrium may have had on coastal ecosystems and human settlement in the Pacific. Along the northern shores of New Guinea—a region viewed by some as strategic for understanding prehistoric Southeast Asian–Melanesian connections (Kirch 1997:55; Spriggs 1997:98)—newly stabilized coastal lagoons likely reached levels of natural resource productivity great enough to support significant local human population growth fueled mostly but perhaps not entirely by the harvest of wild foods (notably fish, shellfish, nuts, and edible starch from the pith of the sago palm) (Terrell 2002). If so, perhaps languages ancestral to those now called Oceanic may have come into wider use as regional population growth founded on a wide spectrum of subsistence resources, some wild and others carefully managed, began to transform the give-and-take between people in different places in this long-inhabited part of the world (Terrell and Welsch 1997).
2. Even if this tentative reconstruction of Holocene times in the southwestern Pacific should prove to be incorrect, we think it likely that proto-Oceanic was widely spoken—at least in its final stages of development, as Pawley and Green once wrote (1984)—along the chain of intervisible islands running from New Guinea, New Britain, and New Ireland in the northwest to Malaita and San Cristobal in the southeast.

3. If so, then the seemingly rapid spread of Lapita pottery (and perhaps other associated social and material traits) from the Bismarck Archipelago to Vanuatu and New Caledonia (and ultimately to Fiji and western parts of Polynesia around 3,000 years ago) may have been facilitated—at least as far as the southeast Solomons—by already long-established social networks among Austronesian- and non–Austronesian-speaking communities in island Melanesia.

Broader Implications

The observations we have made here also have broader implications. Bellwood (1996) and others have suggested that the patterning of languages and cultures observable on continental and millennial scales in the linguistic and archaeological records is so large-scale that such patterning cannot be explained—and may even be overlooked—by those who like to build their historical explanations step-by-step out of ordinary, everyday processes such as borrowing, trade, competition, recruitment, adoption, marriage, moving around, and inventing new ways to meet life's challenges. Most examples of large-scale patterning that Bellwood has offered come from linguistics—for example, Austronesian, Indo-European, Sino-Tibetan, and Uto-Aztecan. Recognition of these higher-level language categories, however, is ex post facto, as is the ordering of the subfamilies, languages, dialects, and the like seen as their subcomponents (see Simpson 1953:324, 376). Therefore, Bellwood's observation that these language families are geographically widespread and are deeply subdivided, or differentiated, is not in itself evidence that the evolution of such large-scale patterns of linguistic diversity calls for similarly large-scale explanations. As we have argued here, relationships among the Oceanic languages of western Melanesia are more reticulate than phylogenetic (see Terrell 2001b). It is doubtful, therefore, that Bellwood's "phylogenetic approach" can be used in this region with much success.

As Whaley recently observed, whatever the merits of a phylogenetic (that is, cladistic) approach, it must be stressed that the claims made by those advocating such an approach in anthropology and archaeology usually apply only at a remarkably general level.

> A multiplicity of details, many of which do not align with the larger picture, arises at a finer level of investigation. These details also require some account if we are to have any confidence in our claims about the compositions of macrofamilies of languages, population expansions, and the transmission of material culture in prehistory. Of course, one may treat such details as theoretical noise

> that can safely be ignored at macrolevel views of prehistory, but another possibility is that these details are in fact the more telling feature of the language family, regional population, or culture complex being investigated. (Whaley 2001:106)

Furthermore, as Pawley and Ross have pointed out, linguistic subgrouping on its own even under ideal circumstances only leads to relative chronology: "[T]o give absolute dates to prehistoric linguistic events, we need to be able to relate them to archaeological events" (1995:43). Unfortunately, how to achieve this added step is problematic. While in the case of Lapita and Austronesian in the farther reaches of Oceania—or at least in Fiji–West Polynesia—archaeology and language would appear to be in step with one another, the correlation between the two in the most recently settled parts of the Pacific can only be used to estimate Austronesian's *minimum* age as a language family. The link between language and culture in Polynesia tells us nothing about the deeper chronology of Austronesian in the older settled parts of the southwestern Pacific.

NOTES

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1. For instance, we would anticipate that if the first Austronesian speakers to reach the Bismarck Archipelago comprised a fairly homogeneous population—biologically, culturally, and linguistically—the most likely reason would have been that they were a small "founder" group, that is, a kin-biased "population sample" drawn from a heterogeneous source region (probably located somewhere in the island world of western New Guinea and the Wallacean region of southeast Asia; see Terrell 2002). In other words, we think there is little reason to assume that their "creolization" began only after their arrival in the Bismarcks.

2. As Ross acknowledges: "A proto language is usually reconstructed only where its descendant languages all share a number of innovations: it is more likely that a collection of shared innovations reflects inheritance from a unitary proto language then [sic] that these innovations have spread through a network after differentiation" (1988:8–9).

3. As Ross remarks (1991:433), these taxonomic units are equivalent to what Isidore Dyen (1965) has called *minimal groups* in the sense that languages within such a group are seen as more closely related to each other than to any language outside the group thus recognized.

4. It should be noted that Ross acknowledges that the innovation-linked classificatory units he has proposed are not necessarily first-order Oceanic subgroups as traditionally recognized and defined (1989:137).

5. As Pawley and Ross recount, "subgrouping under the Comparative Method can be applied recursively to identify subgroups within subgroups, that is, to construct what is conventionally called the 'family tree' of a set of genetically [i.e., historically] related languages" (1995:42).

6. The same holds true in biological cladistics where similar assumptions and procedures are used, although biologists are generally more stringent in how they recognize ancestor-descendant relationships (see Hennig 1979; Mayr 1981; Platnick and Cameron 1977; Rieppel 1980; Sokal 1974).

7. In such cases, as Pawley and Ross have recounted, the "innovations form an overlapping pattern, such that, for example, languages A, B and C reflect one bunch of innovations, languages C, D, and E another bunch, languages D, E, F, and G yet another, and languages G and H still a different bunch of innovations" (1995:50).

8. Ross glosses what he calls *lectal differentiation* (i.e., dialectal differentiation) as "the progressive break-up of a lectal linkage to form a group of separate languages." Since there is no objective way to discriminate between "a language" and "a dialect," he uses the noun "lect" and the adjective "lectal" in reference to both logical types (Ross 1997:212; see also Sebba 1997).

9. Our comments on Ross's model of language diversification mirror in many respects those that Bradshaw has already made about languages in the Huon Gulf region (1997, 2001).

10. Another standard way of describing innovation-linked subsets is to say that they are polythetic sets that similarly require many properties (traits) be used to classify entities (Sokal 1974).

11. If Lapita pottery and early Oceanic correlate in some way, it could be argued that Ross's "North New Guinea cluster" is far too young to be taken as evidence supporting this observation, since the earliest securely attested pottery-making traditions in northern New Guinea and the Vitiaz Strait—which are now seen as being immediately derived from the Lapita ceramic tradition—date back only to around 1,500–2,000 years ago (Lilley n.d.; Terrell and Welsch 1997). On other archaeological grounds (McEldowney and Ballard 1991; Spriggs 1997:111–113; Wahome 1997), the Admiralties cluster might also be removed, leaving only the current geographic distributions of the Meso-Melanesian cluster and the "St. Mattias group" as conjunctive evidence supporting a "Bismarcks homeland" for proto-Oceanic. At very least, therefore, Pawley and Ross's 1995 statement quoted in the text should be amended to read: ". . . the proto-Oceanic (POC) homeland in the Bismarck Archipelago, where *two* [not *several*] fairly well-established high-order subgroups meet."

12. There are obvious parallels here with Blust's revival of the older term "Malayo-Polynesian" for all Austronesian languages external to Formosa. However, at least according to Blust, the stay-at-home Admiralties languages appear to constitute an innovation-defined subgroup, while the Formosan languages do not (1998, 1999). Both Malayo-Polynesian and Oceanic appear to constitute innovation-defined subgroups.

13. If we were in favor of neologisms, we might be tempted to call Ross's Oceanic divisions *metalanguages* (see above, sections 1.2 and 1.5).

14. In view of the close conceptual parallels between modern biological cladistics and the classical techniques and assumptions of the comparative method of historical linguistics, it is worth noting in this context that the role of sympatric speciation—speciation occurring within a single geographic area where individuals have the opportunity to interbreed—is being increasingly acknowledged today in evolutionary biology due to new models substantiating its plausibility and new evidence showing that the conditions specified by these models are found in nature (Via 2001).

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RESEARCH NOTES

MARIJUANA USE AMONG HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENTS IN GUAM

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This study aimed to provide an estimate of the prevalence of marijuana use among Guam's high-school youth and to explore the potential protective and risk factors associated with its use. Using a probability sample (n = 589), our findings revealed that 51 percent of respondents said that they had used marijuana at least once during their life. Males reported using marijuana more frequently than did female respondents. Higher grades and being female were each associated with significantly lower levels of marijuana use. Contrary to predictions, students that discussed their problems and worries with adults, and students that participated in high-school extracurricular activities, were more likely to have used marijuana. However, students who were members of intact families that discussed their worries and problems with adults were significantly less likely than others to say they used marijuana.

THIS BRIEF STUDY extends earlier research focusing on the use of marijuana in Guam (Pinhey 1997a, 1997b). Previous analyses suggest that between 8 and 12 percent of Guam's adult population (i.e., persons 18 years of age and older) have used marijuana and that younger persons are more likely than older individuals are to have ever used the substance (Pinhey 1997a:117). Indeed, Pinhey estimated that the percentage of persons in Guam who had ever used marijuana was about 29 percent for those between the ages of 18 and 25 years, about 13 percent for persons between the ages of 26 and 35 years, and only about 5 percent for persons over age 35 (ibid.). An evaluation of the literature on substance use indicates that estimates of marijuana use among Guam's youth are virtually nonexistent (see ibid.: 117–118 for a review). Thus, the goals of the present study were to (1) estimate the prevalence of marijuana use among Guam's youth and (2) explore the potential risk and protective factors that may be associated with marijuana use among Guam's youth. The study begins with a brief review of the literature, followed by a description of our sampling techniques, measures, and analytical strategy, and continues with a description of our findings. Finally, we discuss the results of the study as they may pertain to future research and theory.[1]

Previous Research

Marijuana is the world's most extensively used illegal substance, and about one in four Americans report that they have tried it (National Institute on Drug Abuse 1990; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1988). Marijuana use is most frequent among individuals between 18 and 25 years of age, and more prevalent among males than among females (National Institute on Drug Abuse 1990; Robbins 1989; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1988). Recent studies of Guam's adult population suggest that the use of marijuana is positively associated with higher levels of psychological distress (see Pinhey 1997a) and with religious beliefs associated with "sinful behavior" (see Pinhey 1997b).

Some researchers argue that Peace Corps volunteers introduced marijuana to the western Pacific (Lindstrom 1987). Others note that substance abuse in Micronesia grew as transportation networks improved, tourism increased, and more islanders traveled to other countries, thus gaining exposure to different lifestyles and substances (for example, Marshall, Sexton, and Insko 1994:23). Following a decade-long decline (Bachman et al. 1988), rates of adolescent marijuana use in the mainland United States have risen sharply. Indeed, more than 41 percent of high-school seniors recently reported having tried marijuana or hashish, the highest rate since 1989 (Leland 1996).

There is general agreement that the effects of marijuana are not partic-

ularly dramatic: an increase in heart rate, a reddening of the eyes, a dryness in the mouth, and a disruption of short-term memory. Although the health hazards of marijuana use continue to be the subject of an emotional debate, marijuana is clearly less dangerous than alcohol, tobacco, cocaine, and most other widely used recreational drugs (Ray 1983). However, recent studies suggest that marijuana use among adolescents may contribute to subsequent psychological impairments (Hansell and White 1991), especially among those individuals characterized as being "highly introspective" (see Zablocki et al. 1991). Finally, research conducted in the mainland United States indicates that Asian- and Pacific Islander–Americans are significantly less likely than other ethnic subpopulations to abuse pharmacologically active substances (Zane and Kim 1994). Research describing marijuana use among Guam's extensive Asian-Pacific high-school student population, however, is nonexistent.

Research Methods

This study's data derive from a survey of high-school students conducted in Guam during the months of April and May 1999. We used random sampling techniques to select nine high schools, which included five public and four private schools. For the total number of sampled schools we calculated the proportionate percentage of students at each grade level and then randomly selected clusters of classes within each individual school at each grade level in proportion to the total. We completed 589 usable interviews. The sampled high schools enrolled 9,208 students, which is 86 percent of the total number of students currently attending high schools in Guam. Preliminary analyses indicated that the sample approximates the distribution of students in Guam's high schools by grade level and gender.

We assessed marijuana use with a single item asking students to estimate the number of times during their life that they had ever used marijuana. Codes and response categories for this item were (0) never, (1) 1 or 2 times, (2) 3 to 9 times, (3) 10 to 19 times, (4) 20 to 39 times, (5) 40 to 99 times, and (6) 100 or more times. This measure was then recoded into two separate items, reflecting (1) the midpoints of each category described above (never used marijuana = 0; 100 or more times = 100)[2] and (2) as a binary item reflecting those students that had *ever* used marijuana (coded 1) and those students that had *never* used marijuana (coded 0).

We hypothesized that students who were members of intact families and who frequently discussed their problems with adults would be less likely than other students to say that they had ever used marijuana. Indeed, previous research indicates that Guam's high-school students meeting those

criteria are less likely to consume alcohol (Pinhey et al. 1999). The literature also reveals that students who participate in extracurricular activities are less likely to participate in health-compromising behaviors such as physical fights (Pinhey, Workman, and Perez 2000). Involvement in extracurricular activities obligates students to participate in team practices, band rehearsals, or student-government meetings, thus placing various constraints on their behavior. These constraints include the threat of dismissal from school or the denial of participation in favored extracurricular activities because of taking part in behaviors such as smoking or using alcohol or marijuana. As well, participation in extracurricular activities is likely to place students in direct contact with positive adult role models (coaches, teachers, club sponsors). Thus, our analyses control for the effects of family intactness, frequency of discussion of "problems or worries" with adults, and participation in high-school extracurricular activities.

Our measure of family intactness draws from a single item asking respondents whom they lived with most or all of the time (see Fitzpatrick 1997 for review of this measure). Response categories included (1) both parents, (2) one parent only, (3) a biological parent and a stepparent, (4) grandparents, (5) other extended family members, (6) unrelated persons, and (7) others. The variable was recoded into four categories that included does not live with parents (coded 0), lives with one parent only (coded 1), lives with one biological parent and a stepparent (coded 2), and lives with both biological parents (coded 3). Seven percent of respondents indicated that they did not live with their parents, 20 percent said they lived with one parent, 8.8 percent said they lived with a biological parent and a stepparent, and 64.1 percent indicated that they lived with both of their biological parents.

Our measure of frequency of discussing problems and worries with adults was a single item that asked respondents, "How frequently do you talk about your problems or worries with an adult, such as a parent, relative, teacher, or coach?" Response codes and categories included: (0) never, (1) discuss problems and worries only with other kids, (2) discuss problems and worries with adults rarely, (3) discuss problems and worries with adults sometimes, (4) discuss problems with adults almost always. Fully 22.8 percent of students said they never talked with adults about their worries or problems, and 15.6 percent of students said they always discussed problems and worries with adults.

We measured participation in extracurricular activities using six binary items (participation = 1, nonparticipation = 0) that form a summated scale. The scale items replicate those used in the High School and Beyond study (for a review of this measure, see National Center for Educational Statistics 1983; Glanville 1999; McNeal 1999). Students were asked if they had ever participated in any of the following activities during the year previous to the

survey: (1) worked on the school newspaper or yearbook, (2) participated in student government, (3) were members of the school band or orchestra, (4) were members of school athletic teams, (5) were members of school clubs, and (6) participated in theater or drama productions. The scale ranges from 0 to 6 and has a mean of 1.61 with a standard deviation of 1.40 activities. High values on this scale indicate greater participation in extracurricular activities.

Our ordinary least squares (OLS) and logistic multiple regression models also control for the effects of student grades (see Fitzpatrick 1997 for review of this measure), which is a self-reported single item asking respondents, "What grades do you typically earn?" Response codes and categories were: (1) D's and F's, (2) C's and D's, (3) C's, (4) B's and C's, (5) B's, (6) A's and B's, (7) A's. The modal category of this item was A's and B's (27.8 percent). Fully 22.3 percent of respondents said they typically received B and C grades, 14.9 percent of students indicated they received C's and D's, and 4 percent said they received D's and F's.

Ethnicity is self-reported. Binary ethnic categories include Chamorro, Filipino, Asian (Chinese, Japanese, Korean), Micronesian (Chuukese, Yapese, Kosraean, Pohnpeian, Palauan) and Caucasian respondents (the excluded comparison category in the regression models that follow). Additional variables used in the analysis include a binary measure of students' gender (female = 1, male = 0), and age (actual years). We begin the analysis with a discussion of our estimates of the prevalence of marijuana use among Guam's youth and then assess the effects of various risk and protective factors for self-reported lifetime use of marijuana.

Findings

As may be seen in Table 1, 51 percent of the total sample said that they had used marijuana at least once in their lifetime, and the mean average for lifetime marijuana use is 15.37 occasions for all respondents. We also replicate a common finding in the literature (National Institute on Drug Abuse 1990; Pinhey 1997a; Robbins 1989; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1988), which indicates that males are more likely than females to report ever using marijuana (58 percent and 44 percent respectively). Female students reported that they had used marijuana on 10.25 occasions during their lifetime whereas males indicated that they had used marijuana on 21.29 occasions throughout their life.

As previously noted, 51 percent of respondents reported ever having used marijuana. A 95 percent confidence interval (CI) was calculated to estimate the prevalence of marijuana use among Guam's youth (95% CI = 51 ± 4).

From these figures, one can roughly estimate that between 47 and 55 percent of Guam's high-school student population has used marijuana. In contrast to these findings for Guam, approximately 41 percent of mainland U.S. high-school seniors reported having tried marijuana or hashish (Leland 1996).

What are the risk and protective factors associated with marijuana use among Guam's youth? We use OLS multiple regression to explore the potential factors that may influence the use of marijuana among Guam's high-

TABLE 1. **Percentage Lifetime Marijuana Use and Mean Marijuana Use for Total Sample and by Gender for High-School Students in Guam**

	Total Sample	Female	Male
Percentage	51	44	58
Mean times used	15.37 (29.54)	10.25 (23.22)	21.29 (34.55)
N of cases	584	311	272

Note: Standard deviations in parentheses.

TABLE 2. **Unstandardized OLS Regression Coefficients and Standard Errors for the Regression of Lifetime Marijuana Use on Ethnicity, Gender, Age, Family Structure, Discussion with Adults, Participation in Extracurricular Activities, Self-Assessed Grades, and Interaction Effects (*N* = 556)**

	Additive Model		Interaction Model	
Variables	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*
Chamorro	−1.500	4.962	−1.516	4.958
Filipino	−12.174°	5.128	−12.125°	5.123
Asian	−12.695°	6.991	−12.010°	7.002
Micronesian	−20.460°°	6.992	−20.256°°	6.988
Female	−7.522°°	2.392	−7.524°°	2.390
Age	2.028°	.879	2.053°°	.878
Family	−.637	1.156	1.253	1.787
Discussion	1.170+	.854	3.593°	1.946
Extracurricular	1.750°	.838	1.805°	.838
Grades	−4.480°°°	.695	−4.528°°°	.695
Family × discussion	–	–	−1.061+	.766
Constant	10.735	–	6.149	–
R^2	.174	–	.177	–

+$p < .10$; °$p < .05$; °°$p < .01$; °°°$p < .001$ (one-tailed tests)

school students. As may be seen in Table 2 (equation 1, additive model), when contrasted with Caucasian respondents (the excluded comparison category), Filipino students (–12.174, $p < .05$), Asian students (–12.695, $p < .05$), and Micronesian students (–20.460, $p < .01$) were all significantly less likely to indicate that they used marijuana. Chamorro students were not statistically different in their use of marijuana when compared to Caucasian students ($B = -1.500$, not significant). Female students indicated that they used marijuana less frequently than males did ($B = -7.522$, $p < .01$), and students that reported earning higher grades were significantly less likely than others to indicate that they had used marijuana ($B = -4.480$, $p < .001$). Contrary to our predictions, students that said they frequently discussed their problems with adults ($B = 1.170$, $p < .10$) and students indicating that they participated in high-school extracurricular activities ($B = 1.750$, $p < .05$) were more likely to say that they had used marijuana. Older students ($B = 1.922$, $p < .05$) were also more likely than younger students were to be at risk for marijuana use.

Finally, we tested the hypothesis that students who are members of intact families and who discussed their problems with adults would be less likely than others to use marijuana by estimating the interaction effects of family

TABLE 3. **Logistic Regression Coefficients and Standard Errors for the Regression of Lifetime Marijuana Use on Ethnicity, Gender, Age, Family Structure, Discussion with Adults, Participation in Extracurricular Activities, Self-Assessed Grades, and Interaction Effects ($N = 556$)**

	Additive Model		Interaction Model	
Variables	*B*	*SE*	*B*	*SE*
Chamorro	.549+	.399	.551+	.401
Filipino	–.966°	.415	–.981°	.418
Asian	–.412	.557	–.299	.563
Micronesian	–1.372°	.594	–1.402°	.603
Female	–.436°	.201	–.431°	.202
Age	.103+	.075	.109+	.075
Family	.025	.097	.350°	.153
Discussion	.001	.072	.405°	.166
Extracurricular	.183°	.073	.201°°	.074
Grades	–.294°°°	.060	–.309°°°	.061
Family × discussion	–	–	–.179°°	.066
Constant	–.224	–	–1.015	–
R^2 (Cox and Snell)	.186	–	.197	–

+$p < .10$; °$p < .05$; °°$p < .01$; °°°$p < .001$ (one-tailed tests)

structure and the problem-discussion variable on marijuana use. As may be seen (Table 2: equation 2, interaction model), students who were members of intact families and who talked with adults about their problems and worries were significantly less likely than other students were to indicate that they used marijuana ($B = -1.061$, $p < .10$).

We next considered the possibility that our OLS regression analysis was flawed because the dependent variable was coded-at-midpoint (see Berry 1993). Thus, using a dependent binary variable reflecting those students that had *ever* used marijuana during their life (coded 1) and those that had *never* used marijuana during their life (coded 0), we replicated the analysis using logistic regression. The results of the logistic regression indicate negligible differences from the OLS regression analysis (see Table 3). In sum, it appears that older male students who participate in extracurricular activities are at greater risk for marijuana use than are other students. Chamorro and Caucasian students may also be at greater risk. Higher grades, however, appear to shield students from greater marijuana use.

Discussion and Conclusions

This brief investigation makes a modest contribution to the emerging literature on substance abuse in Guam by employing data from a sample of high-school students to estimate the prevalence of marijuana use among Guam's youth. We also explored the potential risk and protective factors that may be associated with marijuana use for this little-studied population. Our findings suggest that as many as 47 to 55 percent of Guam's high-school youth have used marijuana and that males are at greater risk than females to use marijuana. Contrary to our predictions, our findings revealed that students who said they talked about their problems and worries with adults and who participated in extracurricular activities were *more likely* than others were to say that they had frequently used marijuana. However, students that receive higher grades appear less likely than other students to indicate that they smoke marijuana. Our findings also suggest that there may be ethnic differences in marijuana use among Guam's high-school youth.

What are the implications of these findings for theory and future research? First, peer pressure may account for the positive relationship between participation in extracurricular activities and marijuana use (Aseltine 1995). For example, students that are organized around participation in various high-school extracurricular activities may have a greater influence on their peers than do their parents or other adults. Thus, peer pressure may also account for the positive relationship between discussing problems and worries with adults and marijuana use. However, students that belong to intact families

and who discuss their problems and worries with adults are less likely to use marijuana. This suggests that students that are integrated into intact families where discussions of problems and worries are encouraged may be less likely than others to be subject to the pressures of their peers. One implication of these findings is the potential reduction of illicit substance use among Guam's youth resulting from open family discussion of the dangers involved with using marijuana and other illicit substances.

The association of higher grades to significantly lower levels of marijuana use among Guam's high-school youth suggests that strong social integration into the school environment may shield students from violating various school norms, which would include using marijuana. However, higher levels of participation in extracurricular activities should also indicate greater integration into the school environment, but our findings suggest that integration into school systems through involvement in extracurricular activities actually increase marijuana use.

Why would Guam's high-school youth report greater marijuana use than other similarly aged populations? Our findings reveal that 47 to 55 percent of Guam's high school youth reported using marijuana at least once during their lives compared to 41 percent of U.S. mainland high-school students (Leland 1996). One possible explanation for this finding may be that marijuana use in Guam is relatively common. Indeed, earlier research drawing from anecdotal accounts and direct observation support the hypothesis that marijuana use in Guam is common (Pinhey 1997a:113). However, research describing the assessments of the attitudes and meanings that may be associated with the use of marijuana in Guam appear to be nonexistent.

Although our findings speak to important debates in the literature on adolescent substance abuse, our study has some limitations. First, since our measure of marijuana use is a recoded-to-midpoint scale that is essentially ordinal in nature, the results of our OLS regression analysis are vulnerable to ceiling effects due to top coding. As well, some of our independent variables are also ordinal measures. Marijuana use may be more effectively estimated if the metric of the dependent and independent variables are truly ratio in nature (see Elliot and Ageton 1980). Thus, while we believe our data generally reflect accurate statistical associations, readers may wish to treat our findings with some caution. Second, although our findings are broadly congruent with our expectations, some patterns did not reach statistical significance at conventional levels. The most obvious reason for this is the relatively small sample size. A larger sample of Guam's high-school students might yield more striking and robust results.

To date, the social patterning that contributes to the use of marijuana among Guam's youth has essentially been undocumented. One important

implication from our findings suggests, however, that parents should talk with their children about substance use, thus possibly reducing their consumption of marijuana and other illicit substances. Moreover, further explorations of the influence of variations in family and student organizational structure on the use of marijuana and other illicit substances by Guam's youth should be a priority for future research. Indeed, future researchers may wish to examine more thoroughly the acceptability and meaning of marijuana use in Guam.

NOTES

The data used for this study are from a project supported by Guam's Bureau of Planning with funds from the Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities Act, Grant No. S186A60121–96–A, U.S. Department of Education. We express our appreciation to Donna Lewis Pinhey and two anonymous referees for their helpful comments and suggestions on an earlier version of this article.

1. See Pinhey for a review and background on marijuana use among adults in Guam and the U.S. mainland (1997a, 1997b). See also Zane and Kim for an extensive and excellent review of substance abuse among Asian-Pacific Americans (1994). Marshall, Sexton, and Insko describe patterns of substance use among youths in Chuuk, including marijuana (1994).

2. Although coded-at-midpoint, our dependent variable is actually an ordinal measure. However, following Berry (1993), we argue that a common approach is to use ordinal dependents when the number of response categories are in the range of 5–7 and when responses are not highly concentrated in a small number of categories. Berry argues similarly for the use of ordinal independent variables (ibid.:47), noting that 5-point Likert scales (Likert 1932) in regression analyses are extremely common in the literature.

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REVIEWS

Mervyn McLean, *Weavers of Song: Polynesian Music and Dance.* Auckland: Auckland University Press, 1999. Pp. 556, illus., bib., index, CD. NZ$79.95 cloth.

Reviewed by Mary E. Lawson Burke, Framingham State College

THE TITLE of Mervyn McLean's book, *Weavers of Song: Polynesian Music and Dance,* alludes to a common Polynesian concept of song creation: melody and text are "woven" together to create musical expression. In much the same way, McLean has gathered and painstakingly combined material from hundreds of sources to create this ambitious book, which is sure to become the standard reference in this area. *Weavers of Song* is a beautifully presented text, its pages liberally sprinkled with photographs, drawings, and musical examples. An audio CD featuring forty-three tracks of excellent quality is a welcome inclusion; many are field recordings that are unavailable commercially.

In the introduction McLean states his book is intended to "encompass known information about music and dance throughout Polynesia" (p. vii). The impressive result attests to the author's familiarity with the literature gained from his more than thirty years of bibliographic research on Pacific music and dance, leading to such comprehensive works as *An Annotated Bibliography of Oceanic Music and Dance* (1995), and *Maori Music* (1996). Specialists and general readers alike will find much of value. Illustrations of instruments, dances, and performance contexts enliven the content, while the many musical examples offer further insight to the musically literate. Enhanced by endnotes, the scholarly writing is clear, accessible, and free of jargon—evidence of the thoughtful decision making that went into organiz-

ing the vast amount of material. Appendixes include a glossary of musical terms and a pronunciation guide to Polynesian languages.

Specifying at the outset that he did not intend this work to be theoretical in nature, McLean forgoes engaging contemporary ethnomusicological issues. He also excludes song text translation, analysis of dance movements, and consideration of contemporary "Pan-Pacific pop" as beyond the scope of the book. The exclusion of the popular acculturated musics is disappointing, since these genres are rapidly becoming important—and commercial—modes of expression for young people.

The book is divided into two sections: Book I, "Regional Music and Dance," which comprises about three-fourths of the text, and Book II, "Comparisons." Book I begins with an overview chapter on Polynesian geography, language, subsistence, material culture, social organization, religion, and theories of origins and migrations. The sixteen subsequent chapters systematically describe individual culture areas grouped into Central, Western, and Marginal Polynesia, based on information from historical accounts, published research, songbooks, dictionaries, and word lists. Each chapter briefly describes location and history and then focuses on musical instruments, dances, and song styles. The Western and Marginal Polynesia areas employ separate headings for composition, ownership, learning and instruction, and musical structure—although the material is often very brief. In the final chapter, "New Zealand," McLean presents a succinct overview and refers the reader to his *Maori Music,* widely regarded as the landmark work on the subject. Each chapter includes brief lists for further reading and recommended listening.

Uneven chapter lengths and lack of substantive material for some topics in some regions reflect McLean's observation that many gaps exist in the published research (p. vii), especially regarding contemporary practice. One exception to this is hymnody in the Society Islands, for which he offers a provocative discourse. Using missionary histories, hymn books, travel accounts, and the superb research of Amy Stillman (1991), McLean outlines the development of the complex polyphonic vocal styles known as *himene* and reinforces Stillman's theory that fuguing tunes played an important role.

Book II, "Comparisons," begins with the section "Traditional Music and Dance," an overview of affiliations among Polynesian performance styles divided into chapters "Musical Instruments," "Uses of Song and Dance," "Performance," "Composition," "Ownership," "Learning and Instruction," and "Music Structure." This final chapter contains detailed lists that compare scales (notes, pitch range, melodic intervals), cadence types, tempo, and types of polyphony, providing a good starting point for future comparative analyses.

In the second section, "The Impact of European Music," the author briefly describes early interactions with Europeans, eventually focusing on missionaries, including a concise discussion of Polynesian musical responses to the introduction of hymn singing. The section ends with overviews of musical acculturation and contemporary Polynesian performance. After stating that the "history of modern Polynesian music is largely one of European influence" (p. 437), McLean points out that the process of Polynesian musical acculturation has been two-way, noting the impact of Polynesian practice on European structures.

McLean concludes Book II with "Cultural Connections and Diffusion of Styles," wherein he compares musical traits and, incorporating linguistic evidence and methodology, deduces a possible chronology for Polynesian cultural diffusion. Although he states that his dates are "approximate, tentative, and subject to review" (p. 464), his conclusions, based on careful appraisal of the evidence, are compelling.

Throughout the book McLean uses the terms "traditional" and "modern" as the basis for organizing his material, with "traditional" indicating practices dating from the time of European contact. He employs past and present tenses to clarify which genres are still performed with one caution: One should not assume that past-tense usage necessarily implies obsolescence, since documentation is incomplete for many areas. In the discussion on acculturation in Book II, he introduces the term "modern traditional" to refer to "forms of music accepted as traditional by Polynesians which have either been influenced by European music or are post-European" (p. 437). McLean adds that outsiders must recognize something as "traditional" if the people do, but also must acknowledge the reality of the process that led to it.

Several minor enhancements might benefit the book's ease of use. Although the CD contents list provides page references for notated musical examples, page references to information about the other tracks would be helpful. Numbering the many illustrations would facilitate identifying associated prose, and providing dates for all illustrations in the captions would obviate the need to consult the illustration credits in the appendix or the bibliography. Also, the categorization of Polynesian cultures might be more consistent among all parts of the book. In Book I Polynesian cultures are clearly grouped into Central, Western (including Outliers), and Marginal, but Book II refers to Eastern and Western Polynesia. Further, the CD contents page indicates four categories: Eastern, Western, Outliers, and Marginal. Those not familiar with Oceanic material might be initially confused despite the early statement that Marginal and Central Polynesia are collectively considered Eastern (p. 4).

Weavers of Song is a major achievement and a testament to Mervyn

McLean's lifelong dedication to Oceanic music and dance. In the introduction he states his hope that the book will stimulate further research into Polynesian performance traditions. His wish will certainly be fulfilled. *Weavers of Song* is destined to become an essential reference tool for those who choose to pursue scholarly work in Polynesian performance traditions.

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Barry Craig, Bernie Kernot, and Christopher Anderson, eds., *Art and Performance in Oceania.* Bathurst, N.S.W.: Crawford House Press and Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1999. Pp. vii, 318, illus., bib., index. A$65.95 and US$65 cloth.

Reviewed by Jehanne Teilhet-Fisk, Florida State University

The Fifth International Symposium of the Pacific Arts Association, held in Adelaide in early 1993, was a lively and stimulating conference. It hosted some two hundred international delegates and scholars in anthropology, art history, archaeology, sociology, art, cultural-center arts, repatriation-related issues, museology, and ethnomusicology. The conference had the largest ever participatory attendance by indigenous artists and performers. It also had workshops and a very successful showing of indigenous films. This volume contains twenty-four papers from the sixty or so presented and is divided into four parts: "Art as Performance in Micronesia and Polynesia," "Bringing People Back into the Collections: Indigenous Australians and the Presentation of Culture," "From Performance to Museum in Melanesia," and "Pan-Pacific Development." The title of the book does not really capture the scope of these contributions, a range which while not particularly focused does represent many of the interesting issues occupying scholars in the area of Oceanic arts. It is unfortunate that this volume follows so long after the con-

ference, a casualty being as well the failure to really capture within it the vibrant energy this symposium carried.

Markedly diverse types of papers are presented here. We find, for example, Brenda Croft's personal experience as "other." We feel Deane Fergie's strong reaction to the housing of indigenous cultures with natural history. We learn from Rod Ewins about the acoustic properties of the Fijian *lali* or slit-gongs. Junko Konishi's evaluation of Yap dance performance is given sociological context. Karen Stevenson analyzes the complex role of the Tahitian *heiva* and its place in the Festival of Pacific Arts. The Polynesian body as an art form is investigated by Nancy J. Pollock. Indigenous political analysis by Vilsoni Hereniko considers the role of clowning in Polynesia. Michael Gunn presents the meaning of ownership of *malagan* ritual art images. The case is made for specific attribution of nineteen-century Massim woodcarvings. Attention is given to the volatile area of museum collections. Changes in the role of ritual performance are scrutinized. Philip Dark discourses on the proper context appropriate for the Pacific arts.

A virtue of this collection of papers is its eclectic nature. One can dip anywhere in its pages for stimulating ideas. The editors have made a good selection of robust papers covering in an interesting manner issues that continue to burn. No global synthesis emerges from these pages, but we do find here able and intelligent deliberations on many issues that have acquired more urgency since 1993.

One such general issue addressed in a number of the papers concerns the deep and complicated subjects of museums and their nature and purpose. We find here papers on the colonial New Zealand International Exhibition of 1906–1907 (Bernie Kernot), Fergie's account of indigenous people's museum involvement in western Australia, Christopher Anderson's more interesting discussion of the 1988 *Dreamings* exhibition in New York, Helena Regius's call for "recontextualizing" collections, Harry Beran's related and interesting deductive work in identifying the Massim carver Mutuaga mentioned above, and Susan Cochrane's broader remarks on museum and cultural centers. The central issues attending the museum domain transcend particular fields, but the issues as projected onto specific areas bring important and thought-provoking focus. In particular, there is in Oceania the important and immediate concerns arising from the ever-growing attention of the indigenous peoples to the representation and presentation of their cultures. There is much worth thinking about here and the issues discussed remain as fresh as they were at the time of the conference.

In conclusion, this is an excellent book to be used as a reader by anyone interested in the visual and performing arts of Oceanic cultures. I recommend it to my colleagues.

Andrew Strathern and Pamela J. Stewart, *Arrow Talk: Transaction, Transition, and Contradiction in New Guinea Highlands History.* Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2000. Pp. 216, illus., bib., index. US$19 paperback.

Reviewed by Michael Wesch, University of Virginia

Spanning from the precolonial to the postcolonial, from exchange competitions to inflated compensations, Andrew Strathern and Pamela Stewart's journey through the labyrinths of New Guinea Highlands history is a welcome addition to an emerging historical anthropology of the Pacific. *Arrow Talk: Transaction, Transition, and Contradiction in New Guinea Highlands History* is part of a flurry of Strathern and Stewart publications that has included no less than eighteen papers, six monographs (with three more promised shortly), and three edited volumes, all within the span of four years since they began publishing together in 1997. Those who are familiar with their work will recognize some familiar faces, most notably the master of *moka,* Ongka. *Moka,* the famous Highlands exchange competition, made both Ongka's and Strathern's respective careers as it flourished in the Highlands of New Guinea as well as in the halls of academia from the 1960s through the 1980s. Here *moka* takes center stage again, but perhaps for its final curtain call, for this is the story of its flourishing and ultimate fall from 1964 to 1998—roughly spanning the period of fieldwork by Strathern, one of New Guinea's best and most enduring ethnographers.

The cast of characters is vast—from *kiaps* and councils to MPs and *raskols,* local venture capitalists to mega-multinationals—all playing their parts alongside the ubiquitous anthropologists. The scenes are ever-changing, as the last quarter of the twentieth century ushers in a world of guns, gangs, lagers, loggers, converts, convicts, school classes, and social classes. It is clear that this is not the type of history in which one event after another unfolds in simple straightforward fashion. As the imagery of the title suggests, this story is sharp, moving, and complicated.

The story begins as the penetrating triad of forces identified as capitalism, democracy, and the state stumbled into the Highlands in the form of Australian colonialism. In these early days of colonialism, "law" and "government" simply meant pacification. *Moka,* symbolically modeled on compensation payments for killings, flourished as an alternative to violence and was nourished by the tremendous stock of shell valuables Australian colonials so effortlessly inserted into the local economy. Ironically, it is compensation payments for killings that have flourished in the 1990s, and the practice that once modeled the *moka* has now outmoded it. The payments are not inflat-

ing, but claims are, suggesting that victims are now commoditized, their values tallied in actuarial fashion. Claims are no longer limited to clans but are now made upon "superclans" like those of teachers, the government, and multinationals.

Center stage in all of this are anthropological theories of exchange and personhood that are asked to be refashioned to account for such changes. Tracing theoretical developments from a 1960s brand of transactionalism and methodological individualism to the "interpretive turn" that challenged the most basic assumptions of these earlier theories, Strathern and Stewart set for themselves the worthy goal of recovering what was worthwhile from the earlier perspective to consider alongside contemporary views. To do so, they must penetrate beyond that great tome by Marilyn Strathern, *The Gender of the Gift* (1988)—the book that literally engulfed the transactionalism of the past with its trenchant and expansive analysis of Melanesian understandings of exchange practices, ultimately reshaping anthropological understandings of Melanesian personhood as dividual (or "relational") rather than individual.

Through examples from their work in Hagen, Strathern and Stewart argue that while people may think and speak of themselves in relational terms, there is still an individual agent making decisions to advance his or her own interests. They do not mean to deny relational systems of meaning, but rather to simply add back into the analysis the dimension of the individual pursuing individual interests. To mark this they suggest a new term, the "relational-individual."

Such a term may seem to have an immediate value when seen as part of the broad-based challenge to essentializing and othering "West and the Rest" dualism, but the authors are not making a plea for political correctness, and the value of their term must be judged by its utility in anthropological analysis.

With penetrating common sense, the term reminds us that although the idioms and rhetoric of New Guinea Highlanders may emphasize relationality, they are still individuals, devising their own intentions, making their own decisions, and acting on their own interests. This dissolves the rigidity of the dividual-individual dichotomy and asks us to explore the ways individuals in pursuit of their own interests negotiate relational contexts and ideologies.

However, the term's greatest virtue may also be its vice. By dissolving the dichotomy we are left with limited means of comparison, be it cross-cultural, intracultural, or historical. There are hints of significant differences in personhood throughout Strathern and Stewart's work—between young and old, men and women, converts and convicts, as well as historical differences that suggest an emerging commodification of social relations and new forms of

individuality. It is in these intriguing but all too brief moments of the book that the "relational-individual" loses its currency, for it does not allow us to penetrate these changes and variations, or the conflicts and contradictions that surround them.

"We expect to find relational-individuals all around the world," they affirm (p. 63), and it "is not just a modern or post-colonial phenomenon" (p. 7). If we can expect to find relational-individuals everywhere and at all times, then we must not view the term as a description. It is an assumption. In this sense, the relational-individual is not on the same playing field as the descriptive "dividual" and "individual." Instead it must be seen as the flagship term of a revised transactionalism—what we might call "methodological relational-individualism."

What ties this revised form of transactionalism to its earlier form is the assumption that everybody everywhere is in pursuit of interests. While Stewart and Strathern are careful not to deny relational aspects of personhood and that people may indeed think of themselves in relational terms, they argue that everybody everywhere pursues interests. The grounds for this assumption are within our own common sense, but we must not accept our own common sense as common in cross-cultural contexts. Instead of beginning with this assumption, studies of the person might begin (and indeed have begun) with local understandings of interest and motivation—beginning from a thorough understanding of the local ethnopsychology or ethnosociology rather than imposing our own understanding of these domains. Furthermore, we might explore how the basic concepts and postulates that guide and interpret social action vary for people of different social position—young and old, men and women, converts and convicts. This could provide the groundwork for understanding the massive ontological shifts brought about by that "triad of forces that we can identify as capitalism, democracy, and the state" (p. 171) and ultimately help us to better understand why *moka* died.

"Arrow Talk," our authors tell us, "is a genre of political oratory . . . practiced at the end of political events to express how history has crystallized into a state of transactional play between participants in the exchanges that constitute the event, including a sense of the event as a transition between other events" (p. 1). Though this book is sparing with broad and penetrating conclusions, it is a bit of arrow talk itself, marking much of the territory and defining the terms in which future conclusions might be made. Those of us drawn to studies of personhood owe them a debt of gratitude for, if not pointing the way through the maze, at least marking some of its more menacing walls. It marks a great event in the development of a historical anthropology of the Pacific, while recognizing itself as merely a transition among other events, other transactions, and other contradictions.

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Paul Sillitoe, *Social Change in Melanesia: Development and History.* Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000. Pp. xx, 264, illus., index. US$65 cloth; $24 paperback.

Reviewed by Paul B. Wohlt, Ball State University

Undertaking to introduce someone to the salient characteristics of a culture area must seem a daunting task. Does one systematically catalog culture traits, provide several in-depth case studies, or frame the enterprise in terms of issues, themes, or overarching theoretical propositions? Clearly some combination is required and Paul Sillitoe's strategy (so far at least) has resulted in two books. In the first, *An Introduction to the Anthropology of Melanesia* (1998), each chapter utilizes a traditional ethnography to illustrate a Melanesian theme like swidden cultivation, big-men, and sorcery. In the second, reviewed here, he selects topics such as land rights, mining, and missionaries; draws from relevant writings, usually a classic ethnography from Papua New Guinea (PNG); and examines related current issues from contact to the present. The focus is development in historical perspective where development is firmly a case of forced change. His template is to look at technological innovation, its social consequences, and indigenous rationalizations.

There is a major thread running through the exposition. Sillitoe repeatedly contrasts the Melanesian complex of egalitarianism, sociopolitical exchange, and kin-constructed social environments with Western hierarchy and socioeconomic individualism. The imposition or attraction of the latter becomes a central feature in understanding the issues surrounding most topics, from entrepreneurs to personhood.

The first two chapters set the groundwork for later topics. Development is contextualized as change "which assumes the adoption of improved technological procedures and more effective institutional arrangements" (p. 3), which seems to imply a rather linear notion of evolution. In an apparent aside, Sillitoe takes to task applied anthropologists who are not firmly connected to some other discipline (for example, agriculture or medicine) as naive practitioners of social engineering. Next follows a tidy account of European contact (nice map), then whalers, traders, blackbirders, missionaries, and colonialism—right through independence.

In the third chapter, the viewpoint moves to the "grassroots" level. Using his own work with the Wola (Southern Highlands, PNG), Sillitoe provides a fascinating account of history through their eyes. For the next four chapters he remains, more or less, at the "village" level, the traditional anthropological unit of analysis. Starting with technological change among the Siane (Simbu, PNG), he makes an unfortunate foray into formal economic models following Fisk, but comes back to examine cultural and social factors that "encourage 'modern' socioeconomic institutions to emerge, and facilitate economic take-off" (p. 73). Turning to land rights he promptly critiques the modernization model for its formalist implications. Working from the Tolai case (New Britain, PNG), there is an examination of how the strong Melanesian connection to inalienable land clashes with developers' insistence on individual tenure. Business is next (from Finney's work in the Eastern Highlands, PNG). Sillitoe considers the way big-men's development as entrepreneurs is usually truncated once renown and traditional social standing are achieved. To go further would be antiegalitarian. The last "village" topic is the possible transition from tribespeople to peasants. Here he argues that sociopolitical exchange and egalitarianism will undercut the development of class structure (Eastern Highlands again) while warfare prunes fixed capital accumulation. The national level, however, is another story.

Beginning with chapter 8, "Mining, Misunderstanding, and Insurrection," Sillitoe broadens his view to consider more fully issues at the national and international levels. Ranging more widely in Melanesia than in previous chapters, he describes extractive forces at work and concludes that they are inevitably leading Melanesians to a centralized life. Participatory development might mitigate the transition and anthropologists might have a role in defending people's interests. Issues surrounding forestry, migration, cargo cults, and missionaries receive a similar treatment.

In considering forestry (West Sepik, PNG), the conflict between Western notions of compensation as a contract (fixed, final, formal) and Melanesian reciprocity (negotiated, continuing, imbedded) is nicely presented. Similarly, he alleges, developers and planners see Melanesian groups as cooperating for the benefit of individuals, sharing the profits of joint labor, when they should be recognizing that people operate as individuals within the constraints of reciprocity and egalitarian ideologies, sharing products produced as well as received within groups and networks. Reflections on possible ways of using that perspective conclude the chapter.

Because there is little industrialization to provide jobs, migration to urban areas leads to a kind of dead-end tribalism of gangs and payback rather than an upward pathway to affluence. There is little room at the top for the nascent elite. Sillitoe portrays cargo cults as eminently rational, intellectual

responses to change within the context of the clash of Melanesian equality and Western inequality (the John Frumm cult, Vanuatu). Missionization (Methodist minister George Brown, New Ireland and New Britain) results in a distinctly Melanesian brand of Christianity that seems to bridge this gap, on the one hand instantiating the alien idea of failure and on the other contributing to physical and psychological health.

In the last two chapters the incompatibility of egalitarianism and hierarchy are again invoked. Customary behaviors represent barriers to development. Corruption, law and order problems, and elections without radically different agendas characterize a sort of developmental paralysis. A consideration of *kastom* and identity (Kwaio, Solomon Islands) and the thoughts of Bernard Narakobi leaves the reader with a slim hope that somehow Melanesians will find a viable and enduring Melanesian Way, but not without human suffering in the transition.

Since this book and its previous companion are said to be written for the reader with some, little, or no background, they would presumably be candidates for college texts. Some background to *Social Change,* however, would certainly be desirable. Each chapter contains highly compressed explanations of terms, models, or theories. This can be very misleading. For example, his representation of evolutionary "theory" sounds almost unilineal and goal driven.

The book is constructed from a series of university lectures. Although they are well integrated as chapters and flow easily from one to the next, they retain the flavor of that style of discourse with asides to explain relevant ideas, small barbs at unidentified categories of persons (like developers or the media), and advice concerning the appropriate uses of anthropological knowledge. At the end of each chapter is an extensive list of books divided by subthemes from the chapter. What is disturbing about this arrangement is the distinct lack of detailed documentation. Presumably it is a response to being written for those of some, little, or no background. A book that gives every appearance of being a scholarly product (and certainly is) should not leave the reader to ponder whether it fulfills the role of popularized anthropology, introductory text, or scholarly integration.

Nonetheless, having finished the book one might well feel a certain command of various Melanesian themes and some familiarity with the entwining threads of discourse at this point in the story of Melanesian continuity and change.

BOOKS NOTED

RECENT PACIFIC ISLANDS PUBLICATIONS: SELECTED ACQUISITIONS, JULY 2001–JANUARY 2002

THIS LIST of significant publications relating to the Pacific Islands was selected from new acquisitions lists received from Brigham Young University–Hawai'i, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, Bernice P. Bishop Museum, University of Auckland, East-West Center, University of the South Pacific, National Library of Australia, Melanesian Studies Resource Center of the University of California–San Diego, University of Nijmegen's Centre for Pacific and Asian Studies, and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community Library. Other libraries are invited to send contributions to the Books Noted Editor for future issues. Listings reflect the extent of information provided by each institution.

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