

Chapter Seven.

DISPUTE SETTLEMENT.

Dispute Settlement:

In my journal for 18 March, 1974 I asked myself whether the months of February and March were commonly a time of tension the village. It may have been an unusual year, but it seemed that there had been an abnormally high number of incidents during the previous few weeks, culminating in a seven-day period in which there were seven largely separate incidents that appeared to indicate an underlying moodiness among the people: a middle-aged man erupted in anger one morning and knocked down his aged father and step-mother; a youth took an axe to his grandmother's suitcase, and then overturned all the water drums around the house when he was angered by her incessant complaints; two men stood in the centre of the village at night decrying households that failed to keep their pig fences in order, as their beasts were destroying gardens; an elderly man took a youth before the councillor for swearing at him; the chiefs called a meeting of the whole community to discuss why the gardens were not growing as well as expected; and one man confided that he was thinking of moving away from the village with his family to escape sorcery threats.

I do not have sufficient year-round experience, nor enough cases, to show statistically whether or not the period is one in which people's concerns normally come to the surface. Two men denied it, but if my impression was correct it would not be surprising as it is the height of the rainy season and people are sometimes confined to their homes for several days at a stretch; it is the time when garden food is in shortest supply; the crayfish are just beginning to

run, and people anxiously wonder whether it will be a good or bad year for crays; and the children have recently returned to school after the holiday season of parties, feasts, canoe-racing and other excitements that kept the old and young occupied.

Throughout the preceding chapters of this thesis various factors that contribute to social control will have been obvious. The very fact that people live in close proximity, and need each other's cooperation on many occasions, encourages self-control. The status of chiefs and their access to sorcery normally ensures that people heed their edicts. Beliefs in bush spirits (paipai) reduces trespass and theft from gardens, and hastens confession by offenders. Knowledge that anger with someone can adversely affect that person's success in hunting or fishing, or even cause him to suffer a minor accident, helps people to control their tempers. Improper behaviour can affect one's own hunting and fishing, and anticipation of future assistance places strong pressure on individuals to properly redistribute resources. When the chief of one sub-clan supervised the initial division of receipts from a bride-price ceremony, he admonished the notoriously lax, elderly head of one lineage "take care of your family [ie: redistribute this carefully] . Remember that your sons are coming to the age when they need to look for bride-price."

Despite influences such as these, there are inevitably times when tempers break, and my concern in this chapter is to show how individuals gain satisfaction over their grievances, and resolve their differences, at least temporarily. Many disputes have long antecedents and people may have forgotten, or

even never fully understood, their true origins. Hogbin wrote of the Kaoka speakers of Guadalcanal "a person never nourishes anger ... for long" (1964:52), and while this is true of the Roro, it is also true that beneath the surface of brotherly love lurk memories that rankle. One middle-aged man told me that some years ago the neighbouring plantation owner gave him, his older brother and two other men a contract to build a goatshed for K200. He asserted that his brother, who had arranged the contract, kept K100 for himself, and divided the remainder. On another occasion he advised me about his brother, "if you lend him a file, make sure you get the same one back. He may change it for an old one."

Yet memories like these do not normally disturb the everyday cooperation and genuine affection between the two. In fact I have never seen them quarrel openly, and people commonly express their anger in other ways. One man, the elder of several brothers, was upset with his youngest brother who had not assisted him in Port Moresby when he was short of money and needed to get back to the village. When the younger hosted a feast to receive bride-price for his daughter, the elder refused to attend and pointedly went out fishing. Another man, angered at his sister's sons' failure to consult him over their mother's burial, did not attend the mortuary ritual to extinguish the fire on his sister's grave. A third, believing his wife's younger brother had stolen a crayfish from his canoe, would not attend a small family gathering at which his affine was to be present.

Occasionally a person's anger overflows into violent rage, often over a seemingly trivial incident (cf: Hau'ofa 1975:94-5). I saw one man leap from his

own platform, run to his father's verandah and knock both his father and the old man's second wife to the floor. A few minutes later his neighbours led him away to calm down. The immediate cause of his anger was that his father (probably in his late 70s) had become so nauseated by the smell of dog excreta on the sand near his house, that he had removed the offending mess himself. As this was a task normally undertaken by women, the old man had shamed both himself and his eldest son who was angered, not so much at his father's action, but by the women of his father's household who had done nothing.

A trifling matter, but one whose provenance dates back over twenty-five years to the circumstances, about which I am not clear, under which the old man took his second wife. The same events have led to an atmosphere of distrust between the children of the two wives that belies their apparent amicability. One elderly man from a different sub-clan predicted that the two sets of brothers might split after the death of their father.

Other people normally intervene in family squabbles only when it appears that anger threatens injury to one or other party, as in the incident just cited. On another occasion when a young man smashed open his grandmother's suitcase with an axe, with which he then struck the houseposts, walls and water drums before overturning the last with his hands, the villagers listened, covertly watched and pretended to be unconcerned. They seemed to realise that though the youth was angry with his grandmother, his violence was directed at inanimate objects.

He told me later that the old woman had done nothing but complain for months about him and his wife. He finally could stand it no longer and said (using the English expression) that he just "blew his top."

There are times when the community finds comic relief in a marital dispute. In one incident which I found sad, an elderly couple whose basic problem was their extreme poverty, set upon one another one evening, to the humour of the rest of the village who alternatively laughed and pulled them apart. The couple followed periods of abuse with physical violence - he hitting her, she biting back - and then angry silence before swearing at each other again. Their eldest daughter, 20, tried to stand between them, while their son, 14, alternated between pulling his father off and hitting his mother.

Purely family issues such as these rarely come before the councillor. One that did concerned an elderly lady who moved out of her house following an argument with her son-in-law. She complained to the councillor, and in the ensuing 'court' the case centred on the fact that she was a dreamer and curer (auba'i hauna) who could divine the cause of minor illnesses. In constant demand for her services, the old lady was often absent from the house, and her son-in-law appeared to feel that everytime she went on a mission one of his own children became ill.

The councillor and his assistants may have sensed that the younger man's real grievance was that there had been no one to help his wife through a recent difficult pregnancy culminating in a caesarian delivery.

They reminded the old lady that she and her husband had encouraged their son-in-law to live uxorilocally, that he was doing good work in the village and they should think of him and help him. She moved back into her house, and we heard no more about the matter.

The elected Local Government Councillor appears to be of crucial importance in the control of disputes. His official tasks are to represent the village at meetings of the Kairuku Local Government Council, to act as a channel through whom the patrol officer and other government personnel may intervene in village affairs (it is the councillor who organises meetings on behalf of the PO, and to whom officials go when they arrive in the community), and to supervise day-to-day communal work in the village.

In pursuit of the last, every Monday evening he stands in the centre of the village, blows one blast on his whistle for attention, and announces the work for Tuesday, council work day: "Tomorrow morning nobody will go to their gardens. The boys will take their knives and clear the grass around the water pump and pathway, the men will continue building toilets, United Church girls will clean around their church compound, Catholic girls will clean their church compound, the woman will clean the beach."

The following morning people go to their allotted tasks and are free in the afternoon to get on with their own jobs. In the evening, if the councillor is dissatisfied, he makes another announcement, "Some men didn't turn up for work (and he names them). Tomorrow these men will cut grass and leaves and spread them to dry properly for the toilet roof. And so-and-so (he names another man), he pleaded that his eyes were no good and he would stay in the house, but

then he hopped on a truck and went to Port Moresby. How bad are his eyes? If the police came to him there, what would he say? And you boys - you worked hard and well, then you went for a swim and you opened coconuts to drink - but you just left the shells lying around. If you open coconuts, you must throw the rubbish away properly."

I did not include the councillor in my chapter on chiefs and other leaders, in part because I was concerned there with the traditional structure, but also because until the 1970s Village Constables and Councillors, and the first elected Local Government Councillor were all men of rank, thus their primary influence lay in their traditional authority. The two non-ranking men who held the elected councillor's position during the 1970s received support from their committee of three, two of whom were traditionally ranking men, and from the chiefs of the four sub-clans. One of the last, the councillor's most vociferous supporter, had been the government appointed Village Councillor from 1947 to 1963 and then the first elected Local Government Councillor.

In everyday terms, the councillor's most important task (although technically beyond his powers) is to provide a forum for the public airing of grievances. In this he is following a precedent established by his predecessors the village constable and village councillor, and by councillors all over the country (eg: Young 1971, 1974; Epstein 1974; Counts 1974; Reay 1974). As Epstein noted of the Tolai moot (1974:94), it is difficult to say just how far public hearings presided over by the councillor are in line with practices in pre-colonial times, but there seems

little doubt that public opinion has always been an important factor in the settlement of disputes throughout Melanesia (eg: Read 1959).

Perhaps one of the commonest Melanesian methods of announcing a dispute and beginning to mobilise public opinion was for the aggrieved person to harangue the village at night, usually standing in front of the house of the person who had wronged him and stating his case in the hearing of the whole community. Unlike the Tangu (Burridge 1969) and Wogeo (Hogbin 1978: 17-18), the Roro do not beat drums or slit-gongs in time with their anger, nor did I hear any hint of the drastic action attributed to the Tolai in his attempt to gain compensation for a wrong: setting fire to any house he chose to make other people angry enough to force the original malefactor to pay compensation for all the damage (Sack 1974:87).

Individuals in Nabuapaka today do not often resort to the night-time harangue. It is my impression (but I would like more instances before stating this as a fact) that it is most commonly the less influential men who use this device when it is hard to legitimately focus their frustrations on a single individual. So most instances I have of this are complaints about pigs destroying gardens. The community sometimes receives the harangue in total silence, but at other times a spirited debate ensues, with men and women loudly expressing their opinions into the night while standing in front of their own houses.

Saturday night. Mare stands in the centre of the village, facing Harima's house and begins to talk - at first quietly, and then raising his voice as he gets warmed up. He complains about pigs in his gardens, blaming Harima's beast, and asking who is going to feed him and his family: "the pigs have eaten our food. We are hungry. Who will feed us? You, Harima?"

The village is fairly quiet. People listen, but not too closely. Children continue to play, men continue to eat or talk, as do the women, half listening to the plaintiff, and half continuing what they were doing before.

Harima makes no public response to Mare, but later in the evening goes to him and asks "did you see my pig?"

Mare: "I saw your pig fence open and said it for nothing. Don't get angry."

Harima: "If you chased it and it went into my fence, you would be right to complain."

Mare: "Yes. Don't get cross. I saw your pig fence open. I'm tired of people's pigs destroying my gardens, Don't get angry".

They chew betel together.

The effect of such an incident may be to make men, over the next few days repair their pig fences, or the councillor may take the lead and on the following council work day instruct them to do so.

People in Nabuapaka usually take their complaints directly to the councillor, who convenes a 'court' to allow the litigants to air their ill feelings. He does this by blowing twice on his whistle (two blasts signify a court, one an announcement) and calling the names of those who are to attend. Typical of the cases that came before him while I was there were theft, threats, a dispute about house sites, a paternity suit, a case of swearing, and a woman who asked for a hearing to clear her name of adultery.

I shall outline each of these to indicate the range of cases that come before the councillor, the manner in which he handles them, and the parts sometimes played by other members of the community.

Case 1: Theft

Some Mekeo villagers travelling between Moresby and their home, used Nabuapaka as a staging point to transfer their cargo from a truck to a canoe. Nabua youths helped them carry their goods, and in the twilight a fourteen-year old slipped a carton of soft-drink into the bushes. The next day a middle-aged women saw some young children drinking from the bottles and asked where they got them. When they told her, she reported the matter to council who hauled the culprit before him.

The boy admitted the theft. The councillor put him to work repairing the causeway, and told him he had to earn some money to compensate the Mekeo, but did not specify how he should do this. In addition his father thrashed him.

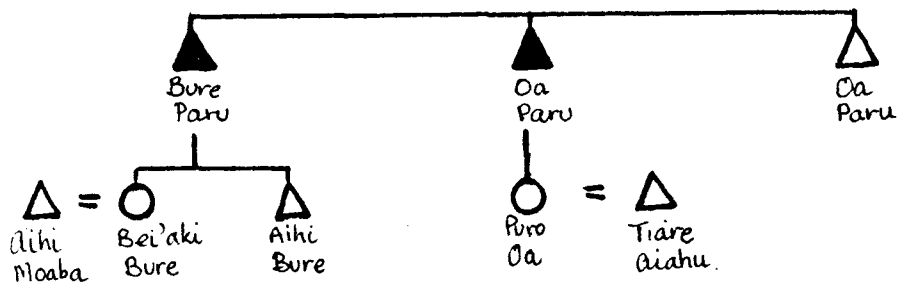
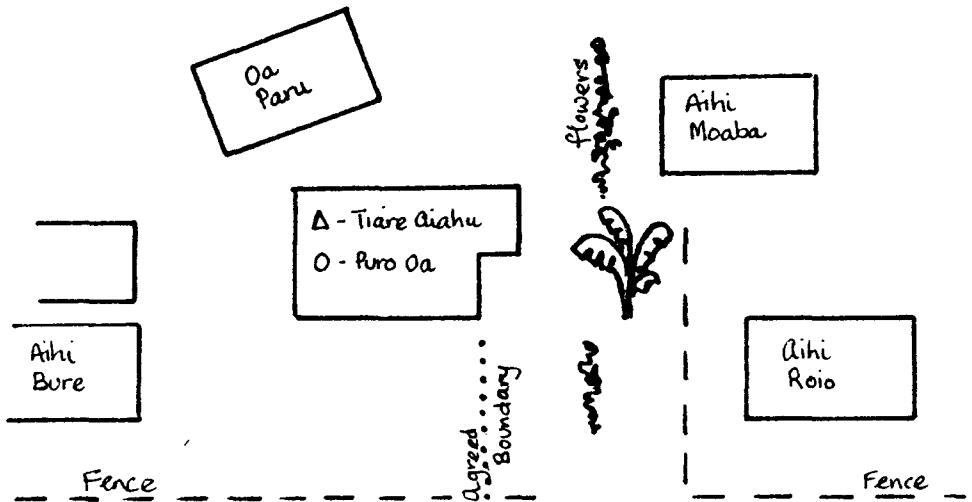
Case 2: Threats

Three youths, aged 16 and 17, made threatening gestures to a middle-aged widow when they came across her apparently returning from an assignation in the bush with a man from a neighbouring village.

She complained to the councillor who 'courted' the boys whose only motive had been to make fun of the woman. He punished them by making them spend a day carrying sand to fill in a large, muddy hole in the road.

Case 3: House sites

25th March 1974, 7.30 am. The councillor stands in the centre of the village: there is a complaint about house sites between Puro Oa and Aihi Moaba. He would like all those who remember the house sites of the old people to gather and discuss the problem, which began when Tiare's children knocked down some of Aihi Moaba's flowers.



8.30 am and we all gather, to be greeted with betel mixture provided by Tiare. The councillor begins by reminding people of two fruit trees that formerly marked the boundary, and asks if anyone remembers exactly where they stood.

Discussion on these and other markers continues for about two hours. For the most part quietly, only once does it become heated, briefly. Though many people talk, few add substantively to the debate. Tiare Aiahu, who is living uxori-locally, says nothing, and business is dominated mainly by Hau Paru (a former councillor), Aihī Moaba, Oa Paru, and Aihī Bure, with the present councillor officiating.

Hau Paru suggests a position for a marker peg. After further debate he and Oa Paru (no relation) agree on a boundary line about twelve feet further away from Aihī Moaba's house, that the meeting accepts. At this point we stop for food on Tiare's platform, followed by more of Tiare's areca nut and a long talk about other village matters.

Then Aihi Moaba stands: "I'm not angry", he says, and shakes hands with Tiare Aiahu. Both then shake hands with everybody present, one of the leading men in the community, Aihi Paru Miriana (not of formal chiefly status, but with a strong outstanding claim to the chieftainship of one sub-clan), refers to the fact that everyone is descended from Ume Hau, O'oru Hau and Moaba Hau, thus we are all one family and such disputes are unnecessary.

The meeting breaks up, and Tiare tells me that when he eventually builds his new house he will move it slightly over, and at that time a permanent marker will be installed for future reference.

Case 4: Paternity

A nineteen-year old girl is pregnant and asserts that a twenty-one year old youth is the father. He denies paternity. Her parents refer to the councillor who calls the couple before him, at the same time instructing all the young men and women of the village to attend the hearing.

The youth again denies paternity, and the councillor closely questions each of the young people present about their knowledge of the relationship between the two. He can find no conclusive evidence and decides that we will wait until the child is born and see its face, before deciding whether or not to take the matter to the Local Court Magistrate at Bereina.

Case 5: Swearing

Friday night. M, an elderly man, complains to A that the latter's pigs had destroyed his gardens. A's son, B, aged 21, gets angry and says "fuck you!" so M complains to the councillor.

Saturday night, and the councillor orders M and B to come before him:

There is a mumbled silence from M, and after a few moments Camillo Aihī Paru steps forward, though he remains outside the fence. He tells the participants that they should not be quarrelling for a start, because they are all one family [M is married to A's FFBD]. He continues to castigate both sides: B was wrong to swear at M, and M was wrong to accuse someone's pigs without being sure. And A should think ahead: B's bride-price has still to be collected and paid for, and M is part of the family...

Although no-one is particularly happy, they agree to forget the incident. The two sides exchange no words as they move away.

Case 6: Adultery accusation

○ = △
A B

○ = △ — ○
C D E

C appealed to the councillor for a hearing (bakai - question) after A accused her of committing adultery with B.

The councillor sat on the verandah of the government rest house, with two members of his committee beside him. A and C stood on the ground below them on either side of the verandah. B sat among the crowd of onlookers. D and his sister E were not present.

Amid a great deal of talk and bad-tempered shouting, joined by many of the onlookers, the basic story emerged as follows: late one night, about two months earlier, B had entered D's house and lifted E's mosquito net. She shouted in fright, and B ran from the house.

A heard the story and accused her husband of actually attempting adultery with C. In the heady days of youth, B and C had at one time been lovers, and A apparently feared that they were still attracted to one another, even though both now have adult children.

D, also jealous, insisted on a hearing before the Bereina magistrate, charging B with adultery with his wife. At that hearing A accused her husband of going after C, asserting that C had encouraged him. B denied the charge, saying he was actually after D's sister E.

The magistrate dismissed the case, but once back in the village D assaulted his wife C, accusing her of encouraging B. Finally C asked for the hearing to ask whether anyone had seen her encourage B in recent years.

At one point in the exchange A stood up, and while still asserting that C had been trying to entice her husband, began to edge towards her. One of the committee leaped from the verandah and grabbed hold of A, fearing she had a knife. He and the councillor searched her and found a small club hidden under her blouse: apparently she intended to publicly hit C.

Accusations of jealousy flew in all directions but settled ultimately on A. However the consensus of opinion seemed to be that B was really to blame for entering D's house, while the councillor also censured D for hitting his wife without finding out the truth, and for not being present at the meeting. (I never found out why he was not there).

At this point light rain began to fall, and everyone dispersed.

Discussion:

Clearly villagers are prepared to take a wide range of issues before the councillor, indicating that by-and-large they are satisfied with this method of airing their grievances and organising public opinion. More than once I heard leading villagers ask aggrieved individuals if they wished to take their case to the magistrate at Bereina, and almost invariably they preferred to have it handled within the community.

In the closing stages of a hearing, when everyone has had his say, the councillor or a man of rank who has been listening from the sidelines, such as Camillo Aihi Paru (eg: case 5), commonly appeals to eternal verities such as the unity of the family (case 3, case 5, and the earlier instance of the woman who moved out of her house), criticises all sides in the dispute (case 5, case 6), and reminds people of cooperative obligations such as a bride-price that has yet to be collected (case 5).

In himself the councillor has the legal authority to direct disputes to the magistrate's court, and though he sometimes assigns work to offenders such as youths, he has few direct sanctions to apply, other than such ideological appeals to public opinion. Indirectly, if, like the two most recent councillors, he is not a chief in his own right, with supposed access to sorcery, then members of his committee are likely to be men of rank, and in any case the chiefs usually support him in his decisions.

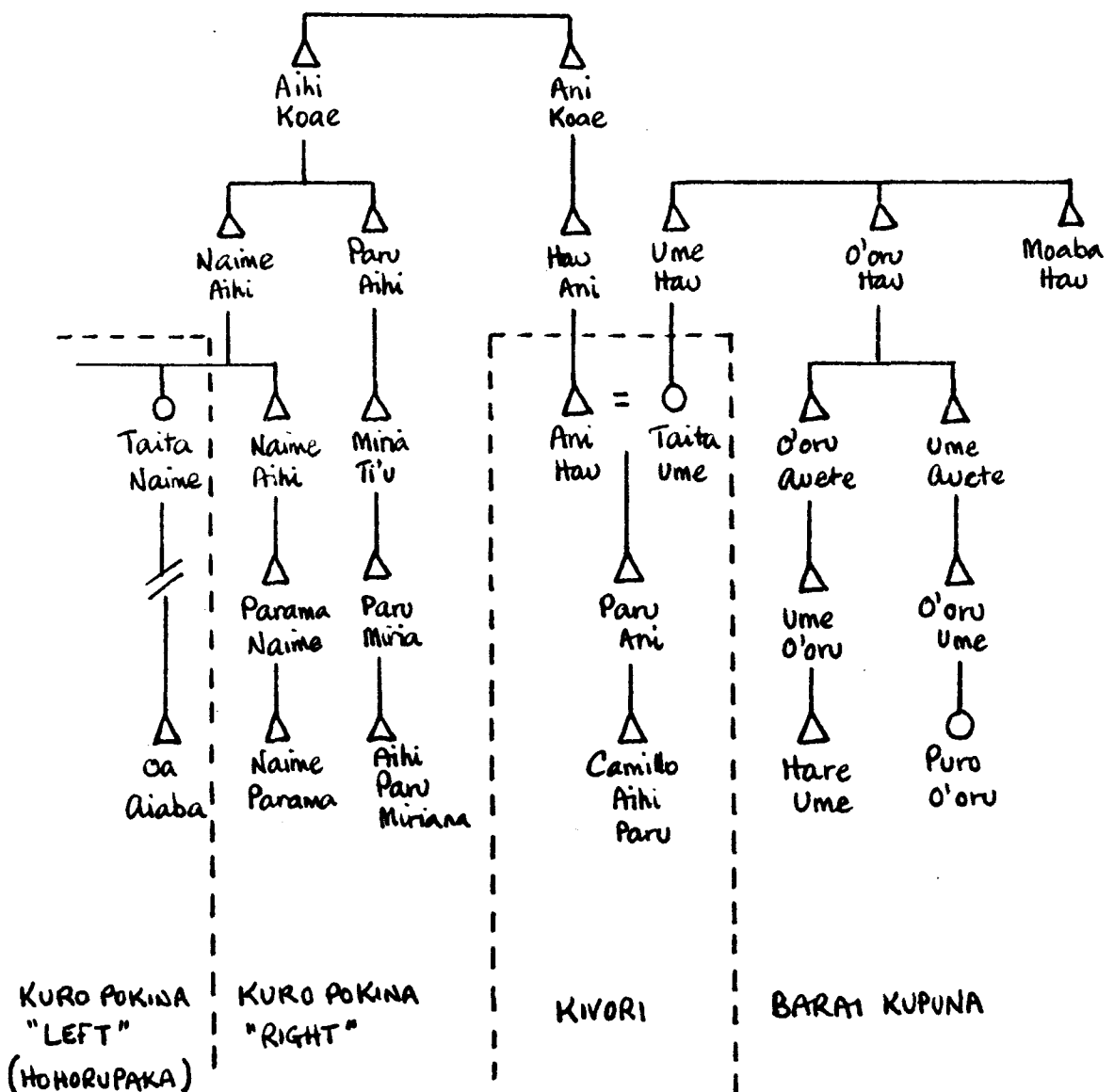
One chief in particular, Camillo Aihi Paru, who was Village Councillor from 1947 to 1963, and then the first elected Local Government Councillor, tries to attend all the councillor's courts. He listens to the litigants and does not always intervene, but when he does it is at the end and quite deliberate. As we walked across the village to hear the swearing incident (case 5), he told me he wanted to know what had happened because he intended to reprimand whoever was deemed wrong. "If B is wrong, I'll tell him off. If M is wrong, I'll scold him". In the event, he castigated both parties, and everybody present - the councillor and his committee, the participants and the observers, appeared to accept his intervention as if they had expected it.

During one incident when even Camillo found it hard to speak through an angry melee of words, he stalked off to his house and returned a few minutes later. Standing in the middle of the crowd he flourished first his chiefly insignia - a set of pigs tusks, ea robe, worn only by chiefs and handed to him by his grandfather at his installation ritual forty years earlier. "Remember," he shouted, "I've got the village 'certificate' from my ancestors." Then he waved a document¹ in the air, "and I have the government 'certificate'. These are my backbone. These give me power to speak in the village".

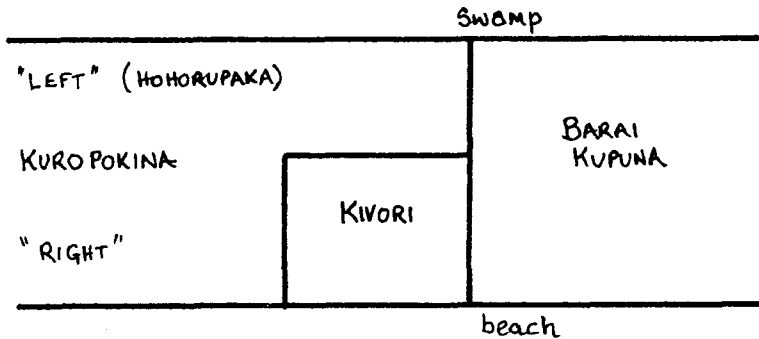
The people quietened down, and he was able to say what he wanted.

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1. The document says: "Aihi Paru (2) of Keabada village, Kairuku sub-district in the West Central District, has given valued service to the Administration of Papua and New Guinea and his people whilst occupying the position of councillor for sixteen years, and he has now retired on the establishment of the Kairuku Native Local Government Council. Presented this 5th day of February 1963 at Bereina."

Camillo also has another claim to a hearing at times of dispute: he is chief of Kivori sub-clan, and Kivori is situated physically and genealogically, thus also symbolically, in the middle (ibuanai) of the village. Camillo's grandfather, Ani Hau, was born a member of the Kuro Pokina sub-clan. He married the daughter of the chief of the Barai Kupuna sub-clan, and later, as I showed in earlier chapters, formed the Kivori sub-clan in partnership with another man. The following simplified kin chart shows the principal features:



There have, of course, been other marriages between the sub-clans, for example Parama Naime of Kuro Pokina married the sister of O'oru Ume of Barai Kupuna, but these did not hive off to create their own sub-clans. Physically, Kivori's house sites are in the centre also:



Today people say that if a fight occurs between members of Kuro Pokina and Barai Kupuna, then Camillo could go and stand between the participants and the brawl should end, not only because he is a chief, but also because he is "born from both" sides and thus symbolically is in the middle. It is theoretically taboo (rauhubu) for fighters to pass any chief who stands between them, and offenders must pay the chief a fine of a pig. In Camillo's case it is doubly disrespectful.

Apparently his grandfather had been sufficiently influential that in his attempt to contain intra-village fighting he extended the taboo to include even passing Kivori land in the village. At a noisy hearing following a brawl that spread from one end of the village to the other but mainly involved the two halves of Kuro Pokina, Camillo tried to invoke the taboo. An elderly member of Barai Kupuna asked him, "Would you not also have fought if you had been here?" and Camillo, who had been away at the time of the incident, replied emphatically "No. My grandfather gave me the pig tusks

for peace. I would try to stop the fight. I am in the middle." The exchange was sufficient to quieten people down and allow the hearing to come to a conclusion.

I encountered no overt instance of that common Melanesian practice, fighting with food, in which one side tries to overwhelm its rivals with gifts of pork, garden produce and fish, forcing them into a position of inferiority with debts that may take years to reciprocate (Groves 1954: Young 1971; Hogbin 1978). It probably existed in the past. Hau'ofa (1975:140-3) recorded an example of Mekeo humiliating their affines with gifts of cooked food, and echoes remain in Nabuapaka: one young man said to me of our guests after a feast our sub-clan had hosted "We really killed them with all that food!"

It may also have been used as a device for more direct social control: when we were discussing a youth who was notoriously badly behaved, an old man said that in former times the chiefs might have used a feast as an opportunity to make a large prestation of food to the boy's father, indicating that it was time the boy was brought under control.

Post-script:

When I was last in Nabuapaka in January 1978, the villagers had just elected a village magistrate and a peace officer under the recent Village Courts legislation. The task of the former appeared to be to take over the social control functions formerly held by the councillor, although this time with legal backing, while the latter possesses legal powers of arrest.

Interestingly, the people elected ranking men to both positions. Aihi Moaba, middle-aged, Chief-of-the-Knife for Kuro Pokina sub-clan, became magistrate, and Saolo Moaba, of Barai Kupuna sub-clan, peace officer. In his mid-twenties with Form IV education, he has recently taken over the task of hunting magician (Puro'o Hauna) from his grandfather, and is direct heir to the last war chief (paiha obia).

Chapter Eight

VILLAGE ENTREPRENEURS

VILLAGE ENTREPRENEURS¹

Having looked at the history and ethnography of the Roro, at least from the point of view of Nabuapaka, in the final part of this thesis I examine the factors affecting the small-scale rural entrepreneur. This is an important topic, in part because the village-based business-man's attempt to participate in the cash economy reflects the aspirations of his fellow villagers as they try to take advantage of the new opportunities available to them, and in part because of the Somare government's Eight-Point Improvement Plan² which illustrates the desire to draw PNG Nationals firmly into the active side of the monetary economy by encouraging "decentralisation of economic activity"; a "more equal distribution of economic benefits [and] services" through the country; an "increase of the proportion of the economy under the control of PNG individuals and groups;" and "an emphasis on small-scale artisan, service, and business activity, relying where possible on typically PNG forms of organisation".³

The topic is also important because the failure of many of these ventures has meant the loss of tens of thousands of kina in damaged or abandoned capital equipment such as motor vehicles. A loss which the individual, his community and the nation can ill-afford.

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Barth considered the entrepreneur to be someone who takes the initiative in administering resources and whose innovations "may be expected to become prototypes for the formation of similar units ...Thus ...the concept of entrepreneur leads us directly to highly seminal

1. This chapter is a much expanded version of Monsell-Davis,

2. See appendix.

1976.

3. All quotes are taken from the Eight-Point Plan.

points of social change" (1963:5-6). He added, "to the extent that persons take the initiative, and in the pursuit of profit in some discernable form manipulate other persons and resources, they are acting as entrepreneurs" (1963:6). He would thus probably agree with Finney's notion that Melanesian societies generally, and Goroka particularly, were "preadapted" to the market economy (Finney 1969:58).

Noting the competitive achievement-orientation of the traditional big-man style of leadership, Finney stressed the emphasis on prestige through the accumulation and manipulation of wealth, the facility of groups at pooling wealth and other resources for specific purposes, and the entrepreneurial style of ambitious, status-seeking men (1969:10). Several writers have shown how, at least in the early phases of development, the aspiring leader exploited the new opportunities available to him in his search for political power, just as earlier leaders used the traditional economic system (Finney 1969; 1973; Bulmer 1960; 1961; Salisbury 1970; Strathern 1970; 1971; Reay 1967; I examined the process in an earlier paper: Monsell Davis 1972)

In a short comparative survey of East New Britain, the Highlands, Manus and Madang seeking to explain why some communities seem better able to exploit the new opportunities than others, Finney concluded

the four regional sketches demonstrate how closely indigenous economic developments in New Guinea have correlated with the presence or absence of favourable pre-conditions for economic growth. Where there are fertile soils, where government (and, at times, European private enterprise) policies have actively encouraged and aided indigenous involvement in the cash economy, and where profitable cash crops have been introduced and their exploitation made

feasible through extension aid and the development of a transport and marketing system that reaches people in their villages, one finds - as in East New Britain and the Highlands districts - that people respond positively to opportunity and quickly become involved in cash-cropping and other commercial activities. However, where soils are poor, where positive economic policies have not been implemented, where profitable crops, extension aid, and infrastructure are lacking or have not been systematically introduced - as in Manus and Madang - one finds that people make little progress toward becoming significant participants in the cash economy (Finney 1973:136-137).

The Mekeo, as Stephen has shown (1974) would appear to share the favourable preconditions that Finney stressed, and they, like the Roro, are as keen to participate in the modern economy as any other group in Melanesia, yet "they have been unable to move beyond what Epstein terms the 'investment trial period'" (Stephen 1974:354). Finney initially tempered his optimism about Melanesian pre-adaption by speculating that "a different type of adaptation might be expected ... where there is an important hereditary ... element in leadership" (1969:59 fn), but later appeared to reject ideas that cultural or psychological characteristics might affect people's capacity to enter the cash economy (1973:125-6).

In discussing his own material Finney had earlier emphasised the differing contact history between the New Guinea coast and the Highlands. He commented that as a result of the more enlightened approach by the Administration and missionaries Gorokans were not "shorn of all their self-confidence when the opportunity came to participate in the market economy" (1969:9-10; 62-63).

He also showed, following Crocombe, how inefficiency, insensitivity and compulsion on the part of the government in Orokaiva "did little to encourage cash-cropping ... indeed it seems to have had an opposite effect, which persists today" (1973:127-8. Compare also his notes on compulsory land-alienation in Madang 1973:135-6).

While I agree with him that we must reject notions "that an economically backward group is so because its members are simply lazy or ritual-minded" (Finney 1973:126), I do not think there is much doubt that differing status systems and contact experience help to shape cultural and psychological attitudes. Thus they are relevant to our understanding of the problems facing the Papua New Guinean entrepreneur.

In examining the efforts of individuals in Nabuapaka to establish business ventures, I shall begin by outlining the history of Colonial attempts to effect economic development in the Roro/Mekeo area before specifically looking at Nabuapaka. There are five points that need to be borne in mind throughout this analysis: (1) the history of the Roro political and economic experience with the government, and the nature of the encouragement and advice given to the people. This can include the expectations raised by enthusiastic extension officers (Singh 1974:9; Chandra & Prasad:1977); the efficiency of transport and marketing facilities, and the degree to which advisers encourage people to use their own initiative. (2) Community obligations versus the needs of a business enterprise. This includes notions such as Mair's "room for manoeuvre" (1969:124-7) and the social costs the entrepreneur must

pay in establishing his venture (Barth 1963:8).

(3) The knowledge of the business-men. This includes not only skills, but also knowledge of the possibilities for successful enterprises, and of his rights in relation to organisations such as wholesalers, finance companies, repair work-shops and government agencies.

(4) Social structure, by which I mean such things as the leadership system, the relationships between affines, and sorcery beliefs. (5) The nature of traditional "communal" organisation. This is of particular relevance to point four of the Eight-Point Plan, and to those people seeking to establish a Melanesian Way for conducting business. As I noted in an earlier paper

It is only partly true to assert that traditional village life was characterised by cooperation and sharing of resources: the cooperation needed for building, hunting, gardening and so on, is not the same as that required for an on-going, permanent enterprise such as a business; the most consistent cooperation was probably within a sub-clan or between linked sub-clans, rather than right across a community; sharing of resources should more properly be seen as an exchange of resources and services, rather than a distribution by the wealthy; and in cooperative ventures in traditional society all people concerned played an active role - which is not always possible in a present-day business venture (Monsell-Davis 1976: 29-30. See also Finney 1969:22; 1973:107; Fitzpatrick & Southwood 1976 22-6).

Early Economic Development:

Sandalwood was probably the earliest venture in which the Roro could participate, and judging from comments by Chalmers, MacGregor and Kowald cited in chapter two, the people of Nabuapaka were regularly occupied in cutting the wood and carrying it in for sale to traders. How long it continued in the vicinity of Yule Island is not clear. Mair noted that sandalwood constituted 10% of Papua's exports in 1913-14 but declined from then until 1937 (Mair 1970:115).

MacGregor and his successors continually felt the need to raise internal revenue, and to this end aimed at extending cash cropping by Papuans. As early as 1894 the Administration introduced Regulations to compel the planting of coconuts or other useful trees, with fines and imprisonment for defaulters. Officials devoted much time and energy to enforcing the regulations, themselves marking out planting areas for villagers. The government invoked the same legislation to encourage rubber growing in Kokoda in 1917 and rice in Mekeo and Kerema in 1919 (Mair 1970:118).

Roro villagers resisted planting coconuts, believing, so old men told me in Waima, that it was only the government that would benefit, just as, over a half a century later "the collapse of the post war rice schemes did not convince Mekeo that cash cropping was unprofitable, but that the government had appropriated the profits which were rightfully theirs" (Stephen 1974:378). The Administration does not seem to have experimented with other cash crops such as sisal, cotton, tobacco, sugar, coffee, and rubber in the Mekeo/Roro area, although the last was successfully introduced at Kuni after the war.

In 1919 new legislation insisted on a ten shilling per year tax for all males between 16 and 36, with a penalty of six months jail for failure to pay. Its overt function was to raise money for Papuan education and other measures "of direct benefit" to the local people such as sanitation and medical aid (Mair 1970:78), and later came to include agricultural education and village plantations; the salary and publishing expenses of the government anthropologist (from 1921); village water supplies (1922); footballs (1926); publication of Papuan Villager (1929); and

native crafts (1934/6) (Dickson 1976:27). A related purpose of the tax was to further encourage villagers to plant cash crops to raise money for their tax. In this the legislation was partly successful (Stephen 1974:131). Stephen cites a number of examples of villager incomprehension as to the reasons for the tax; of feelings that they received nothing in return; and resentment at having to pay without reasonable sources of income. Some individuals sold traditional heirlooms to raise money (Stephen 1974:135-6). She concluded

The tax, failing to promote any spontaneous interest in the cash economy, served merely to create a sort of vicious circle - the threat of jail driving the people to participate in new activities which they disliked, in order to earn money which they did not want, to pay a tax which they did not wish to pay and from which they saw no advantage to themselves (1974:138).

Any aspirations Papuans might have had for entering the cash economy under their own initiative were not helped by the attitudes of officials and other Europeans in the country. Even Murray as late as 1938 wrote that "Europeans as a whole have an innate superiority over Papuans" (cited by Dickson 1976:36), but he recognised that there would eventually be a need for higher education.

Other residents were even less sympathetic. Dickson cites a 1925 writer in the Papuan Courier who

Expressed contemptuous amazement that 'a certain native' was to start a transport business, and later gave the insulting anecdote: 'for carrying a bag off the wharf on Sunday afternoon, a new arrival gave a native sixpence. You should have seen the astonished look on the coon's face when he took it. We know what they should get - but never forget the office on the hill'. The last phrase is an interesting commentary on Murray's influence - even a brash columnist felt the restraint of Government House 'on the hill'. Yet it was possible to write so as to imply that it was presumption

for a Papuan to start a trucking business, and that it was even more so to expect payment for portage of a white man's baggage. Such prejudices limited the ambitions of many Papuans¹ and made difficult the employment of those whose ambition survived (Dickson 1976:37. See also Griffin 1976).

In post-war years, with growing Papuan expectations of the government, and increasing European understanding of Papuan abilities, McAuley criticised those pessimists who had "so low an estimate of native capacities for work and responsibility, that they consider that the Administration is wasting its time trying to foster native undertakings" (1952:276).

Mekeo Rice

I include the rice scheme in this discussion because the regular interaction through Church, school, intermarriage and trade between the Mekeo and the Roro peoples means that successes and failures among one group are quickly communicated throughout the whole sub-district. In addition Epo, where the experimental rice station was situated, lies on the boundary between the two.

The Catholic Mission introduced dry rice to the Mekeo in about 1910. Villagers accepted it as a part of subsistence agriculture but owing to tedious hand methods it did not then attain much importance (Spate 1953:161). About 1932 the Administration intensified

1. If such prejudices limited the ambitions of Papuans, they must also have limited the ability of Europeans holding them, but charged with training people, to do their job. As recently as the mid-60s the Teacher-in-Charge of a school to which I was posted remarked "You can't educate these people". This attitude resulted in his often being absent from his classroom, or at best not taking his job seriously.

its efforts to enforce production to raise money for tax, and for a while during the 1930s rice replaced vegetables as the medium of barter with the coastal Roro (Jeffreys 1969:1-2; Stephen 1974:127). Flood losses and low returns discouraged any significant expansion of the scheme (Spate 1953:162) until 1948 when the government tried again, this time with full mechanization and the establishment of Rural Progress Societies to encourage rice growing on a village-collective basis.

In 1952 McAuley sardonically commented that the Administration intended the rice scheme to be a form of collective farming, but the reality

is that the Administration is growing rice on native land, probably at a loss if all the relevant costs were reckoned, and is paying the community a rent for the use of the ground which consists of the calculated profit on the sale of the rice. The dividend received by individual members depends on the number of days each person has turned out to watch the white officials, and a few native assistants, make money for them (1952:277-8).

After 1953 officials gave up attempts to grow rice on a village basis, and encouraged growing by individuals, families, and clans. The Rural Progress Societies were wound up and replaced by Cooperatives established to buy, mill, and market the rice. Poor seasonal conditions, marketing problems, and falling prices led the Mekeo to lose interest in rice as a cash crop, and the Administration abandoned the project in 1959. A report in the local newspaper said the people had lost interest "because of the hard work involved and low returns" (Jeffreys 1969) and Stephen cited Mekeo complaints about the drudgery with "only the government" profiting (1974:138-9).

Spate questioned the degree of mechanisation of the scheme and concluded that poor marketing and inadequate roads and maintenance facilities for the equipment lay behind its failure (1953). Jeffreys appeared to agree that enthusiastic but inefficient organisation and planning had led to transport and servicing difficulties, and added that traditional land tenure, labour, and leisure patterns, plus unreliable climatic conditions, had compounded the problem (1969:7-10:25). He had earlier noted that as the cash needs of the people expanded during the 1950s so they rediscovered familiar ways for raising money, but with less effort, through the sale of betelnut, copra, oranges, and vegetables (1969:16).

Stephen stresses that the Mekeo were enthusiastic to embrace the new opportunities, and, in their own view, had fulfilled the demands made on them by the government. Their loss of interest stemmed from their perception that the Administration had failed in its reciprocal obligations (1974:376-378).

Co-operatives:

A number of cooperatives began in the late 1940s as Rural Progress Societies with a strong bias towards social development - self reliance and better use of leisure, with less emphasis on the control of finance, management and economic potential (Healy 1962:657-8).

In 1947 the Administration created a Cooperative Section within the Department of District Services and Native Affairs (Singh 1974:1-2) and during the early 1950s Cooperative Societies replaced the Rural Progress Societies. The Coops were intended to buy and market members' produce, particularly copra in the early days, and establish small retail stores in villages. Legge considered that the Administration's assistance with coops after the war "was designed to guide political

forms of resistance into proper channels" (cited by Fitzpatrick and Southwood 1976:14; Singh 1974:2).

Over the years some have expanded into shipping, fishing and saw milling, while others have limped along as little more than village trade-stores that occasionally acted as middlemen in the sale of members' copra. A committee of inquiry in 1972 concluded that co-operatives had generally failed as profit-making ventures (cited by Fitzpatrick & Southwood 1976:15). "The general picture ... is that of a few fairly successful enterprises and a large majority struggling and inefficient" (Singh 1974:16). While the range of their activities has increased, they remain relatively unimportant vis-a-vis other forms of business enterprise (Singh 1974:191).

The Co-operative Society in Nabuapaka has had a chequered history. I have not at this stage had access to government files, so my discussion is based entirely on villagers' accounts. The purpose was to buy members' copra and arrange its sale to the Copra Marketing Board, and to operate a small store. The first shop, built of bush materials, opened in the early 1950s and appears to have operated more or less continuously until about 1971 or 1972 when villagers built a new store with flat-iron walls and corrugated iron roof. This store closed early in 1973, reopened in July 1974, closed again in December the same year, reopened once again in September 1975, and finally closed in about May 1976.

The Society was composed of a Chairman and four committee members, a store-keeper, a secretary to take care of the correspondence, and members who had bought shares in the '50s.

What went wrong? Why was it apparently able to remain in business so long, only to run into trouble in recent years? Listening to reasons for the closure early in 1973, I constantly heard villagers make remarks such as "Money is getting lost;" "The store-keeper is just getting food for nothing;" "The store-keeper was clever - he didn't take money, only food;" and "He writes one amount on his pay-sheet, but takes more."

Such whisperings reached a crescendo early in '73, and one of the members went to the store one day, padlocked the doors, taped the lock, and demanded that inspectors come and examine the books. Apparently they found nothing amiss, but the shop did not reopen until about July 1974 following a further inspection by cooperative officers, who again found nothing irregular. In fact the store accounts were in credit, and the inspectors took with them an order for new stock.

The previous store-keeper said he did not want the job back, and a young unmarried man agreed to take it on, provided he had proper backing from the committee and members. Before long gossip was again rippling through the village, and the store-keeper, feeling he had no support, locked the doors and walked off in December, 1974.

In September, 1975, the young people in town felt they wanted to do something tangible to help their village, and formed a committee which, after negotiations with the villagers, reopened the store. Another young man was elected to run it, and the village committee agreed to supervise day-to-day affairs, while the urban committee undertook to check the books every month and report to the village.

Once again the mumbling started. "The store-keeper is never there when we want him"; "Yon see the young boys gambling with pennies - where are they getting the pennies? From the store"; "He goes to town to buy goods - we don't know if he spends all the money on stock, or some of it for himself". The young man became disheartened and in May 1976, following his predecessor's example, locked the doors, handed the keys to the chairman of the village committee, and went to find a job in town.

Why did people feel unable to trust their elected store-keepers? The village committee had every opportunity to supervise the running of the shop. It was supposed to be a part of their responsibility to oversee the money paid out and to check the goods coming in against the invoices and the cash which the store-keeper had taken to town. In fact they rarely undertook this part of their job, even when specifically requested to by the store-keeper.

In theory it would seem very much to their advantage for villagers to maintain a store whose operations and retail prices they could control. I was myself concerned in the most recent attempt to keep the shop going, and prices were held as low as possible - over five months the store was just breaking even, with a turnover of more than K3000.

Stephen noted that Mekeo were similarly "intensely jealous, and therefore suspicious, of the officials they elected" (1974:302). They feared that they were "using their position to increase their personal wealth and influence" (1974:303). Such attitudes would seem to be universal: Paine observed the same mistrust of the central figure in an enterprise in Northern Norway where villagers assumed that his position would lead him to disproportionate strength in the community (Paine 1963:34).

One late middle-aged man in Nabuapaka, indignant at what he saw as the parlous state of the store, blamed the younger generation in general, rather than the individual store-keepers: he asserted that the old people, most of whom are now dead, had really worked hard to build the store. They did not ask for their money back. They struggled without transport to make copra. "So I'm getting very angry with these young people," he said, "There is nothing to remember our old people by".

This kind of distrust presumably masks other discontents perhaps less easily expressed. There seems little doubt that people have long been disenchanted with the idea of cooperatives (Kent Wilson 1968). Expectations raised when, "in the early years of the movement, some Administration officers promoting co-ops ...placed excessive emphasis on rebates to attract members" (Singh 1974:9) have never really been met. Low rates of profit, the necessity to pay interest on capital loans, curtailment of associated activities, (such as logging in Moveave) during depressed market conditions leading to loss of income by villagers, and, in Nabuapaka, lack of understanding as to why the store should be in debt to the Co-operative Wholesale Society (from which it bought goods on credit) have led to a loss of support and a decline in cooperative activity.

In Mekeo Stephen observed another fundamental misunderstanding of cooperatives. She said that people expressed indignation "when asked to pay for goods from their 'own store' or when they were charged to use their 'own tractor'." She cited one man as saying "We've bought the tractor and trailer with our own money, yet we still have to pay for it doing our work ...we've thrown away a very big money on it for nothing", and she concluded "when the societies were eventually liquidated, the stores closed, the stock and all assets sold, they were finally convinced of

the government's perfidy" (Stephen 1974:305;
cf: Hau'ofa 1975:19-20).

The Crayfish Industry:

The principal resource available to the Roro apart from copra, is the sea, and their main source of income the crayfish (pannularus ornatus) (Barclay 1969:3). In 1961 the Administration set up a fishing cooperative, The Kairuku Fishing Society Ltd., at Yule Island to exploit the crays. Two poor seasons and inadequate second-hand freezing equipment brought some disillusion, but a good run in the third season saw an increase in capital, though continuing problems with machinery and unreliable transport to Port Moresby.

The slow acquisition of improved equipment led an Australian who had helped with the society to enter a partnership with S.R. Slaughter, a business-man and ship-owner on Yule Island. Not wanting to compete with the Kairuku Fishing Society, they offered it a share in their company, Morr Pty Ltd. The society rejected the offer, and both went ahead in the 1964/5 season, which saw an appalling run of crayfish.

During 1965 Slaughter and officials from the Co-operative Registry suggested to Society members that the two enterprises pool their facilities. Much heated debate took place among members, but as their society faced liquidation, they had little choice but to agree to a joint venture (the first of its kind in PNG) under which both parties were to hire their labour, management and equipment to the new company, Yule Lobster Enterprises, on an "as required" basis. Each had assets worth about \$17,000 and agreed to share profits equally.

The following season was good, but an unreliable sales agent in the USA caused the financial position to deteriorate further. The 1966/7 run was a great success with the processing of over 40,000 crays. Returns from the USA exceeded all expectations. The Venture cleared interest on its loans, shared profits, and paid \$20,000 to fishermen during the season (Barclay 1969). I believe it also paid a dividend to Society member for the first time.

The next two seasons again saw poor runs of crayfish, and the Venture began to diversify into general fishing and prawning with the purchase of a 46ft trawler in the late 1960s. By the mid-70s few men had availed themselves of this opportunity to make money all year round by fishing for the local freezer. Some time ago I noted in my journal conversations with a business-man who was concerned that villagers apparently lacked the will to continue a job: "Give them a net and a dinghy and they fish really well for three weeks or so and then give up - yet they can make K50 a week or more if they wanted to."

What the European entrepreneur does not always recognise is that while money may be attractive to the villager, it is not necessarily to his advantage to spend a great deal of time on such tasks. First, in practical terms, the village man's other responsibilities such as gardening and house maintenance occupy much of his time; and second he must play an active part in community affairs or be branded anti-social. This includes helping other people with their day-to-day tasks, preparing for important feasts, participating in Council work every Tuesday, and at least listening-in at village meetings.

In the past a villager who, for example, spent a great deal of his time working on his gardens to the exclusion of other matters, left himself open to village gossip which might speculate that he was secretly preparing a food-giving challenge against a leading man of the community. He was in danger then of the chiefs offering him a pre-emptive challenge - and thereby breaking him by forcing him to distribute most of his food.

In a neighbouring community a man who spent some time fishing for the local freezer found his nets slashed, though no one could say why or by whom (Kent Wilson 1968:64). Unfortunately these attitudes are clearly not compatible with the needs of the freezer which of course must have a constant supply of fish to remain in business.

Although fishing is a year-round activity, the period when most men and boys spend a great deal of their time at sea is when the crayfish run during the wet season when the crops are growing and not much work has to be done in the gardens. In a good crayfish season several thousand kina may enter a village, but as I noted in my journal one year, "it is money hard-earned; very long diving hours, sometimes day and night for several days at a stretch; hands get ripped by the crayfish, and legs and arms get torn and grazed by the coral. Sores are so easy to get, but so hard to heal because of the life-style - the sand and constantly working in the sea".

Even though there is at present no way of predicting good seasons from bad, there seems to be a belief by officials that a poor catch is the result in part of lack of effort by village fisherman. Kent Wilson noted, "it was maintained by some ...that crayfishing was much below its true potential because of low fishing effort by members". So strong was this belief that in 1967 one Co-operative officer advocated employing outside labour "because the local people were said to be unprepared to work hard enough at cray-fishing" (1968:62).

Nearly a decade later, in 1975, a European officer asserted, when I visited Yule Island, that there were plenty of crayfish in the sea and that he had seen them himself, but that people were not interested in catching them. I returned to my community and reported his comments to the village men who promptly took their canoes out to sea - to come back almost empty-handed.

I told him of the people's lack of success, and he still insisted that the crays were there. I do not doubt his sincerity, but somewhere there is an extraordinary lack of communication: I was living in the village, and I know that every season the men hope for a good run of crayfish - to the extent that some even give up their jobs in town to wait for crays.

Another complaint that I heard in a poor year was that villagers were being disloyal to the cooperative society and taking their catch to sell in the Moresby markets rather than to the Lobster Enterprise. While that has occurred in some good years when plenty were available, in this particular season there were so few crays that men were catching two or three a week, instead of dozens, selling a few to travellers on the road, and sending the rest to sons and daughters in town to eat. (In any case, we must recognise that villagers look to a quick return in financial matters, and they were able to get a much better price in town than the freezer was able to offer).

Initiatives by villagers:

Almost all the ventures I have discussed, from sandalwood trading to the fishing cooperative, were government or European operated enterprises into which Papuan entrepreneurs could put individual or collective effort, but over whose activities they had little control. Even village cooperative societies suffered from member's lack of trust in their elected officials, misunderstandings of credit facilities with wholesalers and of the manner

in which profits are generated, and the failure to pay regular dividends.

Stephen (1974:333-352) recounted several attempts by Mekeo villagers during the 1960s to form clan "clubs" to produce copra, build driers and open small stores. Some Inawi people organised themselves into work parties for hire as building or garden labour. Rice growers in other communities employed them to help with the harvest and at other busy times. None of these ventures lasted long. In fact Stephen asserted that every attempt to start an enterprise in Inawi has ended in failure and personal tragedy for those concerned (1974:336). One closed because of quarrels between members; another when members accused the clan chief, in charge of the store, of stealing money. But some collapsed because of death and fear of sorcery: a series of deaths of the children of the first three presidents of one club convinced members that their clan chiefs, who had not joined it, opposed the venture. They abandoned their business.

Stephen detailed several examples of group and individual enterprises suffering through fears of sorcery and poisoning. In these instances Mekeo villagers attributed the problems both to chiefly antagonism and to the more diffuse jealousy of their fellows. People are not sure why the chiefs should oppose them, except that the real intention must be to prevent commoners from usurping their position of privilege and authority (1974:337).

Nabuapaka attempts to establish small business ventures have been equally dogged, in their view, by jealousy and its consequent sorcery. Prior to the opening of the first route of the Hiritano Highway in mid-1973, linking Port Moresby to Bereina, two men ran private trade-stores in the village, and three others owned large twin-hulled canoes with 40hp outboard motors. One had broken down some months previously, but the others were still operating.

The opening of the road led to the demise of the canoeing enterprises, opportunities for trucking businesses, and increased turnover at the two trade-stores. (Compare Ward 1970 on the opening of the Rigo road). Over the next few pages I shall take each of these ventures in turn, and outline its progress.

Canoes:

A man in his late 50s owned the broken-down motor. He had had a few years LMS schooling in the vernacular, spoke no English, and his work experience outside the village was limited to carrying for ANGAU during the war. He is a quietly-spoken, intelligent man who holds an important traditional office in his sub-clan.

He ran his canoe for several years but kept no record of income and expenditure. When his motor broke down, the workshop in Moresby charged him K100 for repairs (he showed me the invoice dated May 1973: parts K67.71; oil .79; labour K31.50). He maintains that when he got the motor home it still did not function properly. He added that on seeing the high price he had "thrown away" he was afraid to go back to the workshop and spend more money.

Here we have one of the many difficulties facing the rural entrepreneur - lack of knowledge as to his rights in regard to commercial interests that carry out repairs. Having paid K100 he should have felt able to take the motor back and insist that it be made to operate without extra payment - assuming that no additional damage had been sustained.

The second canoe went into business at the beginning of 1973 and lasted only two years. The owner, Peter, in his 40s, was educated at a Catholic school to Standard III, then after two years training with the Mission, worked as a carpenter for sixteen years before returning to village life in 1967. He started building his canoe in 1972 out of logs bought from Mekeo relatives and paid for with an unspecified amount of rice, sugar, tinned meat and fish and tea. With the help of an Australian son-in-law he acquired a 40hp Johnson outboard motor and went into business about February 1973.

The profitability or otherwise of such ventures is difficult to assess as the operator's records tend to be incomplete. Peter's figures indicate that between March and June 1973 he made nine round-trips to Moresby, carrying 187 passengers and their cargo for K617.10. In the same period he made nine local trips to market with 81 passengers for K86.10. His recorded expenses were K202.40 for petrol and oil and K41.15 for servicing and spark-plugs. In other words, in the four months to the end of June 1973, according to his records, he had a tidy operating surplus of K459.65.

The road to Moresby was opened to through traffic about June, and over the next few months Peter's records show a clear decline in the use of his canoe - certainly he made fewer trips to Moresby although his canoe was still regularly patronised on market days. I suspect his enthusiasm for keeping records was also declining at this time, for they become more sparse and confused.

	<u>Income</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Surplus</u>
Four months: April-June 1973 (9 trips to Moresby, 9 local market journeys)	K703.20	K243.55	K459.65
Twelve months: July '73- June '74. (3 trips to Monsby, 16 local trips)	345.50	321.85	23.65
3 major repairs (I saw no invoices).		400.00	
	<u>1048.70</u>	<u>965.40</u>	<u>83.30</u>

While I do not believe we can place much reliance on the accuracy of these figures, their general trend is clear - the opening of the road provided villagers with a faster, more convenient means of transport.

A one-way trip to Moresby by canoe took a minimum of nine hours and cost K2.50, and once in town people had to find further transport to reach their houses. The truck takes three hours, costs K3.00, and delivers people to their doors.

Another point emerging from Peter's and others' records is the lack of importance the local-level businessman places on accurate books, especially when problems begin to mount up. A man who ran a small bus for a few months told me "I used to keep a record of income and expenditure, then I threw it away when I saw the expenses getting too big. It made my head ache."

For Peter, the end of his business came early in 1975 when his twelve-year old son became ill. A doctor suggested to me that the boy might have osteomyelitis, but Peter would not leave him in hospital long enough for proper tests to be made. Convinced that the boy had been bewitched by others who were jealous of the canoe business, Peter pulled his canoe up onto the beach and removed the motor.

By the end of 1975 the hulls were dried-out and split, fit only for firewood, and Peter's son had improved to the extent that he could crawl from the house to the beach and back again.

3

The third canoe went into service in 1969. The owner and his brother, at that time in their middle to late twenties, acquired a loan from the Development Bank to buy their 40hp motor. They operated it until the latter part of 1974, by which time the motor was breaking down almost every time it was taken out, and the hulls were leaking badly as a result of damage by marine worms.

Although I have no figures for income and expenditure for this canoe, prior to the opening of the road it was clearly running at a satisfactory profit. The original loan was apparently paid back within six months, and a later loan from Josephine Abaijah (then MHA Central District), after the motor required an overhaul, was repaid in time variously quoted as between two and five months. When his younger brother's wife died in 1972, the owner asserts that he spent between K300 and K500 on petrol and other matters, giving free passages to numerous relatives who came to cry at the funeral.

The possibility of sorcery was raised as the cause of this canoe's breaking up. It was not the owner, but his cousin (his father's sister's daughter) who told me one day that rival business interests in the community wanted a monopoly and had made magic, calling on their ancestors to damage the canoe. That was the reason that the hull split, and once it was

repaired, why the motor continuously played up.

Unlike the previous case, the sorcery was supposedly directed at the canoe and its motor rather than at the entrepreneur's family. Sorcery was also cited as the cause of the brother's wife's death, but for reasons unrelated to the canoeing business.

In the early part of 1974 the owner told me he was thinking of building a new canoe, but by 1975 he was no longer interested. There were two reasons; with the road taking most passengers there was little need for sea transport, and his brother had used their good standing with the Development Bank to obtain a loan for a passenger truck.

Trade Stores:

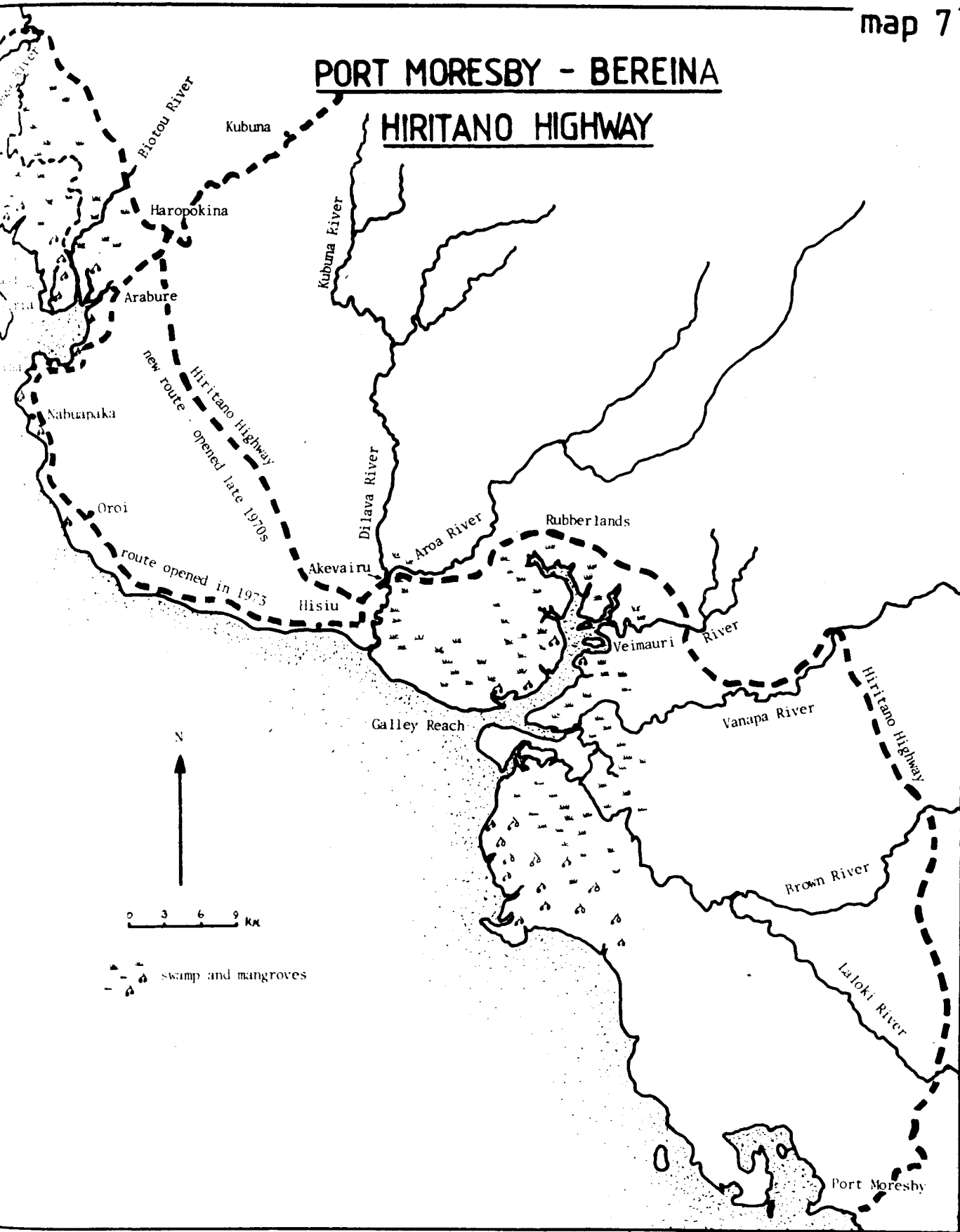
In mid-1973 the two privately owned trade-stores were tin sheds under ten feet square. Both carried low stocks of fast-selling goods such as cigarettes, tobacco, canned fish and meat, rice, sugar, tea and ships biscuits, and both operated by almost running down on goods before using takings to re-stock their shelves.

In early 1976 these stores were still operating, the Cooperative store had twice reopened and twice closed again, and there were two new stores along the road at some distance from the village. One of these last (which I shall not refer to again) was owned and run by an Australian ostensibly in the name of a villager from a neighbouring community.

The Hiritano Highway has provided an opportunity for new stores to be established and significantly increased the turnover at those already existing.

PORT MORESBY - BEREINA

HIRITANO HIGHWAY



1

The first is run by the man who owned canoe number 1. He has run his store for a number of years but could not tell me just when he first opened it.

As with the canoe, it is difficult to assess profitability, for although owners keep their invoices for goods bought, they do not maintain records of sales. I have not even attempted to estimate profits, and the figures below simply show the turnover based on invoices from wholesalers in Port Moresby.

Jan-June '73	13 invoices	K386.88
(then the road was opened)		
July-Dec '73	38 invoices	1044.72
Jan-June '74	34 invoices	1684.02

As a direct result of the road, then, a considerable increase in turnover occurred. The road encouraged villagers working in Moresby to return at weekends. Many visited home as often as once a fortnight.

I should note two points about the figures I have quoted: for four months during the third period (Jan - April 1974) the road west of the village was closed by floods, but the village itself was still connected to Moresby. As a result it played host to hundreds of Mekeo and western Roro people as they arrived by canoe to continue their journey to Moresby by truck, or, coming from town, waited for canoes to take them home. Thus the figure for the third period may be inflated by the demands of the people passing through.

The second point is that a part of the apparent increase in turnover is undoubtedly the result of inflation: this store's invoices show the following increases over the eighteen-month period.

25kg bag of white rice	increased from K5.20 to 9.00
30 kg " " sugar " " "	8.00 " 15.90
1 carton tinned fish " "	8.40 " 11.90

These were the most extreme price rises. Other items such as tea and cigarettes had gone up, but only a few toea. Even taking unusual demand and inflation into account, I believe the figures show a considerably increased turnover of stock.

I have not attempted an estimate of this man's expenses but I did try to assess the pressures faced by the second store owner.

2

The second store is owned by a man in his late 50s. He is hereditary chief of his sub-clan, had a limited education, and gained most of his non-subsistence work experience as personal servant to ANGAU officers during the war. When he returned home, he married and eventually became village councillor and then Local Government Councillor representing the village. He was also active in the Co-operative Society, and on the Mission school P and C Association.

He began his store in 1966 with money raised from the sale of a pig. As with the first store, the road has led to increased stock turnover, although not as great as for the first example:

Jan-June '73 (road opened)	10 invoices	K310.84
July-Dec '73	14 invoices	407.58
Jan-June '74	23 invoices	724.60

This is the evidence from invoices alone. Some have probably not been included, and store owners sometimes buy goods without dockets. This man returned from one trip to Moresby with K96.00 worth of goods on invoices, and about K20.00 without. These figures do not, of course, include fares, freight charges nor expenses while in town.

While the turnover of both these stores may appear high for such a small community, actual profits are likely to be low as a result of government control of retail prices. Most essential goods are subject to price control and the Consumer Affairs Bureau maintains a strict watch, prosecuting retailers who overcharge.

Uncontrolled goods such as clothing have a slower turnover rate than foodstuffs, and the village store-keeper does not often stock such items.

In assessing the gains made by the owner of a small business such as this, we must discard the notion of profit in its financial sense as too restrictive in its meaning (see Barth 1963). (Many villagers and store owners alike confuse 'profit' with 'takings'). The rural entrepreneur does not separate his business from his other day-to-day family and social affairs - household expenses, gardening, bride-price and funeral contributions - and one of the most important overt functions of the store is probably to provide the owner with a source of ready cash: the takings.

Later in this chapter I attempt to outline this man's various sources of income and his expenses. It becomes clear that many of his commitments are met from the takings in his store, to the extent that there are times when he is without both cash and stock.¹

1. In 1974 an Australian Council Advisor told me in casual conversation of a similar situation in a neighbouring community, where, he asserted, a privately owned store had been running at a loss for 15 years. When it runs out of money, the owner and his sons make copra to obtain cash for more stock. What he could not tell me was the extent to which the deficit was a loss on the running of the store, or rather the takings being spent on other things such as gambling and bride-price contributions.

On one such occasion in May 1974 the shop contained some soap, a few biscuits, three tins of fish, and several pounds of boiled sweets. The owner 'sold' the sweets to village children in exchange for dry coconuts with which to make copra to obtain money for new supplies. He was able to restock his store the following month. (Compare Finney 1969:40).

Trucks - Passenger Transport:

Within the first twelve months of the opening of the Hiritano Highway four people attempted to establish Passenger Motor Vehicle businesses (PMV). A PMV is any road vehicle - car, truck, small bus, or utility - licensed to carry passengers. By Christmas 1975 only one of these remained.

I

George, a young man on leave from his job as a truck-driver with the Bougainville Copper Company, bought the first PMV. He arrived in October 1973 with K1000 and the intention of using it as a deposit on a K2000 truck. Instead the salesman at the car yard put strong pressure on him to buy a 2ton Nissan Cabal at K3000. With insurance and registration, the total price came to about K4000 so that after putting down his deposit, and paying for seats, frame and a canopy for the tray of the truck, he was left with about K3000 in repayments. He signed an agreement to pay at the rate of K177.63 for eighteen months.

Four months after he began using the truck, I made arrangements with him to keep a record of his journeys, number of passengers, and expenses, but unfortunately it broke down before he could begin the records.

Clearly he was taking enough in fares to cover normal running expenses and his monthly repayments. He told me he was also able to put a little into the bank but did not specify how much. He worked hard, often making two round trips to Port Morsby with 24 hours, especially at weekends when many people were travelling. He did not make enough money to cover major depreciation and repairs.

In March 1974, less than five months after he bought it, his truck irretrievably broke-down. He had driven it at high speeds for most of that time. He asserted that at the beginning of March, he had had the vehicle fully serviced at a cost of K87.00. He brought it back to the village, and two days later it was undrivable, with loud clanking noises in the engine, and hard to get into gear.

He could not repair it himself, could not afford to tow the vehicle to Moresby, nor could he pay his monthly instalments. Some time later the finance company repossessed the truck and made their own arrangements to tow it to town.

I am not a mechanic and could never get an authoritative verdict on the problem. George himself maintained that the engine bearings had broken up, though it seemed to me that the difficulties lay more in the gear box.

What was the cause of the breakdown? Whether it was unreliable servicing, or George's driving too hard, too fast, too early in the vehicle's career so that the engine was not properly run in, is impossible to say. Clearly he had several difficulties with his business, beginning with an aggressive salesman who

persuaded him to buy a vehicle he did not want, and to sign an agreement to repay at high rates; his own lack of sympathy for the truck, so that he drove it too hard; perhaps a lack of understanding of proper maintenance requirements (as a driver on Bougainville, other people would have done his servicing); and a possibly poorly-undertaken service just before the vehicle broke-down.

If this last was a cause, as George maintained, he had no means of proving it and thus no redress against the servicing agent.

As is so often the case, a complex question of sorcery came up with George and others asserting that his truck had been destroyed by sorcery, and that his own life was threatened. Reasons cited were others' jealousy over the truck, and problems with the family of a girl he was courting. In retrospect he justified his hard driving as the product of sorcery: "My head was already turned. I was driving my truck at 95 - 100 mph. Really stupid. And I didn't know it!"

2

A European married to a woman from the village bought the next truck, a three-ton Isuzu 250, at the end of 1973. He intended to establish a small business in his wife's name to provide an income for her and their children should anything happen to him.

He employed his wife's brother as driver, and for a short while the PMV comfortably covered its running costs. Within three months, in February 1974, this vehicle too was off the road. The driver said that the filter pump had been smashed by a rock, the axle bearings shattered, and the engine poured out smoke. The owner at this time was in another part of the country.

The driver was highly competent at handling the vehicle. Some years earlier he had been with the Public Works Department, and maintains that he was Prince Philip's driver when at one time the Duke visited Papua New Guinea. I suspect therefore that the problem with this vehicle lay in a combination of rough roads and lack of knowledge about proper maintenance. As in George's case, when this man was employed by PWD, other people would have serviced his vehicle.

3

The third PMV lasted about a year. A young school teacher returned home in December 1973 and bought a second-hand Toyota Hi-Ace bus. He paid a deposit of K500 and agreed to pay the remainder over twelve monthly instalments of K71.75. He gave the bus to his father's brother to manage; a second father's brother, a mechanic, undertook the servicing and maintenance; while a third man became driver. According to records I asked them to keep for two and a half months between April and June 1974 they carried 135 passengers, took K405.00 in fares, and paid out K139.55 on petrol and oil.

This business might have kept going if the roads and the bus had been in better condition. At that stage the road was too rough for a small vehicle, and the bus, by no means new when it was bought, required constant maintenance. In the end these difficulties overwhelmed it, and the owners abandoned it in its parking spot near the village towards the end of 1974.

A further problem facing such enterprises comes when the owner or manager has to rely on others for his driving and servicing. Neither the driver nor the mechanic possessed unlimited enthusiasm for constant work in a virtually honorary capacity.

The driver, for example, has ambitions to launch his own business venture - he wants to save money to build a little roadside cafe to cater for travellers, but there is no money for him in driving for someone else.

I recorded the following notes after a conversation with him in June 1974:

[The driver] wants to go to Moresby to earn money, but [the manager] wants him to stay. The latter ... doesn't need to worry about his gardens etc, because his father and elder brother are here to help him and his family while he goes around with the bus. The driver is on his own and now finds no time to work his gardens properly - "birds have spoiled all the bananas." He has perhaps two or three days per week to go fishing, hunting, tending the garden, repairing his canoe and house. And he gets no real wage - the amount depends on the takings. Some weeks he might get nothing, other weeks K5.00 or K6.00, rarely more. So he and his wife have to collect coconuts and sell them in the markets at Moresby, but the return is small, perhaps up to K10.00. And he pays K40.00 per annum for one child's schooling, and K5.00 and K4.00 for the other two. Then there is Local Government tax, clothing etc.

And the driver feels that the manager does not spend the bus takings wisely. On one occasion he lost K25.00 gambling.

But he still plans his business and cafe.

4

The longest-lasting passenger vehicle business so far began in June 1974, when Alan, the younger brother of canoe-owner number 3 bought a 15-seater Toyota Hi-Ace bus. Second hand, it had done 59,000 miles, and he paid K670 deposit on a total cost of K1100, the balance payable at K53 per month for one year.

In his early 30s, Alan has had some high school education, and worked in Moresby for a number of years. He is a careful driver with a sympathy for his vehicle, which in any case was in better condition than the smaller Hi-Ace bus in example 3, and he was always ready to return it to the dealer for attention and service.

I have no figures on Alan's income and expenditure, but he was clearly successful. Early in 1975 he was able to capitalise on a good reputation with the Development Bank and obtain a new loan. He traded-in his bus and bought instead a brand-new truck which he converted - with wooden seats, a frame and canopy on the tray - into a PMV capable of carrying 16 people plus their goods (the bus had been too small to carry much cargo).

Eighteen months later (two years after he had first bought the bus) Alan's PMV was still in good condition and he was talking of trading it for a new and larger truck when he had completed his repayments. By a judicious use of his resources, and a respect for the needs of his vehicle (partly learned from experience with the canoe) he has been able to keep his PMV going while others have lost both their vehicle and their money.

The kinds of problems brought about through poor roads and basic mechanical ignorance are repeated all over the country, as Finney's material indicates for Goroka (1969:47-48).

Discussion:

While the opening of the road led to the demise of canoeing enterprises, it has also brought about greatly improved communication between the village and its sons and daughters in Port Moresby, and between the

village and its regional centre, Bereina. With the road has come a more frequent flow of people between town and village, with townspeople carrying money, food, building materials, and urban news and ideas; and villagers taking vegetables, coconuts and sea products to urban markets. This movement has led to increased turnover in village stores and to opportunities for PMV owners, as well as raising the possibilities for a wide range of other enterprises and service industries.

I am always struck by the number of men who talk of starting a business venture of some description, but equally taken by the fact that there is so little action - and that which does take place tends to follow established examples rather than branch into new areas.

So, for example, different men have talked about establishing a cafe or service station on the road to cater for travellers; others have talked of piggeries, poultry farming, and cattle raising; another considers planting a wide range of citrus fruits; and yet another has had detailed plans since 1974 to build a digester from which he will get methane gas for his cooking and lighting and fertilizer for fish ponds and vegetable gardening. Yet no-one has actually started any such enterprise, even though most could probably be viable.¹

1. I tried to encourage people. When anyone did talk to me of poultry farming, for example, I would obtain the appropriate literature written in Hiri Motu from the relevant government department in Moresby, and pass it to the individual concerned.

In the late 70s then, the overt situation did not look much different from that in June 1973: the same two trade-stores operating, and one passenger truck as distinct from two motorized canoes. Several families dream of opening little trade stores, and almost every household ponders the benefits of owning its own truck. The examples they see convince them that they would have success in the same field. People do not want to know that a multiplicity of such enterprises would leave the majority unviable.

A Mekeo friend complained of the same problem in his area, with increasing numbers of people attempting to start miniature rice or cattle projects, and remaining uninterested in his alternative suggestions that would complement rather than rival existing ventures.

Three questions arise, first why does so little action emerge from so many words? second, who is it in fact who takes the initiative? and third, what are his problems?

To take the second question first: without further work in other Roro/Waima communities, I am not prepared to make a categorical statement on the nature or class of men who first attempt commercial ventures of the type I have been discussing. The evidence from this one community is suggestive: of the eight men concerned as principals in the enterprises I have listed, six belong to the class hereditary leaders known as obia (they are either obia themselves, sons or adopted sons of obia, or have a strong, long-standing claim to the status), one is European, and one is an ordinary man (uraru - 'poor'). The last person's maternal grandfather, however, had high rank in the ancestral community of Waima and himself may perhaps be described as representing the new generation. He is educated, travelled and outward-looking.

Thus it may normally be men with claims to hereditary leadership status who take such initiatives. This would provide, of course, a partial answer to the first of my questions: given the number of ideas people possess, why do so few actually try to put them into action?

Traditionally the ordinary man should not appear to seek chiefly status. As Stephen said of Mekeo, "The man who aspires to a position which is not his by birth is looked upon with contempt. To 'beg' for office is beneath the dignity of respectable men" (1974:13), and one of the many tasks of the official sorcerer in former times was to protect his chief by knocking down the upstart. Even the chief himself should not seem to covet inordinate wealth or influence but maintain a low profile as generous protector and provider for his people - the focal point of his sub-clan.¹ Even he might become a target for the sorcery of those jealous of him.

During disputes I have heard influential men accuse the present-day chiefs of neglecting their responsibilities for the welfare of the community. Stephen cited similar complaints in Mekeo (1974: chapters 7 & 8). She also provided a thoroughly comprehensive discussion of the decline of the real authority and influence of Mekeo chiefs since the 1940s.

1. In the village where I lived the houses of the four sub-clan chiefs were of noticeably poorer quality than those of many of their clan members. This contrasts with the Mekeo and the older Roro situation. Hau'ofa says of Beipa'a village that chief's houses had special roof designs to distinguish them from those of other men, and that the largest and most impressive belonged to chiefs and other hereditary leaders. Further, chief's houses were built parallel to the central ground, while the others were at right-angles to it (Hau'ofa 1975:51-52).

It is a largely unperceived loss certainly misunderstood by the people themselves, who react by asserting that chiefs deliberately misuse their positions (1974:374). Chiefs can no longer give positive direction to the new developments, while ordinary men fear to take the initiative.

For these reasons, and because people expect their chief to provide the focus for the needs and aspirations of the sub-clan, it would seem inevitable that his followers, even the well educated, leave to him the problems and privileges of innovation. In this lies not only a conflict of interests in the present but perhaps a hang-over of understandings from the past: in earlier times when a chief or other appropriate individual initiated an enterprise such as a fishing expedition, a festival, or a canoe-racing challenge to neighbours, everybody was involved, and all gained not only from the distribution of food, but also from the prestige of a successful venture.

While a communal enterprise clearly brings the same prestige to its participants (Finney 1969:30; Lawson 1971 a:10) a purely one-man business does not always work this way, and it may be that this is a part of the reason for the sorcery fears and for the ambivalent attitude which almost everyone holds towards the entrepreneur, and which such men hold towards each other. In an ideologically egalitarian society where even chiefs do not flaunt wealth, people watch each other carefully, or fear that others are watching them.

I have already recounted how Peter abandoned his canoe because he believed his son had been bewitched; how some asserted that the troubles of another canoe were induced by sorcery; and how George maintained that his careless speed was caused by sorcery -each as a result of others' jealousy over the businesses.

At least two deaths of men working in Port Moresby were attributed to jealousy over their distribution of incomes. In one instance the victim had allegedly failed to give some money to the supposed sorcerer when the latter asked for it, and in the other the explanation offered was that the victim had been in the habit of bringing food to the village for his own family while the sorcerer's grandchildren had not been taking food home. So the sorcerer, in an apparent fit of pique, killed off the generous man.

A young man from another village, who holds a good job in Port Moresby, told me that he would like to set up business in the Bereina area to ply his trade but fears sorcery. Even while he works in town his father insists that he "walk small" to avoid problems with those who might be jealous of him. In the village, he says, many of his relatives deprecate his success and speak of him as roaming Moresby without a job, or with only a menial task, to prevent jealous minds from working their sorcery.

Finney observed that Gorokan entrepreneurs faced the same fears (1969:31-32). Agricultural officers told him that men who were becoming prominent through their skills commonly feared assassination by sorcery (1973:114). One man abandoned a cattle project for this reason, and a high school student wrote, "Whenever a man is becoming rich or popular in the district some of his own people quickly get jealous of him and kill him or do other things to make him die" (Finney 1969:32; 1973:113-114).

To return specifically to the Nabua businessman: the owner of store number 2, Canillo, although his education and English are limited, is progressive and intelligent, outward-looking and keen to see the village

improve its appearance and amenities. He is chief of his sub-clan and at one time was Local Government Councillor, on the committee of the village Co-operative Society, and running his own small store. Then his eldest daughter and only son became ill, and he consulted a diviner (auba'i hauna) who told him that they were sick because he was raising himself too high. As a result he resigned from the Co-op and the Council, and his implication is that his children improved because the sorcerer (never named) had succeeded in pulling him down a little, and then removed the baleful effects of his sorcery.

If it seems strange that even a chief should not appear to elevate himself too far above ordinary men, then we need to recall that for Roro as for Mekeo

Chiefs acted little differently from commoners in the normal routine of everyday life: like other men they had to provide for the subsistence needs of themselves and their families. Only on ceremonial occasions was the distance between chief and commoner, and the grandeur of chiefly office, displayed in full (Stephen 1974:369).

It is easy to argue that sorcery is a rationalisation for failure and a convenient excuse for giving up, but this underestimates the depth of belief. Far from being simply an explanation for misfortune, such fears may effectively limit ambition. In 1974 a well educated young man working in Port Moresby lamented the amount of sorcery against business people in the village, and asked rhetorically, "How can we develop?" and at the beginning of 1976, another man with university education expressed doubts about continuing with our project to reopen the village co-operative store. He and I and a number of other young people, all of whom were working in Moresby, were concerned in

the venture. When I pressed him for a reason he explained that he feared sorcery against his two children: "People get jealous. If it is a village project, and it is successful, they all want to be bosses".

The lingering concern at the back of everyone's minds that sorcery may be practiced against the entrepreneur or other successful individual, is perhaps the strongest reflection of the jealous admiration and distrust that villagers feel towards those seen as business men. Such men appear to hold the same suspicions about each other. A man advised me in reference to one, "Don't give him any concessions, he's a business man". On another occasion while I was sitting with one of the store-keepers, a small boy appeared asking for free tobacco for his father, one of the truck drivers. The store-keeper grudgingly handed a stick to the boy, and then turned to me, "Why does he want tobacco from me? He's a businessman too."

This same man was indignant when he was criticised for going to town to purchase goods for his store. The critic, whose son owned one of the passenger trucks, had no hereditary rights to leadership but had at different times been elected manager of the Co-operative Society and Local Government Councillor.

The store-owner cornered me and complained about the criticism:

So-and-so was critical of me going to Moresby. 'Always looking for business' he said, 'not thinking of the village'. and then he criticised the motorised canoe owners for taking their motors to Irobo to carry passengers when the road was closed, 'who asked them to go to Irobo? They should stay and help in the village. Who is doing their gardens? Why can't they help with Council work on Tuesdays?

They shouldn't think of their businesses all the time'.

And I told him to look out, who is driving his truck? Isn't that business also? If he needs to go to Yule Island or Irobo market, who is going to carry him if there are no motors? We have to help each other with all our enterprises. And businesses have to look for money to keep going.

While it is not easy to make a definitive statement, it is probably true that a combination of criticisms such as these, fears of sorcery, the egalitarian ideal, and a remembrance of the proper role of the chief as father/elder brother to his sub-clan, that encourages the entrepreneur to maintain a low profile, to contribute generously to sub-clan and community concerns, and not to seek to expand his affairs too widely.

I made an attempt at recording at least part of the income and expenditure of store-owner number 2. The lists, on page 325, are by no means complete, do not include the purchase and sale of his store goods, and were compiled one day when we sat down to estimate his transactions for the previous year. They do indicate a part of the calls upon his income and the contributions he feels it necessary to make towards village affairs. They show also that at least during 1973/4 he appears to have paid far more in cash and kind towards community concerns than he received. (Compare Finney's observations of Gorokan business leaders' efforts, like traditional big-men, to satisfy their followers with constant generosity and assistance - 1969:28; 1973:110).

As I suggested earlier, many of Camillo's expenses are met directly from the receipts at his store, and for this reason we should not look to the economic notion of 'profit' as a purpose for running a business. Rather, the store provides this man with a source of ready cash from which he can finance some of his community commitments.

So when a young girl in this man's sub-clan lost her husband in a road accident, he paid for the various families to travel to the dead man's village and back; made a substantial contribution towards buying a pig; and donated from his store a bag of rice and another of flour.

Again, when his elderly father's brother was ill, this man paid for most of the divination and curing procedures, and fed the kinsmen and friends who arrived from other villages to sit at the old man's bed.

Some might feel that my comments on sorcery and other problems of the local entrepreneur are wholly negative and indicate a major stumbling-block to the Government aim of encouraging small-scale local-level business ventures in the rural areas of the nation. Given the current ideological search for the "Melanesian Way" of doing things, it may be that the factors inhibiting the village business-man help to prevent, in the short term, the rise of a small class of entrepreneurs in control of much of the nation's wealth.

Figure 7

Receipts & Expenses of store-owner No 2.

(Excluding purchase & sale of goods in the store itself)

INCOME:

Contributions <u>from</u>		
bride-price payments	32.00	$\frac{1}{2}$ bag each of rice, flour, sugar; garden food; arm- shells; Bird of Paradise plumes.
sale of copra	26.00	
sale of coconuts/betel- nut at market	26.00	
from funeral feast	2.00	$\frac{1}{4}$ bag flour, rice, sugar.
from daughter in town	<u>60.00</u>	
	146.00	

This does not include receipts from his store, nor does it include probable other occasions on which he sold copra or produce on the urban markets. The K60 from his daughter went towards buying roofing iron.

EXPENSES:

Trading licence	6.00	
Gun licence	2.00	
Council Tax	8.00	
School fees: High Sch x 1	40.00	
Primary Sch x 2 chn.	10.00	
Contributions to various		1 bag flour; several yds
bride price payments	35.00	cloth, 2 plates, gdn produce.
Contribution to nephew's		bag flour; 10 lb rice; sugar
1st party	5.00	2 cans fish; cloth
funeral contributions -		40 coconuts; betelnut;
pig transport	7.00	garden produce.
transport	36.00	
daughter's widow's		1 pig (K100); 2 bas each
feast transport	20.00	rice, flour; tea.
(plus day-to-day expenses		
feeding guests)		
farewell gift - LMS Pastor	2.00	1 shirt
Gift to Waima man who		
brought sago	2.00	1 shirt
contribution to transport		cartridges; rice; flour; tea;
for trip to Waima for		sugar; garden food.
feast	<u>10.00</u>	
	183.00	

This does not include clothing, pocket money for children at school, feeding his own household - with food from the store as well as from the garden, feeding visitors, fares and freight to and from town, copra bags, building materials, water tank (which he bought during the year), etc etc. Nor does it include the purchase of goods for his store.

For just how long such men are going to remain satisfied with their present gains (alternatively, how long they can satisfy their followers) is another question, as is that of whether the generation at present in school will be willing to accept the same restraints.

Be that as it may, to understand the nature of innovation in any area, we must take account both of so-called traditional attitudes and values and the opportunities made available in more recent times. Mair (1969:124-127) pointed out that in any situation the individual with access to resources has more than one choice as to how he may use or exploit them. Rarely is there a rigid expectation as to how he should act, rather there is almost always "room for manoeuvre", and we can see social change as an extension of the room for manoeuvre open to a person. As new political and economic opportunities become available, so the individual has a wider field of action through which to choose what is best for himself and his family.

Most men probably seek to control and exploit available resources to their own best advantage, and incidentally to the benefit of their followers. In this context we must remember that the rural entrepreneur is first and foremost a villager with all the implications that this has for the obligations and expectations he and his fellow villagers hold towards one another. With this in mind, it seems clear that the individual village business-man may only expand his ventures to the position where he and his fellows all recognise some mutual gain - although this may not be a conscious process. Beyond such a point his activities may backfire with accusations of greed and sorcery, and loss of followers (see Barth 1963; Brox 1963).

As for co-operatives, whether government sponsored or the product of local initiative, I have already noted the jealousies and suspicions surrounding such enterprises in Mekeo and Roro, and Finney has commented on problems with group ownership of trucks in Goroka (1969:48-49; 1973: 153-154; cf: Strathern 1971:490). In reference to those who seek a Melanesian Way of doing business, it is worth pointing out as Finney does that the "communal model rests on unwarranted assumptions concerning indigenous society" (1969:32-33). Over twenty years ago Nayacakalou made the same observations in Fiji: "the structure of Fijian social groups is entirely different from that of co-operatives" (1975:129), yet Fijian leaders still invoke this ideal for running business enterprises (Monsell-Davis 1980:12-13).

Ulufa'alu remarked in reference to land "there is a war path where individuality and communalism meet in a severe battle over who is to rule" (cited in Fitzpatrick and Southwood 1976:8). With entrepreneurial ventures the battle is over differing notions of communalism. In traditional Melanesian society, generally speaking, the most consistent co-operation probably lay within sub-clans and local groups, or between sub-clans allied as, for example, affines, rather than right across the community; kinsfolk came together to assemble contributions for marriage and mortuary exchanges; residential groups combined for ritual affairs such as initiation and dance, or for warfare; kin and neighbours co-operated in matters such as house-building, garden preparation fishing and hunting; and even where land was owned in common, it was most usually divided and gardened by individuals or families following the initial co-operative clearing or digging.

All these were and still remain relatively short-term affairs in which everybody participated. They are long-term only in the sense that they are cyclical, recurring again and again. This kind of communalism is excellent for pooling resources for capital investment in a truck, building materials for a store, or for the initial planting of a cash crop such as coffee, but it is not appropriate for the long-term, uninterrupted management of a business venture. It is not possible for everybody to be actively involved all the time, and squabbles occur over such matters as who is to run the business, handle the money, or drive the truck and for what purpose. Suspicions arise as to the behaviour and motives of the leaders of the enterprise, whom people believe to be concerned only with self aggrandizement and personal wealth.

Villagers are convinced the entrepreneur has plenty of money¹, however poverty-stricken he might appear. "Always looking for money", is typical of the comments made, even though the same man might himself be seeking money by selling vegetables in the Moresby markets or copra to the Copra Marketing Board. People do not characterise these as business.

1. I remember a number of years ago some of my schoolboy students from villages east of Moresby, telling me of a canoeing business which was making so much money, they assured me, that the owner carried a spare motor, and if the first broke-down on a journey he simply tipped it into the sea and used the spare. On his return to town he would buy a new motor.

While all will have their own opinion as to the truth or otherwise of this tale, I quote it because it illustrates the belief that businessmen have substantial incomes

It may be significant that one obtains money from external sources, while the other gets it from his fellow villagers. Again, while the former does not regularly take vegetables to town, the latter operates his business all the time. Stephen noted that making money from betelnut does not arouse Mekeo fears. The trade offends no social values since all may participate freely in it, and the income is distributed fairly evenly (1974:375). The same may be said of crayfishing in Nabuapaka, and might be expected to become true of selling fish at other times of the year to the Yule Lobster Enterprise once the practice has become institutionalised.

Stephen optimistically concluded of betelnut, its success demonstrates "that developments in which all ... can share more or less equally are likely to encounter little opposition" (1974:384).

Conclusion:

Barth's model for the "description and analysis of entrepreneurs in their community setting" (1963:9) envisages an ecological niche into which the entrepreneur slots himself, bringing with him his assets which include his skills, capital, and social claims. The last includes such things as status as hereditary leader. Together the "niche and assets determine the restrictions to which any particular enterprise is subject" (1963:9-10).

Here we must consider the motive for starting a business venture. If the profit sought from the enterprise is primarily prestige, as Harris noted for the Koroba district (1973), and Lawson observed among the Kyaka Enga (1971) then once the owner has achieved his political ends he may not be too particular about what happens to his venture.

I believe Roro and Mekeo interests are mainly economic, but rather than viewing their present enterprises as the start of financial empires they should be seen as, in a sense, an extension of subsistence activities. Just as people require fish, bananas, and areca nut, so they need money for clothing, school fees and tax. A small business such as a trade store provides a source of ready cash to meet these everyday demands, and from this point of view it is a success, even if a failure in economic terms. As Finney pointed out, Highland trucking ventures were economic disasters, but were successful in that they provided much-needed transport services, and prestige accrued to their owners.

In Roro, the niche into which the entrepreneur fits at present is mainly in the field of service enterprises such as transport and retail trading. The limitations include the five points I raised early in this chapter. Clearly they overlap to a considerable degree, but I shall keep them separate for present purposes:

1. History: I do not think there can be much doubt that the history of a people's relations with the Colonial government can affect their attitudes towards new developments. Where colonial officials have poor expectations of Papuan abilities, and deem it necessary to compel local labour and planting, as in Mekeo and Roro; where there is inadequate planning leading to a poor infrastructure of roads and marketing facilities for crops, or service and maintenance arrangements for equipment; where enthusiastic extension officers give people over-optimistic expectations of possible benefits; and where, as has sometimes occurred, officials are concerned with their own ideas and notions of efficiency rather than with local participation, learning and initiative so that they override people's wishes, and ignore the fact that they need time to absorb the implications of a project and make appropriate adjustments to their life-style and institutions; where any combination of these factors has occurred, we may expect attitudes ranging from truculence and lack of interest, as pre-war officials accused the Mekeo and Roro, through lack of confidence in their own abilities that may be indirectly expressed in sorcery fears, to outright distrust of any venture sponsored by the government.

In 1970 I was research assistant to a geographer in Mt Hagen. I was to interview people in a rural setting, asking them what new projects, such as schools,

aidposts, or roads, they hoped to see in their area. Several were reluctant to discuss anything, and one man said, "That's nothing to do with me, that's government business" (em ino samting belong mi. Em samting belong gavmen), and refused to say anything further.

2. Community obligations: As a villager, the rural entrepreneur must choose between a modest enterprise that does not offend social values but allows him to continue his day-to-day affairs as a community member, and one that provides him with a good income but effectively severs his old relations with his fellows.

The independent farmer (galala) in Fiji chose the second course by establishing cash-cropping ventures at some distance from the village, thereby limiting everyday intercourse with his kin and neighbours. But even he contributed generously to community affairs such as church buildings, and heeded chiefly calls for resources (Frazer 1973). The Nabuapaka businessman has not yet distanced himself from his fellows and in consequence has little room for manoeuvre. He is interested still in his position as a good kinsman and neighbour, and the recurring theme of sorcery clearly reflects his fears that others might see him as repudiating traditional relationships. (Frazer does not mention it, but my own experience indicates that for the same reasons the Fijian independent farmer is not entirely free from concern about sorcery).

3. Knowledge: I do not need to belabour this point. Clearly the entrepreneur with appropriate basic managerial, accounting or mechanical skills is the more likely to succeed, as is the man with knowledge of the services available to him from larger commercial concerns such as banks, finance houses, repair workshops, government

extension facilities and the like. It is also important that he understand his rights in relation to such agencies. Finally the man who can choose an ecological niche that has not yet been exploited is more likely to achieve his aims than the one who follows established patterns. In this the villager needs assistance to assess the possibilities for ventures that complement rather than rival existing enterprises.

4. Communal Organisation: Nor do I need to add anything under this heading except to repeat the point that traditional communal organisation was of a different order to that required of a modern co-operative business.

5. Social Structure: Finney (1972:116-117) cites work by McClelland (1967), Alexander (1967), and LeVine (1966) indicating that communities with a markedly achieved status system have a greater proportion of people high in need for achievement than societies with largely ascribed status systems. The former tend to produce more entrepreneurs and to be more involved in economic development.

Finney then showed that in the early years of Tahitian colonial experience it was chiefs who used their positions to dominate trading relations between their people and Europeans (1972:125), but that more recently it has been part-Europeans (demis) and evolué Tahitians who have become prominent. Such men "must either break, or bend to [their] own use" basic tenets concerning equality and reciprocity. Ordinary Tahitian villagers thus view them as exploiters, "as men who are stingy with their pay, who refuse to share their wealth, and who drive too hard a bargain in commercial transactions, or simply as ... kinsmen who have cheated their ... relatives" (1972:128).

I am not equipped to measure Roro or Mekeo need for achievement, but in terms of their desire to participate in the cash economy they are individually and collectively as keen as any other group in Papua New Guinea. Undoubtedly their difficulties stem in part from their status system but also include some of the other factors I have cited such as historical experience and notions of proper relations between kin and neighbours.

Chapter Nine.

THE PAST, THE PRESENT AND THE FUTURE.

The Past, the Present and the Future

One hundred and twenty years ago the Roro were seafarers and traders who lived in a number of sub-clan based hamlets in the Waima-Kivori-Bereina region, and along the lower reaches of the Angabanga Delta. Their agriculture was based on shifting cultivation of the banana and yam as staple crops.

An independent people, their relations with neighbouring communities were characterised by intermittent warfare and regular trade for items such as Bird-of-Paradise plumes and stone-axes from the mountains via Kuni and Mekeo, shell jewellery from Motu, and sago from Elema.

They had strong hereditary chiefs whose political power was backed by personal sorcerers whose spiritual powers descended from a long line of ancestors. Chiefs were not wealthy men who used their accumulated resources to manipulate political relationships, rather they maintained order through the coercive fear of sorcery, and controlled the distribution of their sub-clans' resources during feasts that centered largely on members' life-crisis ceremonies, culminating in major ritual installation of new chiefs. It was on these occasions that the distinctions between chiefs and commoners were most clearly accentuated. In everyday affairs chiefs, like other men, engaged in normal subsistence activity.

One purpose of this thesis has been to demonstrate the strength of traditional leadership and its important bases in heredity and in spiritual power. A second aim,

through a detailed ethnographic study centered on only one Roro Village, Nabuapaka, has been to document some of the changes that have taken place during their colonially-induced transformation from a politically and economically autonomous people, to peasant fisher-folk whose leaders and laws have become subordinated to a wider polity, and who now depend for a part of their livelihood on cash derived from limited primary sources within their own environment (copra and crayfishing), and in part from remittances by sons and daughters working elsewhere in the country. In recent years some individuals have sought to diversify their sources of cash by establishing service industries such as transport and trade-stores. My third intention has been to examine some of the difficulties faced by such enterprises.

While there is little doubt that there has been a long, dynamic evolution of Melanesian societies prior to the Colonial era (Salisbury 1970:2; Valentine 1973:227), there is equally no question that the processes and direction of change have intensified over the last century, beginning with the introduced epidemics that swept the coast killing large numbers of people and leading to significant movements of population. It is probable that the Roro settlement on Yule Island (Tsiria) as well as those to the south of Yule (Delena, Poukama, Nabuapaka and Hisiu) all result, at least in part, from those epidemics.

All subsequent changes derive from the sandalwood traders, missionaries and colonial government who successively invaded the coast in the final quarter of the nineteenth century, and through their activities set in train fundamental transformations to the economic and political life of the people.

Leadership and ceremonial feasting:

Hau'ofa (1975) and Stephen (1974) have shown that the Mekeo "authority system ... differs markedly from those which have informed the prevailing view of Melanesian political organisation" (Hau'ofa 1975: 333), in that Mekeo possess a strong chiefly structure based on inheritance and the coercive power of sorcery.

My purpose in chapters 5 and 6 of this thesis was to indicate the similar strong emphasis on heredity in Roro society in contrast to the big-man model of leadership commonly ascribed to Melanesia. Using the work of writers such as Malinowski (1922), Seligmann (1910), Powell (1967), Uberoi (1962), Young (1971) Groves (1961, 1963, 73), Oram 1968, Abbi (1964, 1976), van Rijswijck (1967), Maher (1974), Ryan (1974), Williams (1969) and Hallpike (1977) it is possible to demonstrate that there is in fact an important hereditary aspect to the political structure of most societies along the south-east coast of Papua (as well as in other areas of the country such as Wogeo on the north coast - Hogbin 1978), with perhaps its strongest expression in the Trobriand Islands and among the Mekeo/Roro.

The hereditary element is almost always to do with the inheritance of magical powers relevant to important areas of the economy or to political and social affairs. That is, to magic controlling the weather, gardening, fishing, hunting, trade, warfare and sorcery.

In Roro there is a hierarchy of men with such powers headed by the chief and his personal sorcerer, followed by men who control specialist magic such as that of the rain and sunshine, and below them the ordinary men and women of the community.

The manoeuvring for real influence takes place only within the "catchment" (Ryan 1974) of ranking men who have inherited specialist powers, but the most important men are normally chiefs who are the pivot of their sub-clans, and without whom the subclan may neither give nor receive resources at feasts, nor may it play its full part in the ceremonial life of the community. The chief is responsible for the well-being of his followers and protects them against sorcery. Collectively chiefs are responsible for village affairs and social control, and in this they depend upon their sorcerers.

In the past each chief was backed by a personal sorcerer whose task it was to defend him, to ensure that all ritual was carried out according to tradition, and to execute chiefly instructions in matters of social control, one aspect of which was to discourage individual ambition by bewitching those who seemed likely to challenge chiefly prerogatives and status.

Among chiefs themselves there is a kind of ranking based on the position of their subclan in the village. In Nabuapaka, for example, Barai Kupuna is nominally the dominant subclan because its founders were the first to settle there, as I show in chapter 4. Its chief, therefore, is theoretically the leading man in the community. This ranking, reflected also in the spatial arrangement of sub-clans, is modified as I show in chapters 5, 6 and 7, by the personal ability and influence of any one chief at a particular time, and by the fact that Kivori is "in the middle" and its chief thus able to exert a moderating influence during disputes between the two principal sub-clans.

Apart from the deference due to them, in everyday matters ranking men did not stand out: they engaged in subsistence gardening, fishing and hunting like ordinary men. It was mainly at feasts and on other ceremonial occasions that those of chiefly status were unambiguously separated from other men in their dress, behaviour and control over the distribution of resources.

Feasting and exchange, presided over by chiefs, took place at almost every stage in the life-cycle of an individual from birth through adolescence and marriage to death (Chapter 3). These celebrations, plus those to welcome a returning trading expedition from the Gulf or to mark the installation of a new chief, commonly took place over two or three days, included the killing of a large number of pigs, and the distribution of huge quantities of garden produce, fish and wallaby meat. In addition they commonly brought together chiefs, sorcerers and people from communities throughout the Roro and Mekeo domain.

The diminishing of these feasts over the years has led to a greater isolation of individual communities from ceremonial linkages with each other, and to a corresponding diminishing of chiefs - of the occasions when chiefs could demonstrate their solidarity as a class and their separation from other men.

The decline of ceremony:

The decline in the number of occasions on which feasting and the exchange of valuables took place, and the reduced size of the ceremonial that remains, can be attributed to a number of factors: firstly church, in particular LMS, opposition to extended dance festivals on the grounds of the apparent sexual licence

among unmarried people (compare Hogbin 1951:137), and the supposed waste of resources and time.

Second, Administration attempts to control pigs by forcing villagers to pen their beasts instead of enclosing gardens, has helped reduce the pig population as it is harder to care for captive animals than those that forage for themselves. This in itself leads to a decline in the size of feasts as people suffer great shame if they have inadequate pork to offer guests.

Third, the main body of dancers on such occasions was composed of youths and maidens and the recently married, and as school, carrying for government patrols, and plantation and other wage labour demanded more and more time, many members of this group were no longer available either to dance (often because they did not have time to ritually prepare themselves - chapter 6) or to fish and hunt for the event.

Finally, the reduction in trade and exchange with neighbouring communities as the Roro adopted steel tools and metal pots, and learned that rice would tide them over periods of shortage with less effort than sago, may have led to a drop in the quantity of valuables circulating in the area.

All these factors, plus MSC efforts to reconcile aggrieved parties, may also be partly responsible for elopements taking precedence over arranged marriages (chapter 3) that require a greater expenditure of valuables.

I am not able to reconstruct formal relationships that Roro leaders may have had with Elema, Motu or Kuni partners for the ceremonial exchange of valuables such as existed in the Hiri (Groves 1973), Kula (Malinowski 1966) or Moka (Bulmer 1960). Presumably such exchanges provided the Roro with one arena in which to vie for

prestige, just as they did for the Motu, Trobriand Islanders and Kyaka Enga. The decline in trade and in ceremonial, however, have reduced the occasions on which chiefs could adorn themselves in full regalia and demonstrate their skills and their separation from commoners, and their control over the receipt and distribution of resources.

The fact that many people are away at school or working for wage labour for long periods and answering to external authorities such as the mission or government must also imply a loss of chiefly control over them. The corollary must be a reduction in the people's dependence on their chiefs.

The reduced time spent in obligatory childbirth and mourning seclusion (chapter 3) may reflect in part increasing secularisation of Roro society in terms of the traditional religion, but also perhaps, the increasing influence of Christianity: it is not uncommon to hear remarks like "We are Christians now, we must treat people like Christians" (Compare van Rijswijck on Kuni attitudes - 1967). The trend may also reflect changes in access to resources: incarcerating a widow with young children meant that others had to feed and clothe the children, which becomes more difficult as people grow more dependent on money for basic subsistence.

Government:

The relationship of the Roro with the Administration has not been a happy one, as I document in chapters 2 and 8. The government established in 1884 and consolidated during the long Murray regime was heavily paternalist in its attitude towards the people. It imposed numerous regulations - some quite petty - that invaded almost every aspect of villager's lives with threats of fines or imprisonment for non-compliance. Even the planting of coconuts and clearing of plantations was enforced with threats.

Village Constables and Village Councillors were mostly appointed from the ranks of traditional leaders, putting them in the ambiguous position of having to obey the government and simultaneously satisfy their village fellows.

The general effect of this era of enforced economic activity and compulsory carrying, which reached its peak during the second World War was to create a resentment among the people that led government officials to believe that the Roro and Mekeo were a difficult people to handle. Officials failed to realise that at least in some instances the people felt they were being made to work for others who would reap the harvest - a negation of the basic principle of reciprocity.

While there was no overt rebellion, no co-ordinated resistance, resentment and tension were there, and were expressed in truculence, passive resistance and the two outbreaks of "cargo cult" in 1929 and 1941.

Following the war the establishment of Co-operatives, Local Government Councils and eventually the House of Assembly, were attempts to anticipate political and economic demands, and channel them in a manner acceptable to the Australian authorities. This fact, plus the failure of a number of enterprises, and the manner in which some officials conducted themselves as advisors, continued the process of directing people and discouraging initiative that had begun with the pervasive Native Regulations and Native Officials, and led to general indifference to government-sponsored projects.

Social Control:

There is as yet no major problem of social control in Nabuapaka. The introduction of Mission teaching has not seriously undermined traditional beliefs in bush spirits and sorcery that, together with public opinion, provide the sanctions underlying the virtues of reciprocity, good temper and confession for misdeeds. The church has perhaps lent further support for the same values by adding Christian sanctions to the traditional ones.

The significant changes lie in the formal administration of dispute settlement. [In this the Local Government Councillor has taken over from the chiefs, although as I show in chapter 7, he receives much support from the chiefs. I have already noted the general loss of chiefly stature, and the lessening of people's dependence on their chiefs. It is worth observing that the colonial administration did not support chiefs qua chiefs - thus strengthening the chiefly class as a class as in places like Fiji (France 1969), but it did strengthen the position of individual chiefs by appointing them village officials.

The very fact that earlier councillors were men of rank may have given the role of councillor an aura of authority that has now carried over into the post itself so that non-ranking men who hold the position may expect to command respect and obedience. The process is not yet complete. The present councillor is still firmly supported by the most influential chief, and the latter's authority stems in part from belief that he, as chief, can invoke the power of sorcery. People do say "We don't obey our chiefs any more," but they also say "The chief is the step of the sorcerer, so we're afraid of chiefs."

The newly elected village magistrate remarked to me early in 1978 "I'm going to really go after the sorcerers." If he is successful he may unwittingly unleash a whole new problem of social control.

Individualism, communalism and entrepreneurs:

The early explorers and sailors initially found the Roro unwilling to trade, for although they coveted the steel axes and knives brought by the newcomers, they were reluctant to part with the much-needed food crops that the ships-crews wanted. With the arrival of the more independent sandalwood traders the rate of trade increased as the Roro were able to supply an item for which they themselves had little use.

Godelier argues that the introduction of steel tools to the Baruya led to an increase in the productivity of individual work and thus "diminished the social significance of collective labour by making co-operation in work less necessary" (1977:134). While the Roro most certainly still value collective labour, perhaps it is possible to see in the use of steel tools the first step in a process leading ultimately to a greater relative stress on the individual and the nuclear family vis-a-vis the wider community.

In the same vein, the Pax Britannica that abolished warfare and revenge killings allowed a greater freedom of movement between settlements, again reducing dependence on others for defence (Hau'ofa 1975:45; compare Hogbin 1951:115-117). The process has continued with decline of the men's club-house, marea, as the focal point of social life. In the past men spent a great deal of time in the club-house, often sleeping, eating and entertaining there with friends, clansmen and their sub-clan chiefs. There the ties between them and their mutual obligations and responsibilities were constantly reinforced. Today with many people away at work and

school, with Mission emphasis on the nuclear family, and a growing dependence on cash, the focus is shifting from subclan solidarity with the chief as head, to the needs of the individual and the household (compare Stephen 1974:365-367).

While it is possible to argue, then, that in practical terms there is an increasing, largely unperceived emphasis on individual needs at the expense of the wider community, ideologically people still stress the values of co-operation and reciprocity. Stephen noted that the church had not significantly brought traditional beliefs into question (1974:387), and both she and Hau'ofa recognise the economic egalitarianism of Mekeo society, and the fear of sorcery as a coercive agent. Hau'ofa wrote

Individual ambitions are not encouraged; they are actively discouraged. This applies equally to ordinary people and to leaders ... the ideal seems to be that no one should become too rich (1975:344)

noting also that:

The ultimate force backing and regulating ... relationships is sorcery and the fear thereof (1975:342).

Here then, lies one of the fundamental problems of the Roro or Mekeo entrepreneur: a growing dependence on cash, plus subtle shifts towards individuality, set against strong traditional pressures for co-operation, sharing and reciprocity, and against any form of individual ambition, backed by the coercive force of sorcery wielded by chiefs and their sorcerers. Stephen noted that the Mekeo business man's position conflicts with notions of equal opportunity and that rank and privilege are conferred only by birth. She added that at the least sign of illness or misfortune the entrepreneur

is faced with a steady stream of sympathetic visitors each advising him that "some important chief or sorcerer opposes his activities and that it would be best to abandon them before serious trouble" occurs. As she says, the anxiety build up can become intolerable (Stephen 1974:354), and leads in the end to the kind of fears, failures and abandonment of projects that I have recounted for Nabupaka in chapter 8 of this thesis.

Conclusion:

I do not want to end on too pessimistic a note. While the changes that have taken place in Roro society are the result of the same international processes that have brought many so-called "underdeveloped" parts of the world into a dependence on wealthy industrial nations and the vagaries of the global economy (Brookfield 1972: 1975), and this includes depressed areas of the industrial nations themselves, Roro have not remained entirely passive acceptors of events.

Like Mekeo (Stephen 1974:354), Roro are eager to participate in the new world. They accepted the opportunity to abandon warfare and pay-back killing, they quickly found a commodity that they could exchange for steel tools and other trade goods, they became Constables and Councillors in the villages, and, as individuals, sought new avenues to prestige through education and training to become teachers and priests and, more recently, outside the village, to enter all areas of business and government.

In the villages Roro and Mekeo resented compulsory planting, tax and carrying for government patrols, seeing in these no benefit to themselves. As their cash needs grew, particularly following the Second World War, they participated in government-sponsored co-

operatives to stimulate rice-growing, copra-production and the fishing industry, but the failure of these enterprises to deliver the anticipated benefits, coupled with their own ideologies concerning access to resources and prestige has led to a general disillusion with such projects, and people are turning instead to family or individually owned ventures such as transport and tradestore ownership to acquire the ready cash that they need.

The opening of the road in 1973 has given new life to the village, and new opportunities for such entrepreneurial enterprises. Economically the history of these businesses is not encouraging. They have been dogged by administrative and mechanical difficulties, and by fears of jealousy and sorcery that stem in part from traditional values that oppose individual ambition and stress equal access to resources. These undoubtedly lead to feelings of guilt and anxiety on the part of the entrepreneur.

The new resource, of course, is money, which is needed for clothing, transport, tax, food (particularly during the wet season when garden produce is in short supply) and to pay for education - itself a key to new avenues for prestige and money. Money is as much a subsistence requirement today as stone axes and shell jewellery were in the past.

Burridge argued (1969b) that money societies and subsistence societies represented different moral orders, yet Godelier showed (1977) that some commodities in subsistence economies functioned very like money in that they could be converted into a number of other commodities, although they were not a universal measure of value as money is.

The significant difference, perhaps, lies in something neither Burridge nor Godelier touched on directly, and that is that while traditional valuables and money may both be invested for future profit, the former have to be given away before they yield prestige and credit, whereas control over money must be largely retained by the owner.

Money is invested in banks and business enterprises, the owner does not lose his title to it or its products, and he alone gains credit, but the only means by which credit can be extracted from traditional wealth is by giving it away: it passes through many hands, each pair of which can thus build credit for future use.

Money, therefore, while more flexible than traditional wealth as an exchange commodity and expression of value, is paradoxically less flexible as a unit permitting equal access to its credit-generating and purchasing powers. (Compare Knapman and Walter, 1980, who show for Mavana in Lau that while subsistence production is redistributed in a manner that obliterates inequality, there is no operative mechanism for the redistribution of cash).

Hence some of the jealousies and fears surrounding entrepreneurial ventures: incipient individualism in the changing society itself coupled with the individualism that money implies both in terms I have just discussed, and as an aid in reducing dependence for resources on chiefs and sub-clan fellows.

Where is Nabuapaka likely to go from here?
Howlett argued that in Goroka "the inevitable
consequences" of the

constraints of the environment,
indigenous socio-economic character-
istics and development policies ...
will be the entrenchment of an
economically unstable peasantry [that
will be forever transitional]
(Howlett 1973:273).

The Roro environment is limited, but they do have the resources of the sea (if these are not divided up between foreign fishing companies), and as they go through the present period of experimentation and learning how to handle trucks and other mechanical equipment, and as technology and values evolve to allow equal share in the commercial exploitation of the sea, (as Mekeo have an equal share in the betel-nut trade), perhaps those who remain at home will develop a new subsistence prosperity, shared by all, based on fishing and service industries.

The Roro are a dynamic society and thoroughly enjoy life. The young people who have grown up since the 1950s are reaching out to the new opportunities. They do not express regret for the past, but look forward to the future.

Appendices

APPENDIX 1.

Population Estimates of Roro/Waima¹ Villages
in the 1890s - by MacGregor.

Mou	300	(BNG 1890:76)
Tsiria	250	(BNG 1890:81)
Delena ²	150-200	(BNG 1890:83)
Waima ³	1500	(BNG 1890:85)
Kivori	1000-1200	(BNG 1890:85)
Nabuapaka ⁴	70	(BNG 1890:83)
{Akabara ⁵	30	(BNG 1890:76)
{Tepeina (Rapa) ⁶	250	(BNG 1890:70)
Babiko	100	(BNG 1894:16)
Hisiu ⁷	180	(BNG 1894:38)

1. Excluding Pinupaka, Bereina, Biotou, Arabure and the now abandoned site of Vailala for which MacGregor seems not to have recorded estimates.
2. Chalmers and Gill estimated 250 in 1885 (1885:270).
3. MacGregor, following Motu custom, referred to it as Maiva.
4. MacGregor used the Motu name, Keabada. He did not provide population figures for Nabuapaka, but on the basis of his estimate for Delena that there were 150-200 people living in "a score ... of houses on the beach and about a dozen more on the small plateau" (1890:83), that is an average of 5-7 per house, we might expect Nabua to have 60-80 people at that time, for he noted "about a dozen houses" (1890:83).
5. "six dwellings" (MacGregor - BNG 1890:76).
6. MacGregor's references to Meauri (1893:20) probably mean Rapa. Meauri is an important sub-klan of that village. Similarly his references to Tepeina also seem likely to mean Rapa. In 1890 he recorded Tepeina as a half-mile from Akabara and having a blind chief of about 60. In 1894 he referred to the "blind old chief" of Rapa. He also noted that Akabara and Rapa "form one community" and that Akabara residents were shifting to Rapa (BNG 1894:15).
7. Thirty houses. "Isiu is a village of quite recent growth ... they are a swarm off the Maiva tribe" (BNG 1894:38).

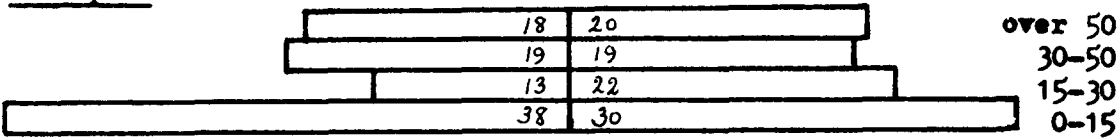
APPENDIX 2.

Age structure of Nabuapaka¹ - 1973 - 1974.

	under 15		15-30		30-50		over 50		totals		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Living in Nabua	38	30	13	22	19	19	18	20	88	91	179
Iare or Nearby ²	5	1	3	4	3	3	1	1	12	9	21
Elsewhere ³	31	20	22	28	13	11	-	-	66	59	125
Totals ⁴	74	51	38	54	35	33	19	21	166	159	325
	125		92		68		40		325		

Male | Female

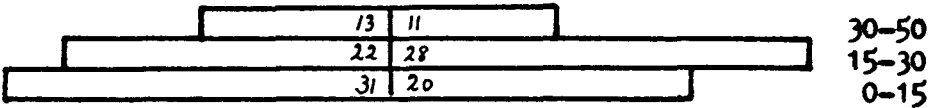
Nabuapaka



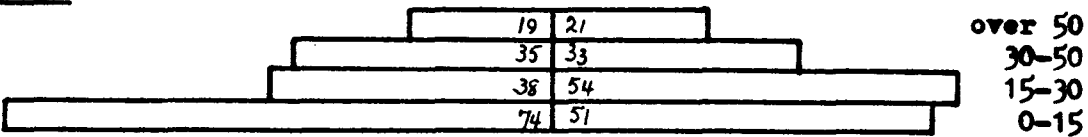
Iare



Elsewhere



Totals



Notes on next page.

1. Villagers do not keep birth records and are vague as to their ages, which is my reason for using these broad categories. My estimates are based on those few who do know their ages, and from that point using accounts of who was born before whom.

These figures are not intended to be definitive, merely a guide to the population structure.

2. This is an incomplete enumeration of Iare. It's population is probably double these figures. I have included only those whom villagers regard as Nabua people but are living in Iare.

3. Includes Nabua people living in Moresby, Kubuna etc who have regular contact with the village. Also includes people living further afield (Lae, Bougainville) who regularly return to the village on leave.

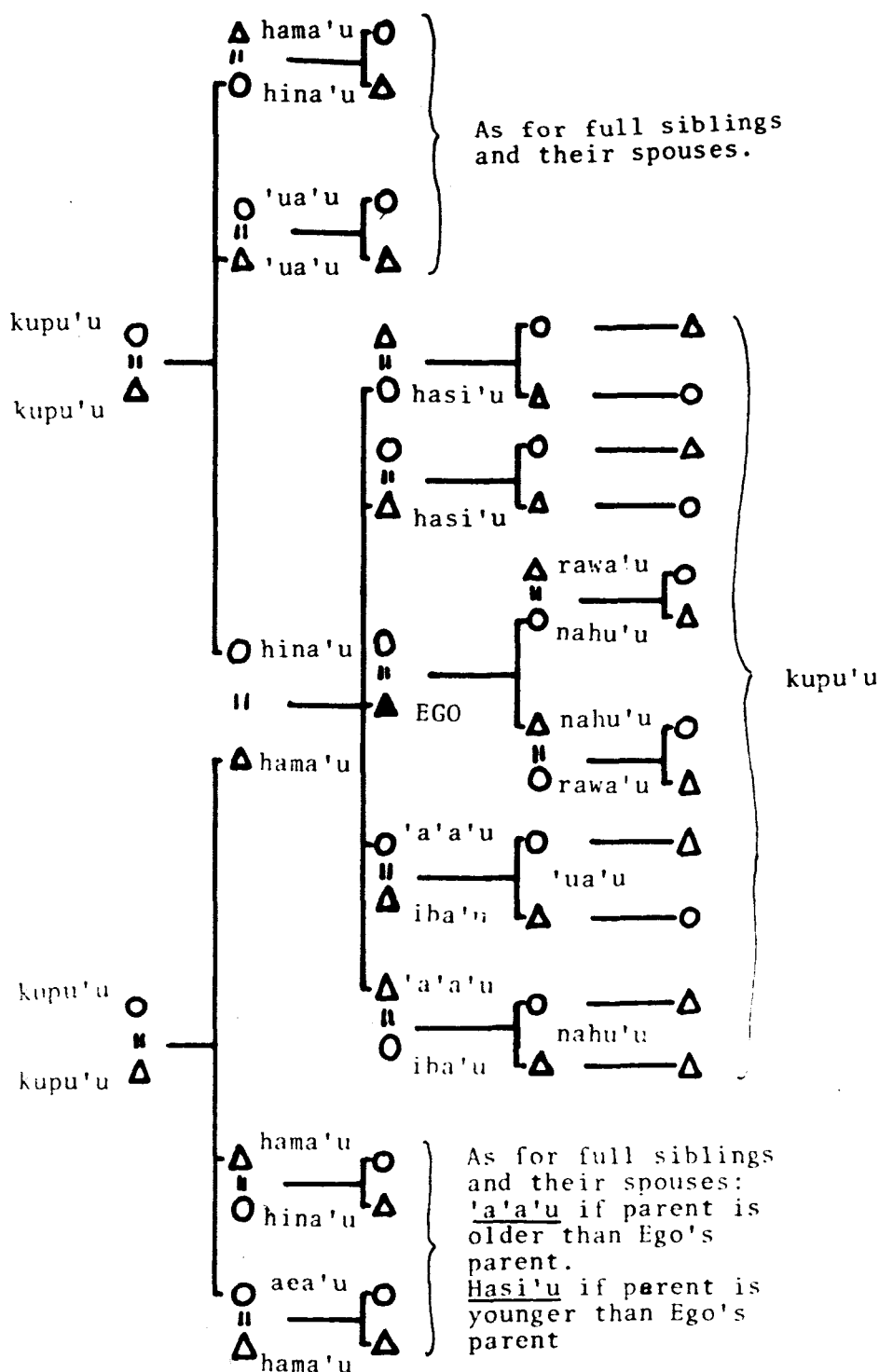
There are others whom I have not listed who have not visited the village for some years, thus I do not count them as interacting with the community.

4. I cannot account for the imbalance in the male-female ratios for the under 15 and 15-30 age groups.

It has certainly been my impression over the last decade that there has been a preponderance of live male births and a number of deaths of infant females.

Roro Kinship Terminology

In this table ego is male.
Where ego is female, the terms are exactly the same except that she refers to her sister's children as nahu'u, and her brother's children as aea'u



Haibu'u	:	general term for siblings
'a'a'u	:	older brother, sister
hasi'u	:	younger brother, sister
iba'u	:	brother/sister-in-law
rawa'u	:	mother/father-in-law
'ua'u	:	daughter/son-in-law
	:	can be general term for 'relative'

APPENDIX 4.The "Eight-Point Improvement Plan."**PAPUA NEW GUINEA'S EIGHT AIMS**

- A rapid increase in the proportion of the economy under the control of Papua New Guinean individuals and groups and in the proportion of personal and property income that goes to Papua New Guineans
- More equal distribution of economic benefits, including movement toward equalisation of incomes among people and toward equalisation of services among different areas of the country
- Decentralisation of economic activity, planning and government spending, with emphasis on agricultural development, village industry, better internal trade, and more spending channelled to local and area bodies
- An emphasis on small scale artisan, service and business activity, relying where possible on typically Papua New Guinean forms of business activity
- A more self-reliant economy, less dependent for its needs on imported goods and services and better able to meet the needs of its people through local production
- An increasing capacity for meeting government spending needs from locally raised revenue
- A rapid increase in the equal and active participation of women in all forms of economic and social activity
- Government control and involvement in those sectors of the economy where control is necessary to achieve the desired kind of development.

From: Strategies for Nationhood : Policies and Issues, December 1974 (Page 2).

Central Planning Office, P.N.G.

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Abbreviations:

IASER	Institute of Applied Social & Economic Development
JPH	Journal of Pacific History
JPNGS	Journal of the Papua New Guinea Society
JPS	Journal of the Polynesian Society
JRAI	Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute
NGRU	New Guinea Research Unit
UPNG	University of Papua New Guinea

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NABUAPAKA - A Response to Examiners.

It is evident from the comments of the examiners that one can apply the old cliché to my account - that it raises as many questions as it attempts to answer. If my response seems at times inconclusive, it is for reasons including lack of data, as explained below.

In general I accept the comments from Dr. Hau'ofa that the thesis would benefit from more clearly defined themes stated firmly at the start, and carried through to the conclusion. Such themes could be the traditional anthropological ones of social change and social control. Although both are in fact among my themes it could perhaps be more clearly stated. Alternatively one could take a more contemporary approach through discussions of imperialism, colonial repression and neo-Marxist theories of economic transformation.

My intentions, however, were as I stated them in the introduction, and these were to write a general ethnography of the Roro, with particular emphasis on the chiefly structure and on the efforts of rural entrepreneurs in the wake of the opening of the Hiritano Highway.

Having written it, I am aware that, presumably like most theses, there are a number of directions I could have taken, a number of areas I could have elaborated as monographs in themselves. For example, the material in chapters three and four dealing with life-cycle, and kinship and exchange and sub-clans, could be considerably expanded. This would be a study of the workings of descent and the interrelationships between subclans. In this regard the symbolic and empirical position of women is critical. We could explore the question, for instance, of a possible structural/symbolic relationship between wife-takers and food-takers. Both are inferior to the givers. The former, one might argue, are food-takers par-excellence: they take not the food, but the producer of the food and of children, who are potential producers of food, and thus their debt can never be expunged.

A second area would centre on chapters five, six and seven, and be concerned with inheritance, power, magic and sorcery: what Modjeska has called "the political economy of politics, the economy and mystical power" (pers.comm). One could envision here a broad re-examination of ethnographic material from Polynesia right through to Indonesia, taking account of notions such as mana, tapu and distinctions between left and right.

A third monograph might examine the problems of the village-based entrepreneur, from the point of view that I have discussed them, and perhaps also with greater emphasis on the colonial conversion of a domestic economy, drawing on the Marxist and neo-Marxist theories of development and dependency.

To take any of these as single theme at this stage, however, would require a very considerable amount more work, either in the field or in library archives.

Christianity:

Turning to more specific issues raised by the examiners, both Bulmer and Allen raise questions related to the work of the Christian Missions. Bulmer asks about contemporary Christian practice, organisation of congregations and the relationship of these to group structure and leadership. Allen is concerned with the processes of conversion, the ideological appeal of Christianity for the people, the relationship between chiefs and Christianity and power, between cargo cults and chiefs, and the kinds of challenge that missionaries and others might have made to sorcerers - and thus to chiefs.

Although I noted that the entry of both LMS and MSC missionaries to communities like Waima was facilitated by rivalry between chiefs, so that chiefs and missionaries alike manipulated each other to their advantage (pp.55-56), I am still very conscious of the limited discussion in these areas.

I also raised questions about the impact of Catholic and LMS pastors (pp.57-60) in their respective parishes, noting some effects such as differing dancing styles, and I explicitly stated that we

require a detailed study of their differing roles. Finally I noted that Christianity appears to have significantly affected pre-Christian religious beliefs and may in fact have strengthened some sanctions concerning theft and other offences by adding Christian sanctions to traditional ones (p.343). I consider, however, that belief in traditional sanctions remains a stronger influence on social control than the Christian God and notions of Heaven and Hell.

A more detailed account of the activities of the two churches and their personnel is worthy of a monograph in itself. I have not had the opportunity nor the time to examine either MSC or LMS archives. The only lengthy account that I am aware of concerning the work of the Catholic mission in the Yule Island area is that by Father Andre Dupeyrat: L'histoire de la Mission. It is in French, however, and regrettably my own command of that language is so shaky that it would require a labour of many, many hours, extending into months, for me to read it adequately. The French that I have quoted in the thesis was either short enough for me to tackle myself, or, in the case of Guis' La Vie des Papous, translated for me by students of the Regional Seminary in Suva.

I would thus have to undertake a great deal more archival work in order adequately to respond to Allen's questions in particular. On contemporary practice: everyone in Nabuapaka is nominally Christian, although regular church-going appears to be confined largely to women. Only one of the four chiefs is Catholic, the other three are LMS, but that does not mean that their clan members are therefore LMS - membership does not follow sub-clan divisions. The only one of the four who is a regular church-goer is one of the LMS chiefs. He is a Deacon in the church, but his influence in this sphere is limited as he is distrusted as a sorcerer.

There is no resident priest or pastor. LMS services are conducted by the deacons and the Catholic service by the elderly head of a non-chiefly lineage of Kuro Pokina sub-clan.

Several of the most influential men, chiefly and non-chiefly, label themselves Catholic or LMS, and bestir themselves to service

when the priest or pastor is visiting, but in the ordinary course of days display an indifference worthy of nominal Christians in Britain or Australia. At no time did I encounter the religious bigotry and rigid rules about the Sabbath, for example, that I have observed in other Pacific populations such as Niue and parts of Fiji.

Why Chiefs and Specialist Magicians?

Bulmer puzzles over the proliferation of ascribed offices in Mekeo and Roro, and asks

Is it just a historical accident that Meko and Roro have evolved (or retained from the ancient past) a system whereby ritual powers are compartmentalised and based on inherited esoteric knowledge? Or does this system perhaps also relate to an unusual degree of compartmentalisation in the traditional economy?

Within the context of Southern Papua, as I discuss in chapter five, the Mekeo and Roro system appears to be a more elaborate version of what is to be found among Austronesian and closely related NAN-speakers such as Mailu and Elema, throughout the region. To throw the net more widely, it is not in fact "an unusual degree" of specialisation, but rather a variation, not just on a Papuan theme, but on a common Oceanic theme.

Readers familiar with Polynesia will recognise much in my account that bears comparison with Polynesia. Thus specialisation of tasks and offices, hereditary chieftainship and notions of spiritual power lending legitimacy to various offices of political, economic or social significance are common throughout Oceania.

This is not the place for detailed speculation on why the Mekeo and Roro social systems should have evolved, or retained, chiefly and specialist offices. Goldman (1970) attempted to classify all Polynesian societies onto an evolutionary scale that he labelled Traditional, Open and Stratified. He sought to explain the differences found throughout Polynesia despite the underlying similarity of concepts of power and status.

I have yet fully to explore his arguments, but in the light of data from Mekeo and Roro it is worth noting some of his points.

He stressed, for example that

Polynesian status systems were organised ... around general principles expressing genealogical distinction, supernatural power, and sanctity, along with respect for outstanding competency in crafts, in warfare, in economic management, and in political leadership (Goldman 1970:35).

The degree to which any of these predominates varies from society to society, but "the central concept of power in ... all of Oceania is mana" (1970:10). "In all of Malayo-Polynesia, ideal status, therefore, has a religious setting" (1970:11), with mana, the religious power, inherited from ancient God-ancestors.

Linearity of descent from a distinguished founder then becomes a graded concept - the most direct line being the most honourable, the most circuitous the least (1970:16). The chieftainship should pass down a line of first-born males, or at a minimum a line of first-born of either sex (1970:36). From a comparative viewpoint this is significant when we consider the Roro willingness to permit a daughter, in the absence of sons, to inherit chieftainship and esoteric knowledge which she then passes to her sons, who have become members of her sub-clan rather than their father's.

Hereditary specialisation of crafts and other tasks seems to have been found on Easter Island (1970:113), Magaia (1970:77), Tonga (1970:297), Tokelau (1970:345) and Samoa (1970:257) among others. The extent to which these tasks were retained exclusively within particular descent groups is unclear. Certainly in some islands inherited skills were the property of particular groups. Goldman pointed out that in Samoa there was a high degree of specialisation of craftsmen of which the most important were carpenters, canoe-builders, and tattooers, and belonged to distinct genealogical lines:

The carpenters, for example, form a distinct genealogical entity, tracing descent through males from that great chief and carpenter, Malama, ... all carpenter craft units or societies are branches of a common descent line, and are ranked in order of genealogical closeness to the direct line from the founder (Goldman 1970:257).

In Fiji there is no doubt that there was a high degree of hereditary specialisation of tasks. From the writings of Derrick (1950:8), Hocart (1929:43-58), Roth (1973:59-64), Nayacakalou (1978:79-80) and Thompson (1940:48-53) we can discern a general pattern whereby each fully functioning community should ideally have several descent groups (mataqali) sharing certain tasks among them. The senior mataqali is the turaga or chiefly mataqali from which come the major chiefs of the community. Then come the sauturaga, the executive who carry out chiefly commands and support their authority. Following them is the mataqali of the matanivanua, the herald, the chiefly spokesman, envoy and master-of-ceremonies. Then come the priests, bete, and warriors, bati, who are members of yet other mataqali.

There are some variations. Nayacakalou noted, for example, a mataqali, quite distinct from the chiefly one, whose task it is to oversee the succession on the death of the old chief (1978: 79-80), and Thompson includes the highly important positions held by crop custodians, master fishermen, carpenters, food masters, and masters-of-the-ceremonial-grounds (1940:48-53). All these positions are retained by particular descent lines, and are backed by notions of mana and tapu.

In this context then, the Roro specialist magicians (part-time, like their Tikopian counterparts - Goldman 1970:362) who divide the work of controlling the weather, the growth of crops, war magic, sorcery, hunting, fishing, dance, the division of food at feasts and so on, must be seen not as "an unusual degree of compartmentalisation," but as perfectly consistent with their Austronesian cousins in other parts of the Pacific.

The fact that inherited offices and specialization of tasks is commonly seen as unusual in the Melanesian context is in part a product of the anthropological emphasis of recent decades. The strong ethnographic interest in Highlands big-men has tended to obscure alternative systems, and in particular the oft-reprinted and oft-cited paper by Sahlins (first published in 1963) on political types in Melanesia and Polynesia, has had a considerable influence on ethnographic thinking.

It is quite evident that there is in fact great variety in the political systems of Melanesia. An impression I have, but this requires further analysis, is that the true big man may be found principally in areas of dispersed settlement such as Siuai in Bougainville, and in parts of the Highlands.

Sub-clans and their relationships:

Allen raises a number of questions concerning group membership and my use of the term "sub-clan".

I employ the term "clan" in the sense that Keesing (1975:31) uses it to mean a descent grouping "whose members believe they are descended from a common ancestor, but do not know the genealogical connections." This distinguishes it from the lineage whose members can indicate their genealogical ties.

"Sub-clan" in the sense I use it, means a localised section of a clan which is dispersed through two or more villages (hence "dispersed clan"). As the genealogical data in chapter four clearly show, the itsubu in Nabuapaka, all ideologically sections of dispersed clans (but note Kivori and Hohorupaka), are commonly made up of two or more lineages.

Admittedly, Keesing also specifies that lineages and clans are unilineal, and the data from Nabuapaka, as Allen stresses and as I elaborate in chapter four, show that itsubu are not unilineal, but how many truly unilineal clans have anthropologists ever identified in Oceania? There is sufficient terminological confusion in Melanesian ethnography relating to descent and local groups as it is, and I was trying to remain consistent with at least Hau'ofa (1975), writing in the same culture area.

It is worth noting that Fox also tried to cut through the confusion in 1967 by using "clan and lineage as the terms for higher and lower order descent groups of whatever variety" (Fox 1967:50).

I agree with Allen, however, that Roro itsubu are probably best described as cognatic descent groups with a strong patrilineal bias. They are simultaneously a descent-based unit for the transmission of important offices and esoteric knowledge, and

property-holding residential corporations concerned with garden and village land, and, in the past, with the ownership of trading canoes and chiefly meeting houses (marea). Keesing stated that commonly in the Pacific we find principles of cognatic descent, for purposes of membership of corporate groups, alongside notions of patrilineal descent for purposes of status (1975:92). While this is probably true in broad ideological terms, it is also true, as Goldman pointed out (1970:36), and as the Roro data show, that in the absence of an appropriate male, transmission of status may take place through females.

In this context it may be that attempts to tie data to notions of patrilineality and matrilineality in fact compound the confusions, as Austronesian ideas concerning status are essentially religious. It is the degree of closeness to the God-Ancestor and thus to the source of mana that is important, rather than patrilineal descent per se. I have already noted Goldman's analysis above in my discussion of chiefs and specialist magicians.

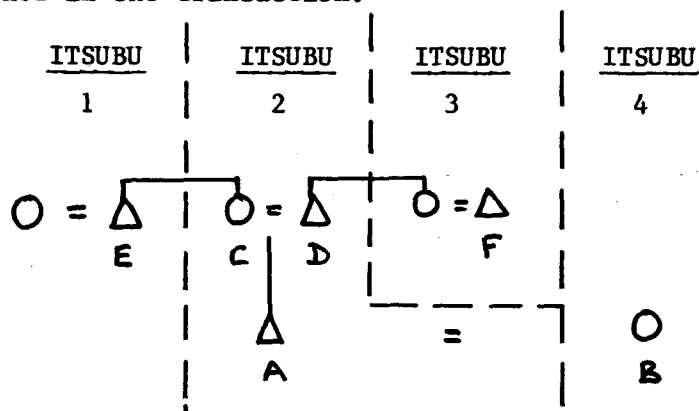
Allen asks about the rights of first, second and third-generation absentee members. Without observing actual instances of returning absentees, we can only speculate about the response should they try to assert their rights to land. I have noted the cases of Imo (p.175) and Saolo (p.175) who believe they can claim land left by their forbears in Waima and Kivori respectively. In another instance a man of about 30, whose grandfather left Nabuapaka after a quarrel many years ago and who never returned, accompanied his father's body to the village for burial. The senior men told him that if he wanted to settle in the village and claim land he had better do it quickly, before the older people died. Evidently there were expectations that he could assert a claim, but it was up to him to express an interest.

By contrast, after I left the village, a middle-aged man who had been adopted as an infant by his mother's brother, quarrelled violently with his foster father, abandoned his house and land and returned to his natal sub-clan. The last I heard was that his siblings were sheltering him and his family, but were reluctant to

provide him with land as they were short themselves.

I do not know the current state of either of these cases. Clearly we need to follow them up.

Allen also seeks clarification concerning marriage and death prestations and the groups of individuals contributing to these. His questions indicate certain ambiguities in my description. Broadly I can respond that it is the members of emically defined itsubu, the sub-clans or cognatic descent groups, who share responsibility for various prestations. They are joined, however, by closely related individuals in other itsubu that may not directly be concerned in the transaction.



A, for example, is to marry B. In appealing for bride-price, A's father will expect all members of his own itsubu (2), however related, to contribute. At the same time he expects E, from itsubu 1, and F from itsubu 3, also to contribute. D might in addition expect assistance from his own mother's itsubu. Clearly the range of individuals will vary according to the importance of the occasion and the size of the prestation expected.

Again, in a small community some members are likely to be equally closely related to both A and B. The decision then as to whether they will be givers with A or receivers of bride-price with B must rest on a whole series of related factors to do with personal relationships, political and economic matters and straightforward human idiosyncrasy.

I cannot answer Allen in more detail than this without a substantial reworking of my material, and possibly a further spell in the field.

Dispersed clans:

Bulmer asks about the significance of dispersed clans. My study was centered on only one village, but there is a real need for a broader overall study to elucidate the links between all Roro (and some Mekeo) communities, to draw the distinctions between the Roro/Paitana and Waima/Kivori groupings, and to examine the hierarchy of chieftainship throughout the area.

There is a clear division between the two broad categories of Roro/Paitana and Waima/Kivori that transcends any distinction based simply on dialect. While there has long been much intermarriage between the two (and with Mekeo, as MacGregor observed in 1890 - BNG 1890:77), it seems that with limited exceptions the dispersed clans are not normally represented outside their own category of villages. Kuro Pokina, in Nabuapaka, for example, is also represented in Tsiri'a, near the mouth of the Oreke river, and in Waima, both Waima/Kivori villages, but not, so far as I am aware, in any Roro/Paitana village. Similarly Parama Kupuna is represented in several Roro/Paitana villages including Tsiria on Yule Island and Poukama, but not in Waima/Kivori villages.

The broad political relationship between the dispersed clans remains unclear. It seems that just as within villages, as I describe, there is a hierarchy of sub-clans and their chiefs, so there is a hierarchy among the dispersed clans. Writing in 1910 Seligmann hinted that Parama Kupuna was dominant throughout Roro, but he did not make it plain whether he meant throughout the whole language area, or just within the Roro/Paitana sub-group. I suspect the latter, for 65 years later the senior chief of Parama Kupuna, resident in Poukama, was still spoken of as the leading chief of Roro/Paitana, whilst the leading chief of Waima/Kivori is said to be resident, with his sorcerer, at Waima.

Seligmann wrote that Parama Kupuna was looked upon as the oldest Roro itsubu, and was probably the strongest. "Its Ovia Itsipana (Chief-of-the-Right) exercised a certain authority over the whole of the Roro tribe, and was known as ovia pakana hauna, literally 'chief big man'" (Seligmann 1910:219). That would probably better translate as 'first of chiefs,' as pakana is usually used in the sense of 'first born.'

Parama Kupuna is acknowledged as the leading clan of Roro/Paitana, and its chief is thus the senior chief. Its pre-eminent position appears to be justified by an ancient story that tells how the original chief, Airaba, killed his son, the heir to the chieftainship, and buried him beneath the main post of the first chiefly meeting house (marea) to be built. By sacrificing his son, Airaba gave extraordinary sanctity to his own position and to his marea (Baupua pers. Comm and 1975).

The significance of this leading position of Parama Kupuna and its chief on the overall political, economic and social organisation of the Roro/Paitana villages, and the interrelationship with the Waima/Kivori villages, is still an open question.

Other matters:

Allen wants greater discussion of questions of economic exploitation (chiefs/commoners and men/women) versus reciprocity and equivalence: and about male/female relations and the recruitment and organisation of labour, particularly with regard to horticulture and fishing.

These matters do not receive extended attention in my thesis because they were not of great apparent concern in Nabuapaka while I was there. I did not hear people complain of economic exploitation by chiefs, nor women complain about men in this regard. As I stress in my account, chiefs for the most part are not overtly wealthier than other individuals. In everyday affairs they are hardly to be distinguished from the general population, and must support their families by subsistence labour like any other man.

When they receive quantities of food at feasts they normally redistribute it almost immediately, and while people may complain about chiefs "not looking after their people" it is most usually in connection with chiefs' failure to mobilise resources to divine the causes of an epidemic, or not moving to control the activities of a sorcerer. Complaints are not about economic exploitation, as such, unlike contemporary Fiji where complaints about the economic demands of chiefs are legion, and the differences in living standards between chiefs and commoners are very apparent.

As for men and women, in the normal course of events they share subsistence activities. While there is some sexual division of labour, as I describe in chapter 1, women are certainly not the work-horses that they are characterised as in some parts of Melanesia. Women look after pigs, carry water and collect firewood, but men build and repair fences, houses and canoes, go deep-sea fishing, clear the bush and dig gardens, and as often as not they share tasks such as planting, weeding and harvesting.

Male/female relationships, then, are generally amicable. To what extent this represents change over the last century is most uncertain. We have no evidence. Today there is no overt sexual antagonism although the general Melanesian complex concerning care over menstrual pollution and refraining from sexual intercourse for sometime prior to important undertakings such as war, trading expeditions and the like, does exist, as I describe in chapter 6.

In this regard we should recall that in certain circumstances women may inherit important ritual knowledge, thus their status is generally higher than in many Melanesian societies. It is true that Guis described one ceremony in particular as an expression of women's anger against men (chapter 3, pp.85-86). It is not entirely clear, however, whether the attitudes he attributed to women were really theirs, or whether he was simply dramatising and making his own assumptions about their thinking and attitudes.

On the recruitment and organisation of labour, again there is little I can add to my account. If a man requires labour over

and above his own, he seeks assistance from among his siblings, his other itsubu members, and members of the wider community, depending on the amount of labour required. A chief operates in the same way in private matters, but appeals immediately to the subclan or wider community if the task is of wider concern, such as preparations for a feast, or the rebuilding of the chiefly meeting house.

Contemporary business activity:

Bulmer asks whether personal savings are regarded as legitimate, and questions how "a failing trade store better provides its owner with ready cash.... than his capital investment, put into the savings bank or a tin trunk would."

The answer to the first is that people are ambivalent. Individuals want to save, usually for particular purposes, but also know that any accumulation of cash renders them a target for requests and/or jealousy. One man showed me two pass-books, one of which had a balance of K100 or so, the other with only K5 or K10 in it. "This is the one I show to people who ask me for money," he said, holding up the latter.

The answer to the second question is that a failing trade-store rarely completely fails, in the way that money in a bank or a tin trunk can completely run out. The tradestore struggles on continually providing a little ready cash, and in extreme circumstances may be restocked by making copra, as I describe. It is easier and more prestigious to run a tradestore while simultaneously maintaining gardens, houses, canoes and fishing nets, than to make copra and continue all the other activities.

Age distributions:

In response to Bulmer's comments about age distributions in appendix 2, I can only reiterate my own puzzlement and refer to Meillassoux (1981:13) who says that research suggests that about 100 couples are needed to maintain a sexual balance among children of about 50/50.

With a resident population of about 200, including children, Nabuapaka would be well short of 100 couples. I am not convinced that this is fully the answer, however, and suspect that my age estimates may need reworking.

Conclusion:

Following my field-work, and in the light of my subsequent experiences in Fiji and Polynesia, I have become convinced that the social sciences have far too long emphasised the differences between Melanesia and Polynesia. I believe that the Australian societies of Melanesia share some fundamental similarities with those of Polynesia, and that we urgently need a comparative analysis of Austronesian Melanesian materials with the Polynesian data as an analytical background.

That there should be similarities is not surprising given their common Austronesian language family, and the evidence of Archaeology that indicates a shared ancestry, perhaps through the Lapita Potters and their descendants. This material has recently been summarized by Bellwood (1979).

What is surprising is the long history of attempts to maintain a distinct separation between Melanesia and Polynesia. It is a history that goes back through Sahlins (1963), Heyerdahl (1952) and Buck (1938) to the early explorers and traders.

An analysis that draws on the shared aspects of AN Melanesian and Polynesian societies might throw light on many areas of debate in Melanesian ethnography.

Michael Monsell Davis
June, 1982.

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