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POWER OR PARADISE?

KORAFE CHRISTIANITY AND KORAFE MAGIC

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of the Australian National University

October 1991
This thesis is my own work.
Canberra, 1 October 1991

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To Noël Stewart Crespi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Professor Ronald Frankenberg, Maggie Whitley, and Ursula Sharma of Keele University for introducing me to anthropology, Marina Shacola for accompanying me in my first ventures in fieldwork, and all of the above for encouraging me to continue.

I am grateful to the Department of Prehistory and Anthropology, Australian National University for giving me the opportunity to do so. I am thankful to all its members and visiting academics, and those of the Department of Anthropology in the Research School of Pacific Studies, for creating a challenging, stimulating and amicable environment in which to work.

The assistance of David McGregor, Helen Nicol, Jan Lee, and especially Debbie McGrath, always extended promptly and willingly, has been invaluable, as is their friendship.

I am particularly indebted to all those who played a part in the supervision of this thesis: Jimmy Weiner and Professor Anthony Forge for their comments on early drafts; Don Gardner, Chris Gregory, and Michael Young for their invaluable help throughout my research and writing. I have learned much from each of them, and I appreciated their efforts, their accessibility, and the sympathetic support they offered me.

The friendship of Bev Sibthorpe, Mary Edmunds, Cecilia Ng, Di Smith, Maureen Mackenzie, and Luke Taylor, all of whom shared their fieldwork experiences with me, contributed greatly to prepare me for mine.

I am grateful to Jakob Simet and the Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies for assistance in Port Moresby. Also in Port Moresby, I am thankful to the families of Jo Brissone, and Judith and Richard Gregory-Smith, for their friendship and hospitality.

In Tufi I am indebted to a great number of people for the warmth, understanding, and genuine concern with which they welcomed and looked after me. In particular the families of afa Robert and aya Teresa, afa Noah and aya Jessette, afa Mackenzie and aya Barbara, afa Randellson and aya Dorothea, afa Lazarus and aya Alma, afa Inok and aya Greta, for making me feel at home amongst them. Robertson, Janice, Anilda, Kennedy, Vinolia, Loti, Robert, Samuel, Nixon, Lascam, Janice, and Leviticus, all contributed to my enjoyment of fieldwork and gave me help whenever I needed it. The young children in the village, especially Joyce, Stordus, Diana, Alphonsus, Pia, and Roberto, added warmth and good humor to my life in Goodenough village.
For their help in learning about Korafe culture I am especially indebted to abua Elkin, abua Elijah, abua Godfrey, abua Joseph, abua Clifford, avia Waiora, abua Sebastian, abua Formen, avia Selemane, avia Rogheia. To all their families, as well as those of afa Alphonsus, aya Brigitta and abua Justus, and aya Joyce and Stordus, for putting up with my visits to their homes and with my inexhaustible curiosity. For hospitality in Uwe I am grateful to ebe Zacharias and tata Clarissa, their son Robert and his wife Rose. Ayakôe bekáresena!

I also wish to express my gratitude to the Department of Anthropology at the University of Sydney, particularly Daryl Few, for hospitality during my stay in Sydney.

Friends and fellow students who have contributed through discussions, support, and encouragement over many coffees are Tina Fong, Erika Mordek, Val Jones, Hartmut Holzknecht, Barbara Luem, Bill Giles, Rita Armstrong, Ton Otto, Christine Boulan-Smit, Penny Graham, Bernard Sikora, Anna and Alicia Paini, Toon van Meijl (irreplaceable office-mate), and Gary Kildea (who provided the spur of competition towards completion, but also excuses for leisure when necessary).

For their time, generously given to help me sort out computing problems, I wish to thank David Martin and Ria Van de Zandt. For their constructive and encouraging comments on draft chapters I am grateful to Margaret Burns, Elisha Renne, Jim and Cindi Farr, Margaret Willson, Grayson Gerrard, Don Kulick, and Christopher Emsden. I am grateful to Kit Laughlin, proof-reader extraordinaire, for the time he spent with me, discussing the meanings of words, querying my commas, and helping refine my thoughts through insightful critique.

To my family and friends in Italy, especially Raffaele Origone, I owe thanks for their unwavering support, understanding, and most of all their patience.
ABSTRACT

This thesis addresses the nexus between Christianity and magic in the contemporary beliefs of a small group of Korafe villagers of coastal Papua New Guinea. The ethnography focusses on the clans living on one peninsula of Cape Nelson, and their various links with neighbouring groups, with the government station at Tufi, with urban dwellers, and with larger institutions and forces, during the period between January 1987 and July 1988.

One crucial outcome of the Korafe colonial experience was conversion to Christianity. Despite their allegiance to the Anglican church, however, Korafe continue to believe in and practice magic. The question posed in this thesis is: how do magic and Christianity coexist? I suggest that the difficulty is not the compatibility of beliefs: contemporary Korafe believe that God gave magic to their ancestors. The contradiction is introduced by the missionary condemnation of magic on moral grounds. Responsible for preserving their clans' heritage, elders are faced with a paradox.

At times Korafe consider magic necessary and valuable; at other times primitive and evil. I argue that the conflicting evaluations of magic stem from Korafe notions about the nature of knowledge, and the relationship between the control of esoteric knowledge and political power. These notions have shaped Korafe experiences of colonial and post-colonial contact. Christianity is held to be the basis of Western knowledge, underlying Western powers. This knowledge is thought to be necessary for success in those activities associated with post-contact social, political and economic changes. Everyday life, however, is characterised by continuity with the past. Contemporary villagers' concerns with subsistence and well-being are no different to their predecessors'. In this context the empowering properties of magic continue to be valued, and magic is practiced by elders despite the Christian ideology of 'magic as evil'.

These dilemmas are generally the concern of ritual leaders alone. By following the villagers through a drought, this thesis shows the processes through which such conflicts are brought to the surface in crisis situations, for resolution involving the larger community in decisions concerning the fate of common ancestral heritage.
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ARRIVAL: SITUATING TUFI AND THE KORAFE

Geographical setting

Arriving in Tufi by air is an opportunity to get a bird's-eye view of the distinctive features of Cape Nelson, on the north-eastern coast of Papua New Guinea. The volcanic peninsulae fan out like outstretched fingers from the Nelson and Topographers' ranges into the Solomon sea. The upper reaches, where the fingers join to form the back of the hand, are densely forested and seem unpopulated. The small clearings, dotted with grey-brown thatch and the occasional tin roof, only begin to appear at the top of each ridge. Some of the ridges are a duller green, showing the places where kunai grass and scrub has grown to replace cleared forest. Near the tips of the fingers, as the plane flies lower, it is easier to see that the patches of different shades of green between the villages are newly-planted or overgrown gardens. Near each of the fingers' point is a fringe of coconut trees, planted on the more gentle slopes. Beyond these, as the plane veers seawards to position itself for the descent to the airstrip, the coral jewels towards which the fingers are reaching barely surface from the sea. Even when submerged by the tide, the line of coral is betrayed by the sudden change in the seawater: deep blue and wavy on one side, pale and mirror still on the other - like liquid fingernails. The peninsulae are steeper at the sides, and there is no reef to frame the dark blue deep water which separates one finger of land from the others. Sheer cliffs drop straight into the water. Where their volcanic rock forms a sheltering fold, mangroves grow on mud flats. There is hardly any time to notice the canoes moored to the mangroves before the small plane comes to a bumpy stop on a wide flat grassy ridge about 100 metres above the sea.

Landing at Tufi airstrip also reveals the regular contacts which contemporary villagers have with the towns. Small airplanes connect Tufi to Popondetta (the capital of Oro Province) and Port Moresby three times a week. As I peered outside
the tiny airplane, the first thing I noticed were the strikingly tattooed faces of women who had gathered (with their children, brothers and husbands) to farewell those leaving on the plane that took me there. This would become a familiar scene later, and I marvelled at the frequency and duration of villagers' trips to different parts of the country. As well as migrants living and working in town, there were men who went on business trips: to collect war pensions or to arrange finance for their latest commercial enterprise. School-leavers in search of work and young girls asked to take care of the children of working kin were sent their tickets by the relatives with whom they would stay. Older men and women travelled to the towns to spend time with their migrant children until, tired of the 'soft' city food, they returned to their village.

Ever since the first young men from Tufi were enlisted as plantation labourers and native constabulary in the first decades of this century, it has been normal practice for young men to seek wage work away from their villages. Most migrant workers remain away from Tufi only a few years; those who stay longer make efforts to maintain ties by visiting their families during holidays or sending airfares for their kin to visit them in town. Life in the towns is a part of almost every contemporary villager's life experience, and is taken for granted. This continual interaction between village and town highlights the fact that villagers do not form a world apart, a self-contained society operating within its own boundaries and isolated from the rest of the world. People's aims, objectives, beliefs and values are not confined to the local context of their villages. They articulate with, and are shaped by, their particular experiences of the provincial, national, and global context within which their lives take place.

The women were wearing bright cotton skirts and printed blouses, and they carried stringbags. I saw someone smile, and the anxious feeling that had been sitting in my stomach since morning melted away: it was going to be alright. As I stepped down a man introduced himself, 'I am Mackenzie, the manager of the Komoa Brothers' Guesthouse, this is Robertson, are you Elizabeth?' They were both wearing what I would come to know as their smart shorts. Mackenzie's T-shirt advertised a ski resort in the U.S.

When he saw the size of my luggage, disproportionate even for a Western tourist, Robertson, who was a tall teen-aged boy, persuaded the driver of a tractor to give us a ride to Tufi Station. We drove along the only road in Tufi, linking the airstrip, through the township, to the wharf. The tractor, the police car, and the District Officer's vehicle thread their way along this narrow track daily. We passed through the small group of louvred, tin-roofed government houses and skirted the playing field, where a formation of school children were sweeping up the grass cut the previous day by their parents. We stopped in front of the 'Laki Hotel'. This expatriate-owned complex included a guesthouse, trade store, and bottle-shop. It also held concessions from the post office, a bank, and the airline company which
serves this area. There was another trade store nearby, owned by a retired teacher from a local village.

These were not the only attractions of Tufi Station, and I quickly learned that a visit there was never a brief affair. Mackenzie's wife had gone with their twin baby daughters to the hospital for some medication. Robertson's sisters were buying betel nut from the market. Mackenzie's sister had joined a group of married women on a platform erected in the shade of one of the huge mango trees of Tufi Station. They had formed a Ladies' Club which, for a time, met every week to cut and sew tapa cloth into bags to sell tourists. I too had business to attend to at the bank and post office. When I finished I sat under a mango tree with one of Robertson's sisters. Women returned from the market with bulging stringbags and sat with us; they shared betel nut with each other while they talked. Those who had earned some money by selling produce at the market would carefully consider how to spend it. A woman would count her money, a handful of coins, then summon a small child and send him or her to buy a tin of meat or a bag of sugar. When the child returned with the goods, the woman concealed them in a wrapping inside her stringbag. After a short time she would count out another small sum and send off for half a bottle of kerosene, or a bar of laundry soap. Lastly she might buy tobacco for her husband, or a treat for her children. When Mackenzie had finished his business, some of the people gathered under the mango tree got up and walked with us down the steep track to the wharf.

There were four or five motor boats belonging to the fisheries plant moored to the cement pier. Another boat was loading passengers for Alotau (in Milne Bay Province). Men were unloading its cargo, goods brought from Oro Bay to stock the shelves of local trade stores. Along the shore were numerous canoes. The smaller ones, pulled up on the muddy banks, belonged mainly to children who paddled every day to school from their villages across the bay. Larger canoes with platforms were tied to poles rammed into the mud. Some were equipped with a mast and a sail. These brought people from as far as Collingwood Bay to the south or Spear Point to the northwest (see map 1). Robertson waded out to one of the largest canoes and brought it closer to the pier, where we embarked. I remember counting fourteen people on board. They all came from Mackenzie's village and had taken advantage of the large 'guesthouse canoe' to visit Tufi.

As well as functioning as a node linking the villages in the district and the rest of the country, Tufi is a focal point for the villagers of Cape Nelson. With its trade stores, hospital, and market place, it provides opportunities for casual encounters and informal meetings, as well as a limited range of cash-earning jobs. Seat of the district government offices, it also provides administrative services for Korafe, Arifama, Miniafia, Ubir, Maisin and Yega villagers. Despite linguistic differences and past animosities, there has been considerable cultural exchange between all these groups. Young people from different groups communicate in English which they learn at school or, more rarely, Tok pisin. Older people sometimes use Motu, but they are generally able to understand each others' vernacular.
Regional ethnographic perspective

The Maisin people are the only group in the vicinity about which there is a significant body of ethnographic writing (Barker 1984). There are considerable similarities in Korafe and Maisin social organisation, culture, and colonial history. The Korafe language is classified as a Non-Austronesian language of the Binandelean stock, which is spoken by between two and three thousand people in two areas of Cape Nelson, as well as up to another thousand currently residing in other parts of the country. Yega, sometimes called Mokorua, is considered a dialect of Korafe. Arifama, Ubir and Miniafia are Austronesian languages, while the classification of Maisin language is uncertain. There are a number of villages which include speakers of two or even three languages.

Map 2: Cape Nelson Language Groups
Ethnographically, as well as linguistically, the groups in this area seem to reflect their geographical location in between two major 'culture areas' with distinct features. On the one hand, the decorative patterns worn on tapa cloth and tattooed on the women's faces (and, previously, on their legs) which Korafe share with the Maisin, show considerable similarity with the decorative style common in the Massim area (Barker 1984:50, Young 1983b:5). Another significant feature of similarity between Korafe and the Massim societies of Goodenough Island is the identification of patrilineal groups with inherited rights to objects, 'customary' ways of doing things, and knowledge, which serve diacritically to distinguish members of different groups. Like the societies of Kalauna and the Trobriands, leadership is associated with the control of magical powers, and is expressed in a hierarchical ranking of clans (Young 1971, Malinowski 1978 [1922]). Further, dancing and feasting are important cultural features in this region (cf. Seligman 1910:ch. 45). As in Wamira and on Goodenough Island competitive exchange feasts are the main context for leaders, and the groups they represent, to display and compete for political status (Kahn 1986, Young 1971).

Korafe and Maisin origin myths are very similar to those of the Orokaiva, Baruga, and Binandele, all tracing their primal ancestors to a hole in the ground somewhere in the Musa and Bariji basin (Waiko 1982, Barker 1984:46, Williams 1930:154-6). Other features of similarity between Orokaiva and Korafe include the organisation of minimal social groups according to the principle of patrilineal descent, which is ideologically favoured but is moderated by an emphasis on bilateral kinship and by residential practices (Schwimmer 1991:148, Williams 1930:130-2). Korafe feasts, like those of the Orokaiva, mediate different levels of social relations. At one level, feasts involving affinal relations mark different stages in the life cycle of a married couple (such as brideprice payment, the birth and initiation of the first child, and the death of one of the spouses). In these exchanges there is a tendency for brother and sister pairs to play the central roles, and for balanced reciprocity to result from the overall transactions (Iteanu 1983, Schwimmer 1991:147). By contrast, the taro and pig exchanges, involving feasting partnerships and groups of allied clans, are more competitive in spirit. They are modelled on peace-making exchanges, and provide a context for the testing and exercise of leadership. Like Orokaiva leaders, their Korafe counterparts are thought to achieve status through a demonstration of knowledge and wisdom. However, there is a degree of ascription in that the possession of knowledge is symbolised by material objects which are inherited patrilineally (Schwimmer 1991:148).

Unlike both Orokaiva and Massim societies, however, Korafe clans are differentiated by a division of magical labour. On the basis of this magic specialisation clans are ranked as elder and younger brothers, in a manner reminiscent of Mekeo social organisation (Hau'ofa 1981). Around each high-ranking clan develops a coalition of junior clans, each of which controls a different kind of magic. The elders of the high ranking clans (associated with peace making, diplomatic ability and feasting) control magic which enables them to promote
solidarity among the 'younger brother' clans which form their solidarity group, and to negotiate with their counterparts outside it. The success of feasting, which involves exchanges between the realm of the living and that of ancestors, (Iteanu 1983) depends on the ability of high ranking clans to promote cooperation between the junior clans associated with them (Schwimmer 1991:147).

FROM TUFI STATION TO GOODENOUGH VILLAGE: CHURCH, VILLAGE AND CLANS IN THE LOCAL CONTEXT

From the wharf, our canoe cut across Tufi Harbour and rounded the point of Kabuni peninsula, leaving the protected waters of the harbour, and landed just the other side of the point on the white sandy beach of Komoa. The Komoa Brothers' Guesthouse, built on this point by Mackenzie and his classificatory brothers, provides their families with an occasional source of cash. I was to live there while arrangements could be made for me to move to a village.

Map 3: Kabuni Peninsula
During those two weeks quite a few people from the surrounding villages came to meet me to find out what I was doing. On Sunday I was taken to the Anglican church service. This is the main occasion for people from all villages on the peninsula to gather on a regular basis, and it provided the right opportunity to introduce me.

St. Luke's church, which serves the villages of Kabuni, was moved downhill from its original location in the village of Karikari in 1972, after a cyclone knocked it to the ground. Most houses in the area were also destroyed, and many people who had been living in scattered settlements re-grouped following that occasion. The village which developed around the new church was called Goodenough because it is located on a small plateau from which, on a clear day, it is possible to make out the island of that name on the horizon. Apparently, during the construction of the church a man looked out to sea and joked that next time they would move the church to Goodenough. The joke, and the name, stuck.

The path which links Komoa to Goodenough village climbs through coconut groves and taro gardens. On reaching the ridge, the path opens into the grassy plateau of Goodenough. At the far end of the village is the church, a squat rectangular building lined with split sago and roofed partly with corrugated iron, partly with nipa thatch. The main door to the church does not face the village clearing but the bush beyond it. Split sago and thatch houses on short posts are arranged in two lines, facing each other across the width of the plateau. Interspersed amongst them are a number of shaded sitting platforms. Their name, oro, refers to the fenced ceremonial platforms of the past, where men used to sit apart from the women, and which were decorated with ancestral clan emblems. The unadorned contemporary platforms are used by villagers for sitting when they remain in the village during the day, as well as for sheltering visitors. Behind one line of houses runs a very narrow stream, dry for most of the year, which marks the boundary of the village. A path leads beyond it to other villages higher up on the ridge. The other line of houses is backed by a steep cliff, dropping to an inner inlet of Fesaba Bay. Gardens are planted at the top of the cliff, and a steep path leads through them to the mangroves at the bottom.

Inside the church, women were seated on a row of benches to the left, men to the right. Unmarried girls and boys sat in the front rows; mothers with small children sat next to the side door, so they could slip out if their child began to cry. A cross was carved out of the wall behind the altar. It was decorated with two prints of biblical scenes, and with a few short cylindrical carvings with pronged endings. These, I later found out, were replicas of the house-posts which were exclusive to the oro platforms built in the past by the Bubu clan (the high rank clan of Kabuni). There was a small cane table in front of the altar, for people to leave offerings to the church. A few toea were collected every week; often there would also be a sweet potato or a hand of bananas, brought by old women who had no money. The service was led by one of two evangelists of the Bubu clan who had returned to live in their village after a period of mission training and teaching elsewhere. A passage was read from the Korafe version of the New Testament
(published in 1984 by the Summer Institute of Linguistics), then the evangelist preached a sermon. Prayers and hymns concluded the service. Evangelists are not entitled to perform the sacraments, and a priest based in Sefoa mission (on a peninsula the other side of Tufi station, see map 1) patrols the various churches in the district on occasions of major festivities; then people have the opportunity to take communion. Periodically the priest also performs group christening and confirmation ceremonies in the village churches.

At the end of the service, before anyone left the church, Mackenzie stood up and addressed the congregation, saying my name. As I walked out I was surprised by all the women who gathered outside the church door, to clasp my hand in theirs, stroking my forearms with expressions of sympathy and pity, as they told me their names. People dispersed to different platforms and verandas, drifting sociably from one to the next. I sat with Mackenzie's mother, wife, and children on their veranda. Mackenzie and other men sat on a platform opposite his house. Occasionally one of these men would pace to the centre of the clearing announcing that they had something to say. The general conversation around subsided while he spoke. People on the sidelines laughed, called out responses, then returned to their conversations until someone else claimed their attention with a speech. I recognised Robert among the orators; he was married to Mackenzie's older sister, and was village councillor for Kabuni villages. His younger brother Noah, Robertson's father and the man in charge of catering at the guesthouse, also spoke. Finally I was called to their platform and we agreed that I could live in Goodenough village, where I would be 'looked after' by the families of Robert, Noah, and Mackenzie. Elkin Kegana, an elder of the Bubu clan from Kabuni village - after which the whole peninsula is named - was introduced to me. He was declared to be the best language teacher in the area and a man of great knowledge concerning not only his own but all other Korafe clans' traditions. He would teach me.

Of the elders sitting on the platform, Elkin said they were all his younger brothers. He belonged to the Bubu clan, which was a Kotofu (high-ranking) clan, and every one else was like young boys compared to him. That was one reason for his greater knowledge of traditions, he explained. Another reason was that he had always been an attentive listener and, throughout his life, had always paid attention when elders talked (unlike other young men) so he never forgot what he was told and accumulated vast knowledge. Nonetheless, Elkin went on to single out a few of those elders sitting on the platform whom he considered to be knowledgeable. Each man he pointed out was a senior man of one of the clans or lineages of the villages on Kabuni. As he indicated them he told me their clan's name and some feature which distinguished them from members of other clans. Although he mentioned different characteristics, the two things which he included in each description were the colour of the feathers which they were entitled to use to crown their dancing headdresses, and their association with particular magical powers of which, he said, they were 'boss'.

I was intrigued at the time by the notion that these men, whom I had just seen reverently wrapping their bibles in clean covers, were known for practising
When I inquired about this, however, I was further surprised by the offhand manner in which Elkin dismissed magic as a thing of the past, belonging to their ancestors, no longer practiced and mostly forgotten by his peers, all of whom were 'Good Christians'. Although I did not know it at the time, the relation between magic and Christianity was a major issue of contention in the villages and it was to become an important focus of my research. I was to spend considerable time with each of the elders who were pointed out to me that first Sunday (see chapter 4).

FIELDWORK PRACTICES AND EPISTEMOLOGICAL QUESTIONS

It is obvious that each fieldworker's experiences will shape the direction of their enquiries and privilege certain things over others as 'data'. It is equally obvious that it is impossible to trace all of one's preconceptions and assumptions, and all the factors influencing the process of note-taking, and the transformation of field notes into a thesis (cf. Clifford 1988:40). However, I want to take this opportunity to discuss those conditions of my fieldwork which I am aware of having influenced the sort of questions I asked people, the things I paid attention to, and the details I have attempted to retain through the synthesising process of writing.

I lived in Goodenough village for the remainder of my eighteen months' fieldwork. I inhabited a house originally built for the priest when he visited St. Luke's church. I shared the house with occasional overnight visitors to the village, and with a variable number of children and unmarried young women who took turns to keep me company, as my neighbours disliked the idea of anyone sleeping alone. Apart from the formal language lessons during which Elkin dictated word lists to me, it was in the course of the many evening conversations with Janice, Anilda, Loti, Vinolia, Diana, Joyce and their sisters that I gradually began incorporating Korafe words into my utterances.

Throughout the formative period of my fieldwork, during which I acquired basic language and social skills, I spent most of my time with these young women. In the daytime I either followed them as they performed their daily chores, or spent time learning about fishing from their teen-aged brothers. Robertson or one of his village brothers (Lascam, Kennedy, Nixon, Moses) would accompany me when I needed to go to neighbouring villages or Tufi station. The bemusement and gentle teasing which my strange ways provoked in the young people who 'looked after' me was instrumental to fine-tuning my social competence. It was by interacting with them, and persuading them to let me get involved in their work, that I gradually succeeded in convincing the rest of the villagers that I was not a tourist to be waited upon. The families who had taken it upon themselves to look after me
ceased planning their days so that someone could stay behind in the village with me when they went elsewhere, and began taking me with them instead.

Like the households with which I became associated, I interacted daily with the other families of Goodenough village. There were also a number of households from villages of the immediate vicinity (such as Lelioa, Komoa and Famadara, see map 3) which also figured regularly in my daily life, as their members cooperated with Goodenough villagers in gardening or fishing, and visited each others' homes. Less frequent, but still significant and equally informal, were our contacts with specific households in other villages of the peninsula. Church services gave me the opportunity to meet and talk with those villagers who were more distantly related to Goodenough villagers. Visits to Tufi station were the main opportunity to spend time with people living on different peninsulae. A visit to these villages was always a formal occasion: either arranged by me specifically to interview someone, or a feast in which members of Goodenough village participated.

Among people who figured prominently in the social lives of the people I lived with were Maisin affines living in the village of Uwe, at the southern limit of Korafe territory (see map 2). Throughout my stay in Goodenough village there were many occasions when affinally related members of the two villages exchanged visits. Similarly, the Miniafia brother and sister of Noah's wife occasionally came to visit from Utukaf. As a result of my close association with specific households, of the practical difficulties of travelling to other peninsulae independently of my hosts, and of the undercurrent of suspicion which unrelated individuals from different villages feel for each other, my knowledge derives mainly from my experiences of life with the villagers of Kabuni peninsula and the people they associated with.

On reflection, I worried that on the one hand my informants represented a narrow section of the overall Korafe population while, on the other hand, some were drawn from beyond the group of people who identify themselves as Korafe. To what extent I can claim to be writing about 'the Korafe' is one of the epistemological questions that I am faced with.

Names and collectivities

One aspect of this problem has to do with designating 'groups' with which their posited members identify, and which shape their interactions with others. People use a variety of collective names to make distinctions between each other. However, Wagner has pointed out the dangers of using such markers of difference to create groups where they do not exist in the consciousness of the people involved. He suggested that criteria for the definition of groups ought to emphasise 'a deliberate collective focus, a sense of common participation and awareness' (Wagner 1974:104). Although the people I was working with would identify with the label 'Korafe', they used it contextually to differentiate themselves from different sets of people who were thought of as 'not Korafe'. Korafe was used to
differentiate villagers from Europeans. The same name could be used in one instance to exclude speakers of other languages living in their vicinity, and in others to exclude speakers of a closely related dialect. Finally, in some cases 'Korafe' was used to distinguish most villagers from those whose ancestors spoke a different language and whose origin myths were different.

Perhaps, then, 'Korafe' identity is predicated on shared origin myth and history. Korafe clans trace their origin to a hole in the ground between the Musa and Bariji rivers. However, each clan had individual histories, had reached its present location on Cape Nelson along a different route, and had forged alliances with different groups along the way. Korafe clans are not strongly associated with the land they own. According to oral history the Arifama and Miniafia, as well as the now nearly extinct Kerebi, were the autochtonous inhabitants of the area. Korafe and Yega settlers are believed to have arrived on Cape Nelson at the beginning of the century, shortly before the colonial pacification of the, then, North-Eastern district of British New Guinea.

Each clan’s history is a succession of alliances, separations, betrayals and night-time flights from besieged villages. Korafe ancestors faced little resistance from the autochtonous populations of Cape Nelson, who 'gave' them land to settle on. In time, they are said to have decimated the original inhabitants through violence and magical might. There are numerous people who trace their origins to different groups encountered by the Korafe ancestors and assimilated to their clan. Among them are people who trace their origin to Kerebi ancestry. Except for one solitary elder, they no longer speak their ancestors' language, and they maintain a discreet silence over their cultural distinctiveness. They are wary of telling their myths in public lest Korafe interpret them as claiming prior rights to the land, or appropriate them for their own ideological ends. Perhaps as a result of their turbulent past, the people who identify with the label 'Korafe' do not actually form a group in the sense of collective consciousness.

The social units which have a more obvious reality for Korafe are smaller groups such as clans (or at least their local segments), villages, and what I have called territorial groups. The last are constituted as federations of those clans and villages whose members live and garden in a well-defined geographical area. Relationships among brothers are referred to as models for relations within and among all these groups. The reality of villages, clans and territorial groups as social units for their members is manifested in different ways and contexts. At one level, all clans on the peninsula of Kabuni are conceptually regarded as brothers. Their cooperation is predicated on the specialisation of each clan's elders in different realms of magical knowledge. Under the aegis of a high ranking clan considered to be the 'eldest brother', clans of the same group cooperate with magical services, feasting, dancing and (in the past) fighting. These territorial groups represent the widest social group with a well-defined corporate reality. Beyond these realms of activity interaction between individuals is governed by kinship, residential patterns, and the duties and rights associated with affinal relations.
Within any group one can expect to find people with different interests, concerns, values and attitudes. The kind of things which found their way into my notebook and thence into this thesis, were partly determined by the interests of the people I spoke to most, and whose words I considered important. This, in turn, was determined by villagers' perceptions of me and expectations concerning the right place for me in their midst. There is an unspoken expectation in the profession that women fieldworkers, by virtue of their gender, have privileged access to aspects of social life and culture which pertain to the lives of women. I did not find this to be the case.

My status in the village was not fixed; it changed over time as I became known as an individual, rather than as a taubora (white person). I was able to participate in their lives in different capacities in different situations - and this very fact marked me, as clearly as my complexion, as an outsider. However many times people from my village boasted to outsiders of my virtues as a villager and a speaker of the vernacular, no one ever lost sight of the elements of fiction in these assertions. My obvious incompetences in some areas of everyday life were never overcome. Ironically, this was most significant precisely for my position in relation to women.

Unmarried and childless, I straddled uncomfortably the boundary between girlhood and womanhood. While my foreignness, association with an Australian university, and access to money placed me in a position which transcended gender barriers, that same foreignness only served to reinforce villagers' assumptions concerning my unsuitability as an adult Korafe woman. Village women knew that Western women get food for their families from shop shelves and water from taps; they cook on gas stoves (if they don't hire a house boy to do it for them) and have machines to wash their clothes and dishes. It was not only that they considered it difficult for a European to carry out the work Korafe women do regularly, but they felt it was inappropriate for me to do so. I had to break through their reluctance to be allowed to do any such work.

Thus, while my status as visitor required that I share the more prestigious food with the elders, age and sex differences notwithstanding, there was no context for me to act as a village woman. By this I do not mean that I was somehow considered an 'honorary male' (an alternative stereotypical description of the social position of female fieldworkers). I think that most people I interacted with considered me as a kind of overgrown schoolgirl, to whom they indulgently explained things, because they felt sorry that I had left my family so far away to learn about Korafe ways. Young people of the village referred to me using terms for sister (elder or younger), adults as daughter, and the elders as grand-daughter. My relationship to all other villagers was worked out from this base-line.

The significance of my ambiguous status is that, although I did become close to some married women (especially Jessette and Teresa who considered themselves
my 'village' mothers and eventually came to trust me at least as baby-sitter), it was not on their specific concerns as women that my fieldwork was focussed. As I became more proficient in the language I began to follow the conversations held by the elders with whom I was expected to sit on any public occasion. This undoubtedly had a great influence on the direction of my inquiries. It was from listening to their discussions that I became aware of some of the dilemmas involved in the responsibilities of elders for the custody of their clans' magical powers, and the ambiguity with which such powers were valued in a context where people were striving for legitimacy as Christians.

As these interests were shaped further by events in the village, I began systematic enquiries into each clan's magical specialisation. This involved seeking out the various ritual experts in their own villages, and talking to them about the specific origin, nature, and implications of their particular magical powers. These issues belong to a realm governed by elders. Women and younger men would talk with me in general terms, helping me to acquire an understanding of shared notions regarding magic, its social value, and people's feelings regarding its compatibility with Christianity. I questioned them about the significance of issues discussed in the villages, and tested my understanding on them. They would patiently explain the background to complex events, and clarify relationships between people involved. But when I asked for information about specific powers they would reply that the knowledge did not belong to them, and refer me to the acknowledged authorities: their eldest brothers, husbands, or fathers. This response was common even from those women who, as wives or widows of magical experts, were considered to know about such things.

As a result of all these circumstances, senior men have come to hold a priviledged position in this thesis, as cited authorities and as the protagonists of case studies. It was these men who were held responsible for maintaining and making judicious use of their clan's traditional patrimony and who, therefore, were confronted more directly than others by the dilemmas resulting from the articulation of traditional beliefs in the powers of magic with Christian moral teaching. This is a major theme to be explored in this thesis. In order to deal with this kind of issue the areas of indeterminacy, conflict and contradiction in indigenous cultural conceptualisations, often overlooked in conventional anthropology, have to be taken into consideration.

FROM DILEMMAS OF REPRESENTATION TO REPRESENTATION OF DILEMMAS

Dealing with internal contradictions requires thinking about epistemological questions concerning the construction of knowledge about cultural and social systems from ethnographic enquiry. There are many kinds of 'facts' about Korafe culture and social structure. At one level villagers speak of their customs, beliefs
or rituals as eternal manifestations of ancestral ways. There is a verb form in Korafe language which has been glossed by linguists as 'when we do (it), we always do (it) this way.' This form makes it possible for Korafe to speak of objectified ancestral customs as current practice: whether or not they have been practiced for any number of years is not indicated by the use of this verb. These objectified ancestral customs are juxtaposed to 'normative' accounts of current practices and beliefs. The acknowledged transformations are explained as conscious responses to pressure by missionaries, educators, and government officials. Alternatively they are considered to be necessary adaptations to changed conditions of existence. In addition to these two levels of self-description, there are my own observations of things people did and professed to believe. These often deviate in many respects from both 'traditional' and 'modern' versions of reified representations. Further, people often made contradictory statements about the value of a given practice depending upon whether they talked in abstract terms or of particular instances. These divergences are accounted for in terms of particular relations enmeshing the protagonists, or special conditions requiring a variation of the norm for specific needs or purposes. It is impossible to construct a systematic all-encompassing and self-sufficient account of Korafe social and cultural life without ignoring large parts of indigenous experience.

Representations which stress coherence are achieved at the cost of excluding those features which seem to conflict with the overall system constructed by ethnographers, and compromise their plausibility. As a result there is a tendency to treat recent innovations as meaningless and to ignore the historical aspects of cross-cultural elaboration. Critics have emphasised that, in their pursuit of the 'exotic' and 'authentic', ethnographers have tended to reify people's practices and ideas by representing them as essential objectifications, manifestations of 'eternal' culture, which has no counterpart in real life. This, according to Keesing, is a consequence of definitions of cultures as 'discrete, self-contained, self-reproducing universes of shared customary practices and beliefs' (1990:10).

One consequence of the multiple ties which different Korafe clans have forged in the course of their history is that they do not view their culture as self-contained. Korafe often refer to cultural borrowings from allies or enemies of their migratory past. They talk of the dance songs which they have learned from the Baruga, and of the tapa cloths with which they were dressed by friendly Miniafia. In turn, they profess to have taught the Miniafia about making canoes and fishing nets, and the Kerebi how to build houses and grow taro. Magic and other esoteric knowledge can also be acquired. Cultural contact, in other words, is taken for granted by Korafe as a source of new ideas and practices. Among outside influences, those of the West rank very high in contemporary Korafe construction of their own identity. Reference to the things which Western agents have taught them, to practices which have been transformed since colonisation, and to the customs which they have dropped because of other changes in their lives, are all common in Korafe discourse. People's opinions of the relative value of ancestral and contemporary ways of doing things are ambivalent. 'Tradition' is sometimes
held up as an ideal, a world of stability and certainty, in which people always knew what to expect from others, in contrast to the chaotic contemporary scene where people's rights and responsibilities have been made uncertain by the social and cultural changes. On the other hand, the world of Westerners is aspired to, and Christianity and introduced technology were seen as valuable changes.

The effects of essentialising tendencies in Melanesian anthropology are most apparent in those ethnographies in which migrant workers, missionaries, tradestores, provincial politicians, government officials, local church organisations, and other institutions which betray villagers' involvement with structures and forces which transcend local boundaries, are completely absent (cf. Iteanu 1983). Similarly, according to A. Carrier and J. Carrier (1987), anthropologists who construct logically derived structural cycles appear to be making use of time and history, but they continue to produce synchronic representations of essentialised systems since the conceptual time postulated in the cycles has no relation to the actual, historical, course of events. Essentialising predispositions are also thinly disguised in the common anthropological practice of dichotomizing pre- and post-contact institutions. Here the 'traditional' is distilled from the contamination of outside influences, changes are treated separately in a final chapter, almost as an afterthought (cf. Godelier 1986). Even the well-meaning efforts of anthropologists to defend colonised people's cultural autonomy by relegating recent cultural phenomena emerging from colonial encounters to a marginal position - or describing them as a mere veneer of 'Westernisation' over a resilient core of authentic native culture - are coloured by essentialist preconceptions (cf. Kahn 1983). Carrier argues for the need to reorient anthropology, to find ways of writing about Melanesian societies which allow us to understand how outside influences and processes affect local communities and shape events within them (Carrier forthcoming: 14).

According to Fabian, the anthropological shortcoming in dealing with the flow of ideas and influences between people and across cultures in the contemporary world, results from a 'denial of coevalness' (1983). He argues that anthropologists distance themselves from the people they study by conflating geographical and temporal distance. Through 'allochronism', or the allocation of the exotic people they observe to a different time from their own, anthropologists create an object of study (ibid. 25, 31, 32). The irony is that although the discourse of anthropology is allochronic, its methodology is predicated on fieldwork - an encounter of observers and observed in the same time - which informs and legitimates anthropological knowledge (ibid. 33-5). Anthropology, therefore, is characterised by an epistemological split between coeval research and allochronic writing and theorising (ibid. 148); the temporal distancing occurs in the process of transformation of fieldwork experiences and recorded observations into ethnographic text. This contradiction, for Fabian, is the crux of anthropology and the point of departure for its critique (ibid. 159).

One realm of village life where the interplay of indigenous and Western ideas is particularly salient and inadequately represented in much Melanesian
ethnography is the religious one. Christian values and precepts are apparent in all domains of village life, and pervade contemporary villagers' relationships with their ancestors, the rest of the world, and between themselves. Barker (n.d.) argues that anthropologists' concern with authenticity, coupled with their preconceptions about missionization as a one-way process of imposition, have prevented them from taking Melanesian Christians seriously and acknowledging that Christianity is an important part of contemporary villagers' social, cultural and religious identity (Barker 1985:263). Christianity is viewed as an artificially imposed innovation to be excluded from representations of indigenous culture.

Thomas suggests that descriptions in which particular practices or ideas are explicated in terms of a coherent social or cultural totality should be replaced by an approach which allows the history of indigenous confrontation with intrusive foreigners to be taken into account. He points to the role which Melanesian's reified conceptions of Western culture and society - constructed on the basis of their experience of colonial encounters - play in the construction of indigenous definitions of their own cultural characteristics. Such dynamic, reactive processes of cultural construction, characteristic of colonial histories, provide the context in which 'substantivized' cultural features held as emblematic of a particular community can be understood (Thomas forthcoming). In another paper, Thomas shows that the construction of self-identity by indigenous people can involve a number of different processes and strategies. Anthropologists concerned with issues of 'invention of tradition' have emphasised those resulting in the affirmation of native customs which become objectified as representative of indigenous identity. This emphasis has obscured other processes such as 'reversal of tradition', by which aspects of traditional culture, seen as diametrically opposed to modernity, are negatively valued and repudiated (Thomas n.d.:24).

Such repudiations consist, however, not in absolute negations that deny the construction of identity in particular terms, but instead invert the values attached to that identity through a kind of negative self-fashioning, valorizing what is other and foreign rather than what is associated with one's place. (ibid.:8)

This process, too, involves reified notions of what constitutes both the 'we' and the 'other'. In this way, I will argue, Korafe have come to consider Christianity as the 'knowledge' which defines and empowers Westerners in the same way that ancestral knowledge attributes different powers to different clans. This notion underpins the ambivalence of contemporary Korafe attitudes to traditional esoteric knowledge and its relationship to Christianity. As Thomas points out, villagers' accounts of their ancestors' conversion to Christianity abound with instances of reversal and repudiation. What is repudiated, however, is not indigenous religion, as an anthropologist might have construed it, but the particular array of practices and beliefs that the encounter had made constitutive of heathenism. (ibid.:15)

Another consequence of the anthropological pursuit of coherent and unified systems is that it does not allow for the co-existence, within any social group, of
alternative and conflicting versions of cultural objectifications. Different kinds of things were regarded as emblematic of Korafe culture by the people I lived with. Korafe switched frequently from referring to objectified notions of their ancestors to those of Westerners as foils for themselves. All these levels of self-description are integral to the cultural and social identity which contemporary Korafe construct for themselves. The relative evaluation of their own practices, knowledge and institutions in opposition to those of significant others are not consistent, however.

Keesing (1990:18) suggests that the concept of culture should be replaced by a 'critical conception of the cultural' which would take for granted the 'multiple, subdominant and partially submerged cultural traditions' to be found besides the 'hegemonic force of the dominant tradition' in any community. In this view the production of alternative systems of knowledge and symbols and their relative prominence in a society's discourse is linked to the interests and relative power of different sections within the community (defined in terms of class, rank, gender, age, and so on). Although this dimension of the 'political economy of knowledge' is relevant to the diversity of opinions and values expressed by different Korafe, it does not account for indeterminacies, for conflicting views expressed by the same individuals, or the personal dilemmas with which they contend.

Contemporary representations and practices can be explained as objectifications, reversals or substantivisations of traditional ways in dynamic confrontation with outside influences. Important questions still remain unanswered, though. How do people change their minds, come to select among their practices and beliefs those which become emblematic of their ethnic identity, those to be rejected as outdated or counterproductive - in short what choice do people have in what to believe and how to act? These questions can only be posed by examining culture in terms of its processes: the processes through which people's tenets, ideas, and associated practices are transmitted between generations, influenced by internal and external forces, and transformed by people's actions.

People's beliefs and practices are constantly shaped and refashioned in the processes of living, interacting, and adjusting their relations to others. Dilemmas are constantly emerging from the confrontation of ideas and representations with realities which challenge them. The different views which Korafe have of themselves in relation to their ancestors on one side, and to 'the West' on the other are not simply exegetical devices. They are ideas and ideals to which people refer in making decisions about how to act in empirical situations. They can also be used in rhetorical oratory to promote given definitions of events or sway public opinion towards one of many courses of action. The uses to which they are put and the perceived outcomes, in turn, influence their evaluation, acceptance, or rejection. It is by seeking resolutions to conflicts that people come to face the contradictory aspects of their ideologies and attempt to resolve them.

A 'processual' approach to ethnography does not lend itself to tidy representations or to conclusions in which essential features of society and culture can be summed up (Falk Moore 1978). It privileges the analysis of events which
allows the juxtaposition and contestation of conflicting views, ideals, and interests to be highlighted, and areas of indeterminacy to be revealed. Certain types of events are more revealing of the processes of social and cultural change and adjustment than others. These 'diagnostic events', according to Falk Moore, frequently coincide with times of crisis, death, or the passage of rights or property to the emerging generation (1987).

This thesis is constructed around a series of events which occurred in Kabuni during my fieldwork, which fit all these criteria, and which are described in the last chapter. In the first five chapters I attempt to provide a context for understanding some of the issues faced by contemporary Korafe in 1987-8, which emerged during a crisis involving a drought and the death of ritual experts. The transmission of magical powers to young men committed to Christian values, and the seclusion of widows in the face of general feelings that such customs are no longer appropriate, were two areas of contestation which required people to act and take positions on unresolved issues. The processes of resolution of these conflicts raised many of the issues discussed in the main body of the thesis, and focussed my attention on the issue of the relationship between magic and Christianity.

I decided to leave the narrative to the concluding chapter because I felt it was necessary to precede it with chapters to set the scene and provide a framework for understanding the nature of the dilemmas, their historical origin and development, and some of the discursive tools which are brought to bear in resolution processes. Various issues discussed separately in the early chapters appear again in the last chapter where they are seen to operate jointly: affecting individuals in different role positions in different ways and at different levels as they are confronted by the testing of ideological positions in reality. The final reason for leaving the narration of these events to the end is to avoid a conclusion in which 'essential' Korafe cultural and social features are 'summed up'.

Anthropologists doing fieldwork, instead of conceiving of themselves as looking at whole cultures or whole societies, are now acutely conscious of observing part of the cultural construction of part of a society at a particular time. (Falk Moore 1987:735)

Thus, I hope with this ending to escape the denial of coevalness implicit in writing about exotic people, I wish to leave the reader with the sense that life, with all its conflicts, resolutions and dilemmas, continues for the Korafe independently of my presence among them.

SYNOPSIS

The first part of the thesis (chapters one to three) is concerned with the structures and processes of Korafe social life. The first chapter describes different levels of
social groups whose formation is ideologically attributed to patrilineal descent. Korafe use of the siblingship model as an ideological representation of possible relations between people and groups of this kind (cooperation and sharing, hierarchical relations and division of responsibilities and rights between senior and junior, and the disruptive potential of competition and jealousy) is juxtaposed to the actual organisation of daily life in villages. Patterns of cooperation between people on grounds such as co-residence, friendship, and uterine kinship are also shown to be relevant to social experience. Korafe are conscious of the complexity of the fit between model and reality, and make use of the alternatives available in the kinship reference system to portray any actual relationship of cooperation as one of brotherhood. Groups of different levels of inclusion (lineages, clans and territorial groups) come into being for different purposes. The contemporary application of this ideology to relations between villagers and migrant workers, and for the establishment of commercial enterprises are also described.

Another feature of the patrilineal descent ideology considered in this chapter is the distribution of things of cultural value among clans. The two meanings of the word Kotōfu are introduced in this context. Spelt with a capital 'K', this word refers to high-ranking clans around which are formed coalitions of clans residing in a specific territory. These clans are described as the elder brothers of the lower ranking (Sabùa) clans in the territorial groups. Kotōfu clans assume rights to leadership and responsibilities to represent the territorial group in dealings with similar groups. Written with a lower-case 'k', the word kotōfu refers to cultural items considered to be shared property of clan members. They mediate relations with ancestral spirits and define individuals' clan identity. The distribution of these kotōfu, particularly the ancestral relics and knowledge associated with magical powers, are the key to relations between junior and senior members of each clan, and to political relations between the clans in a territorial group, whose coalition is predicated on magical specialisation and cooperation.

Chapter two deals with relations between affines and groups which are constituted on the basis of affinal exchanges. In this chapter I use Iteanu's monograph on Orokaiva cycles of exchange (1983), as a foil for my own arguments in terms of methodology, theory and ethnography. Like Iteanu, I describe affinal relationships as the outcome of continuing relations between brothers and sisters, not as relations between groups of men exchanging women. By following the life cycle of brother-sister and husband-wife couples, affinal exchanges are seen as marking stages in their relations, continued in the next generation between cross-cousins. Like Iteanu, I also draw connections between affinal exchanges and those between the living and ancestral spirits. However, I do not consider the exchanges with ancestral spirits to be of a hierarchically higher level. Unlike Iteanu, I juxtapose the objectivised description of each life cycle exchange with accounts of those which took place during my fieldwork, indicating the points of difference, the reasons given, and people's evaluations. Christianity and the consequences of participation in a cash economy frequently feature as explanations, colouring people's appraisal of their relative worth. Some of the
rituals associated with affinal exchanges only exist in name. They have not been performed for years, and yet still play a part in Korafe discourse about themselves and their identity in relation to modernity, the West, and their ancestors. This is the point at which the Orokaiva and Korafe material differs in ethnographic detail. Itianu portrays Orokaiva ancestors as an undifferentiated entity with whom the living, as a group, engage in exchanges. At initiation children are offered to the spirits in exchange for magic. For the Korafe, instead, relations between living and spirits are particular. Each persons' identity depends on the relations constituted with specific ancestors through patrilineal inheritance and the mediation of the brother-sister exchanges. Magic power comes to clan members from clan ancestors, and the clan's children are not offered in exchange for magical assistance. Instead, pigs for the ancestors are obtained from rival clans in the context of competitive dance and exchange feasts.

The themes of fraternal cooperation between clans within territorial groups (introduced in chapter one) and the articulation of exchanges mediating relations between groups of people with those between the living and their ancestors (delineated in chapter two) are elaborated in chapter three, which describes exchange feasts mediating political relations between territorial groups. Although no longer held, Vasai feasts remain salient features of Korafe political ideology. The organisation of feasts is a prerogative of Kotôfu clans, and is considered to be the basis for their leadership role within territorial groups. By coordinating the magical, productive, and performative efforts of the Sablia clans in their territorial group and negotiating with their counterparts, Kotôfu elders create the conditions for the clans' ancestral spirits, embodied in the dancers' decorations, to obtain from their feasting partners the pigs due to them. Rooted in social and political relations between clans, vasai feasts gave expression to such relations and were a context for consolidating or changing alliance and leadership patterns, as their success depended on the Sablia's willingness to comply with Kotôfu requests. The data for this chapter are a mixture of indigenous objectifications and the observation of contemporary inter-clan feasting on occasions of church festivities which have developed specifically in opposition to the traditional feasts while reproducing some of their features in a new context.

The second part of the thesis is more directly focussed on the issues of complementary and conflicting beliefs endorsed by the Korafe and their actualisation in contemporary practice. Chapter four describes in detail the situation of the Kabuni clans' magic specialisation during 1987-8. Each clan's magical patrimony is listed with a description of the clan elder who, at the time, was considered to be responsible for its common knowledge and powers. The myths about the origins of the magic, the oral history of its acquisition by the clan's ancestors and its transmission to the current holders, and accounts of the pressures by colonial administrators and missionaries to abandon it, are reported. Some of the techniques and effects associated with each magical discipline are described, and the relative importance of different parts of magical rituals for their efficacy compared. Across all clans primacy is given to possession and manipulation of
ancestral relics which embody ancestral essence and power, and symbolise the legitimacy of their possessor's claims to be the inheritor and caretaker of his clan's magical tradition. The 'timeless' aspects of magic tradition, as described in Korafe rhetoric, are contrasted to the contemporary reality. The current status of each clan's specialist is considered in terms of his reputation for powerfulness, public opinion concerning the worth of his powers, the morality of their use, the frequency and context in which they are used, his position in relation to Christianity, and his thoughts about transmitting his powers to a successor. As the fortunes of each clan's magical tradition are traced, the divergences between the conceptual model of the reproduction of the division of magical labour on the one hand, and the processual instability caused by realities of material and social reproduction in specific historical conditions on the other, are highlighted. Christianity, as the most significant and emblematic of Western influences or modern tendencies, appears at different levels of discourse: as explanation for the emergence of some powers, as motivation for efforts to combat the existing powers, as proof of the elder's moral standing despite his possession of magical powers, and as raising moral dilemmas by affirming a fundamental incompatibility between Christian values and the practice of magic.

In chapter five the ambiguous relationship between Korafe commitment to Christianity and their reliance on magic is unravelled through a reconstruction of the processes which engendered and transforms it. It provides the historical background and the conceptual framework for the dilemmas recounted in chapter six. Korafe ideas concerning the distribution of knowledge and its properties of empowerment are discussed as a key to understanding their ambivalence regarding Christian moral condemnation of magic. Christianity is considered by them as the knowledge which empowers Westerners, as magic lore empowers members of different clans differentially. This desirable aspect of Christianity has shaped relations with missionaries throughout the history of encounter, encouraging Korafe to acquire the knowledge promised by missionaries. While Korafe had relatively little trouble accommodating Christian teachings among their own beliefs or acknowledging the desirability of some of its moral precepts, they did not swap magical beliefs for Christianity as the early missionaries hoped and expected. Nevertheless, they have adopted an ambiguous stance in relation to traditional powers, which are considered by them as 'primitive' and even evil.

Korafe ideology emphasises that knowledge, to empower, must belong to its possessor. Claims to inheritance of ancestral powers are legitimated by the possession of the relevant relics, as well as by the perceived effectiveness of the magic performed: both attesting to the necessary relationship with the relevant ancestors. The rigid moral position of Christianity regarding all dealings with ancestral spirits as evil is at odds with a Korafe view of magic as a source of powers which can be used for good or evil. Thus on the one hand, the perceived failure of contemporary Korafe to succeed in a modern context is attributed to the fact that Christianity is really Westerners' knowledge, to which Korafe are not really entitled while magic continues. On the other hand, magical powers are
fundamental to the constitution of political relations within and between clans, and continue to be essential for survival and fundamental subsistence activities. Therefore, the general condemnation of magic in public discourse is undercut by a reliance on clan elders for maintaining relations with the ancestors and making appropriate use of magic for the benefit of the community. While most people are able to profess ignorance of magic and blame others for its continued presence in the community, clan elders are faced with difficult choices and attempt to recast their traditional knowledge in ways which seem to accommodate Christian values. This is the background for the events recounted in the concluding chapter. Magic was appealed to as explanation for and solution to a social crisis, while the death of a key ritual figure plunged the community into a period of contestation and contradiction as the rightful successors to the clan's magic appealed to their commitment to Christianity in order to reject the responsibilities attached to the inheritance of magical powers.
1 Some linguists consider Maisin to be an Austronesian language with Non-Austronesian overlays, while others consider it to be a Non-Austronesian language influenced by Austronesian, see Dutton 1971:8 and Barker 1984:53-4.

2 See chapter 1.

3 Oro also refers to groups like lineages, clans and tribes. It also means welcome in many of the languages in the district.

4 Elkin was able to transcend the normal limitations on acquisition of knowledge beyond that of one's own group. He was considered an expert in Korafe traditions, as well as a speaker of many languages learned from the plantation labourers he worked with in his youth. He was consulted by elders concerning aspects of their own heritage they were uncertain about. Although a senior man in the high ranking clan, however, Elkin did not appear to use his knowledge to further claims to a position of leadership. His classificatory brother Formen was the acknowledged political leader of the clan and territorial group. Elkin was respected and welcomed anywhere for his modest demeanour, story-telling abilities, and fair-minded use of historical knowledge to help in settling disputes.

5 Whether I was his younger or elder sister became something of an issue, masked in mutual teasing and jokes, between Robertson and me. He was Noah's and Jessette's eldest son, and the youth who had accompanied Mackenzie to meet me at the airstrip. To begin with he was happy to refer to me as his elder sister, like most of the youths and unmarried girls in Goodenough village: my being an outsider was sufficient reason to use the term which carried most respect. As I succeeded in becoming more of an insider, and in response to my becoming more closely associated with his parents than other families in the village, Robertson tried to shift to referring to me as his younger sister. It is also significant that his jocular challenges corresponded to a stage when he was beginning to assert himself as an adult, and felt that the way he addressed me would affect others' perceptions of his own status.

6 C. Farr, personal communication 1991
CHAPTER 1
CLANS AND BROTHERHOOD

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I will discuss Korafe social organisation and relate it to indigenous models for the sharing of culturally valued heritage among siblings and social relations between them.

The connection between the social structure and organisation of social groups on one side, and the distribution of rights to valuable cultural items on the other, is expressed by a fundamental word in Korafe social idiom: Kotófu. This word has two distinct meanings which I will differentiate throughout the thesis by the use of higher and lower case initials. Spelt with a capital 'K', Kotófu refers to high ranking clans, which collect around them a number of lower ranking clans (Sabúa) to form territorial groups. Spelt with a lower case 'k', kotófu refers to a range of material and non-material items of cultural value, which constitute relations between the living and their clan ancestors. The possession and control of these kotófu defines clan identity and determines their members' social and political role within each clan as well as in inter-clan contexts. Different types of kotófu are associated with Kotófu and Sabúa clans respectively, but they also differentiate between clans of the same rank.

In the second section of this chapter I will consider the way in which the siblingship model articulates with the organisation of cooperation in daily life and with patterns of co-residence. As well as being a charter for hierarchical relations on the basis of genealogical seniority, the brotherhood model allows for the whole range of relations experienced in social life. It manifests itself in ideal cooperation and sharing, as well as in divisive jealousy and rivalry. Social relations such as those between friends and parallel cousins are also important parts of Korafe sociality, and can provide alternative bases for cooperation. Such relations too, when they result in the formation of groups of a permanent kind, are expressed in terms of the brotherhood paradigm.
In the final section of this chapter I will show that ideas concerning relations of seniority between older and younger brothers are used by Korafe to explain hierarchical relations between lineages, and between clans belonging to the same territorial group. This model is based on ideological assertions concerning the division of rights and responsibilities between brothers in a sibling group, their respective stereotypical characteristics, and the ideology and practice of patrilineal inheritance which favours seniority.

**SOCIAL STRUCTURE**

The definition of Korafe social groups is initially problematic as there are no vernacular terms to differentiate between descent groups such as clans and lineages. The word *oro*, which refers to a traditional men's sitting platform, is also used for social groups; however, it does not distinguish between different orders of groups. At its most inclusive *oro* refers to the group of people who identify themselves as Korafe; at the other extreme it refers to a lineage (to be defined below). Nevertheless, people do use collective names which serve to differentiate them according to group membership.

People who share the same group name also share a number of diacritical features referred to as *kotofu*, which differentiate them from others, such as songs, carved posts, necklaces, etc. Ideally, the mode of transmission of *kotofu* is patrilineal, and the most usual pattern of residence is patrivirilocal. As a result there is a degree of correspondence between patrilineal descent groups, residence groups, and the groups of people with shared *kotofu*. This common heritage, however, does not imply that Korafe perceive themselves as members of a group with a fixed, permanent and identifiable membership. Nor does it preclude the possibility that, as among the Orokaiva, some putatively agnatic groups have actually been formed by the aggregation of cognates or of smaller unrelated groups who migrated together (Schwimmer 1973:194). However, the ideological importance of patrivirilocality, as Young states in the case of Goodenough,

is that it underwrites agnatic solidarity, ensuring that the co-resident group of men, which is the principal cooperative group, is also the patrilineal descent group (1971:26).

This ideological assumption is reinforced by the practice of referring to the men with whom they live, share and cooperate regularly as brothers, regardless of actual kinship relations.

Korafe speakers may also indicate that they are referring to a group of people by the addition of terms which mean 'people of' after a name. The word *embo* is used after a place name to refer to people who live there. Thus, for example, to distinguish Arere clan members living in Famadara village from those living...
elsewhere, they would be called *Famadara émbo*. This expression is also used to refer to all people living in a multi-clan village, regardless of clan affiliation. Similarly, all members of a territorial group are referred to by adding *émbo* to the name of its principal village.

The term *gható*, also meaning 'people of', is added after a person's or group's name to refer to all the people connected to it. Ameta clan members dispersed in different villages can be collectively referred to as *Ameta gható*. The name of a lineage head can also be followed by *gható* to distinguish his followers from the rest of the clan. The linguistic distinction suggested by the existence of two collective terms is between groups based on residence and those organised along descent lines. The articulation between these two principles of social organisation is important in social practice, as people interact more with their neighbours than with people living far away, while subscribing to an ideology of agnatic cooperation. In practice the more inclusive groups are formed as an aggregation of smaller ones related to each other in one of many alternative ways (cf. Barker 1984:163-4). Once formed, however, the relations between the component groups are expressed in terms of brotherhood. Thus, lineages in a clan and clans in a territorial group are thought of as brothers, and act 'fraternally' towards each other.

**Levels of inclusion**

Individuals sometimes act as members of a large group of people sharing some general feature of heritage. At other times they subdivide into smaller sub-groups. I propose to use the descriptive terms 'migratory group', 'territorial group', 'clan', and 'lineage' to distinguish between social groups of different levels of inclusiveness. When asked for their *Oro da jávo* (group's name), Korafe usually give their clan's name. Since, as we shall see, *kotófu* are mainly associated with clan patrimony, I take clans as the basic social group in Korafe social structure.

As in Maisin, Korafe clans are of two types: *Kotófu* clans are of higher status, and collect about them a number of *Sabúa* or 'follower' clans (cf. Barker 1984:168, Barker and Tietjen 1990: 233). Each *Kotófu* clan's primal ancestor is said to have emerged from a hole in the ground followed by a 'younger brother', who carried different sorts of *kotófu* and became the ancestor of a *Sabúa* clan. The one to one ratio of *Kotófu* to *Sabúa* clans, however, has subsequently been modified by historical events. These explain the segmentation or extinction of some clans, the absorption of foreign clans, and shifting allegiances. Given the nature of the local topography, each *Kotófu* clan with its associated *Sabúa* forms an isolated 'territorial group' with a well-defined territory on a separate peninsula in the Cape Nelson complex. There are five such territorial groups today. A sixth *Kotófu* clan, Toru, has become extinct, and its *Sabúa* clans have shifted their allegiance to other *Kotófu*. The five territorial groups are shown on figure 2, on each is marked the *Kotófu* clan and its main village.
Figure 1. Korafe social structure: the meanings of 'oro'.

- Oro = 'Tribe'
- Oro = 'Migratory Group'
- Oro = 'Territorial Group'
- Oro = 'Clan'
- Oro = 'Lineage'
The migration route which the ancestors took from their place of origin is the broadest feature for differentiating groups. Each Kotófu clan is known to belong to one of two migratory groups. The Eva da mándi (Son of the sea) clans include the Gaso and Tevari clans plus all their followers. The Aga da mándi (Son of the mountain) clans include the other four Kotófu clans: Bedada, Bubu, Gaboru (or Yariyari) and Toru (extinct) and all their Sabúa. This division between mountain and sea clans is sometimes attributed to the geographical position of their respective villages at the time when their ancestors were living at Gobe. Attacked by their Okeina neighbours, the Korafe ancestors fled taking two separate routes. The Aga da mándi took the mountain route between Mount Victory and Mount
Temeraire, while the *Eva da mándi* navigated around Cape Nelson in their canoes (see map 2 in introduction).

The categories 'Sea people' and 'Mountain people' are still used, despite the fact that the description no longer fits the actual geographical location of their villages. People believe that the spirit of the dead of the two groups travel to separate meeting places, and their ancestral powers are thought to originate from the top of the mountain range and the bottom of the ocean respectively. Nevertheless, since their settlement at Cape Nelson, the distinction between migratory groups has no foundation in practice. Traditional feasting partnerships were formed between pairs of *Kotófu* clans belonging to the same migratory group, not across the sea/mountain divide. However, members of the migratory groups never acted corporately.

Clans can also be sub-divided into lineages. Within the same clan there are a number of different lineages. Ideally lineages of one clan build their hamlets next to each other, forming one village for each clan. It is common, however, for large clans to disperse, joining lineages of different clans or forming an independent village. Some lineages have settled in separate territories from the rest of the clan, in which case they owe allegiance to a different *Kotófu* clan. On the occasion of large exchange feasts, however, they may be asked for help by the other lineages of their clan, thus contributing to the territorial group's efforts. Members of splinter lineages continue to make use of their clan name, but also adopt another name to distinguish themselves from the other lineages of the clan. This name is normally derived from the personal name of the man who initiated the split from the rest of the clan. This suggests that a splinter lineage is a transitional stage in the formation of a new clan. Having recently separated from the rest of the clan, members of a lineage start to emphasise some characteristics which differentiate them, but they continue to share most of the clan's *kotófu*, including the name. In succeeding generations the heritage of each lineage will become sufficiently differentiated to be acknowledged as separate clans with distinct *kotófu*.

**Territorial groups**

Territorial groups can be regarded as the largest social group to have enduring political unity. Each territorial group consists of one *Kotófu* clan and all the *Sabúa* clans which come under its sphere of influence. The clans belonging to the same group function, in certain contexts, as a social, political and economic unit in counterpoint to other such groups.
On the peninsula of Kabuni there are twelve settlements inhabited by members of eight clans (see map 3 in Introduction). I counted a total of 369 people living in fifty eight households (See table 1 below, for distribution of population in households, clans and villages).
Table 1: Household Population by Clan and Village

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VILLAGE</th>
<th>BUBU</th>
<th>JAVOSA</th>
<th>ARERE</th>
<th>AMETA</th>
<th>SEGUMA</th>
<th>KANDORO</th>
<th>SAFU</th>
<th>GUSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KABUNI</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>BAGA 1</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAGA 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LELIOA</td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MARUTA</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MANO</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KARIKARI</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAMADARA</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>GOODENOUGH</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KONAMBU</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAGA 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KOMOA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table shows that despite the ideological correspondence between descent and localised groups, most clans are dispersed over a number of villages, and most villages are multi-clan. The latter are attributed to pressure by the administration during the reconstruction after the cyclone of 1972 destroyed all the houses in the district. Bubu clan is the Kotofu clan of Kabuni territorial group. The peninsula and the group are named after the clan’s main village, which is the highest one on the ridge of the peninsula (see map 3 in introduction). There are three lineages in the clan, ranked in order of seniority. Some households of this clan have moved to Baga village, on the point of the peninsula across Fesaba Bay from Komoa.

Similarly, some Javosa households are based in Lelioa village, some in Maruta, some in Mano, and others in Baga. Baga is the largest village in Kabuni. It is really made up of three hamlets, each associated with a different clan. They decided to settle closer to each other after their previous hamlets were destroyed in 1972. Of the Arere clan, a small lineage has moved from Karikari to settle in Famadara. Goodenough village is also a recent settlement, built since the relocation of the church following the cyclone. It consists of two Ameta lineages and one Kandoro lineage whose leaders were related because their mothers were sisters.
In some cases a man brought up in his mother's brothers' village following his father's death, chooses to remain in his uncles' village and participates in social events as a member of that clan. He would nevertheless be able to make use of his father's clan name, thus also maintaining his rights and obligations in his paternal clan. This was the case of the isolated Safu household living in Lelioa. Similarly, the man who built his house on Komoa point is the son of an Arere woman. Although his father belonged to the Gobe clan, he was raised by his widowed mother in the village of her matrilateral brothers, of the Javosa clan. After living in Lae for a number of years he returned to Tufi and built his house on his maternal uncles' land.

The allegiance of each of its Sabúa clans with Bubu has different origins in oral history. Kandoro is thought to be the original Sabúa of the Bubu clan; their primal ancestor, Kegane, is thought to have been the younger brother of Bubu’s ancestor Baure. Arere is said to have been a clan of the feared Doriri tribe which became attached to Bubu during the course of tribal warfare and followed them to Kabuni. Some further reshuffling of Sabúa allegiances occurred after their ancestors settled in Cape Nelson. Beghuma, for example, left its village within Gaso clan’s territorial group and moved to Kabuni peninsula, on land given to them by Bubu. Similarly, Javosa shifted their allegiance from Gaboru to Bubu.

Such moves are justified in terms of a failure by their original Kotofu clan to 'look after' them properly. This implies that although Kotofu and Sabúa relations are thought to originate in mythical time, they are predicated on the two sides fulfilling specific mutual responsibilities. This division of roles between clans, as I will show below, are explicated in Korafe ideology as reflecting relations between elder and younger brothers.

Clanship and 'kotofu'

The rank difference between clans is also constituted and expressed by the differential distribution of culturally valued objects and rights among them. Each clan’s ancestor is thought to have surfaced from a deep hole in the ground, somewhere in the mountain range between the Musa and Bariji rivers (see map 1 in Introduction). The ancestor brought with him those features (customs, paraphernalia, various items and practices) which became the clan’s kotofu. In its widest sense, the word kotofu is used for all those characteristics which are used diacritically to define clan identity.

The migratory past of the Korafe, and their recent settlement in Cape Nelson, are not favourable to the linking of corporate groups' social identity to common land-ownership. Filiation is a more important feature in the transmission of land ownership. Corporate group identity is rooted more firmly in members' shared past and common heritage. Expressed in origin myths and clan histories, the common heritage manifests itself in traits which, like its name, characterise clan members and marks them off from members of other groups. It is their shared rights, inherited patrilineally, which link clan members to their common
ancestors, and which they endeavour to transmit to their descendants. Similarly, Young described *dewa*, customs, as providing Goodenough Islanders with evidence of their descent groups' continuity (1971:37, 60).

All *kotófu* are invested, to different degrees, with the power of clan ancestors. Great respect is accordingly shown when dealing with them. They are not used indiscriminately, but only when the occasion calls for their use. Specific restrictions must be followed in order to avoid offending the ancestors embodied in the clan's *kotófu*. This close association of *kotófu* with clan ancestors confers on them the attributes of 'unchanging traditions' (cf. Barker 1990a:189).

In some instances ownership clearly cannot entail material possession, but rather exclusive rights to use decorations, tell stories, and so on. Some items, which are singular and indivisible, are held in trust by a clan elder, usually the eldest living member of the senior lineage. The whole clan is supposed to be involved in any decision concerning the *kotófu*, or before they are used outside the clan. Individual clan members cannot bestow any clan property upon an outsider without the approval of their clansmen. The exclusive rights to their *kotófu* are protected by magical sanctions, by outsider's ignorance of the restrictions associated with them, and by the clan members' readiness to fight anyone who misappropriates their patrimony. Not all *kotófu* are exclusive to a single clan and some items are shared by a number of clans; it is the unique combination of *kotófu*, which differentiates among them.

Each clan, therefore, is defined by a unique combination of material and non-material possessions which constitute its shared patrimony. This definition of clan as a group corporately sharing elements of 'custom' is also found elsewhere in the region, notably in Kalauna (Young 1971:59), and Maisina (Barker and Tietjen 1990:219). The following list of *kotófu* is not exhaustive, as there is considerable variation in each clan's range; however it illustrates the nature of the various kinds of clan possession, and how they define its members' social identity, by 'marking social boundaries' (Young 1971:68). Like the Maisin's *kawo*, some *kotófu* mark the owning clan as belonging to one of two categories: *Kotófu* or *Sabu* (*Kawo* or *Sabu* in Maisin, cf. Barker 1984:162,168).

*Evóvo*. This word has been translated by C. and J. Farr (1986) as 'custom', 'habit', 'fashion', 'eternity', 'totem', as well as 'habitual' and 'eternal'. In a general sense, then, it is synonymous with *kotófu*. More specifically, however, *evóvo* refers to animal and plant species thought to have a special relationship with clan members and which are taboo to them. Although they are sometimes described as clan ancestors, genealogical links to them are only in some cases explained by myths. Eating or burning one's *evóvo* results in wasting and death. The word *evóvo* is therefore also applied more generally to all food restrictions and other taboos associated with the exercise of magical powers (see chapter 4).

Like the Orokaiva plant emblems, *evóvo* are placed on the ground or hung on plants to mark the passage of clan members or to place a taboo on produce
Evóvo birds act as messengers and alarm sounders for their clan: if they are heard at unusual times or places they are thought to portend the return of an absent clan member or a death in the clan. 'Showing the evóvo' to a fellow clansperson marks a serious breach resulting in the cessation of social interaction of any kind between the two parties.

In yet another sense of the word, evóvo refers to behavioural peculiarities which are thought to be typical of members of specific clans (cf. Young 1971:68). Such behaviour as refusing to eat from one's garden if somebody has stolen from it, or giving away one's property to anyone who expresses an interest in it, are included in this definition. Dispositions such as violence of temperament or generosity are also considered to be evóvo. Certain stereotypical attributes are associated with Kotófu and Sabúa clans respectively; members of Kotófu clans are thus wise and level headed while Sabúa are impulsive and belligerent.

Kiki. This word is used to describe any type of story, legend, or myth, but in the context of clan property it usually refers to origin myths, genealogies, and histories of clan migration. Although anyone may hear and relate such stories, their use in political contexts, which requires detailed knowledge of ancestral names, is reserved for the elders of the clan involved. Non-clan members who relate such stories in public may be openly challenged by members of the owning clan, or secretly hit with sorcery. Younger clan members defer to their seniors' greater knowledge and refrain from telling the detailed version of clan myths in public for fear of offending the elders.

Divári. While anyone may sing a song and dance to it, the right to lead a dance group in a public performance belongs specifically to the descendants of the man who originally composed or imported the song from a neighbouring group. Only one elder, at any one time, is considered to be the caretaker of a song belonging to his clan. Only he may lead a dance group or delegate the task to another prestigious dancer, regardless of clan membership. This right is transmitted by the dance leader to his younger brother or son.

Ghóro. These include a series of special, individually named ornaments worn by dancers, which, combined with common dancing ornaments, serve to distinguish dancers of different clans from each other. At initiation, the eldest child of a woman is decorated by his mother's brothers with their clan's dancing ornaments. This does not make initiates members of their uncle's clan. They are allowed to wear the particular decorations given to them throughout their life, but they are not entitled to transmit the ornaments to their children, or to make use of other clan possessions (see chapter 2). Similarly, large trading canoes used to be decorated with special ornaments to signal their owners' clan to allies along the route. Oro platforms were also built and ornamented in a style exclusive to specific clans. Only Kotófu clans had the right to build these platforms, and solely for ritual purposes. The special trading canoes and ceremonial platforms are no longer built and decorated; most clan elders can recite the names of their clan's kotófu
decorations, but usually say that they can only reproduce a few of the objects themselves.

*Tuturo*, *Virónu*, *Káe*. These are three different kinds of ancestral powers which share fundamental characteristics and are thought to be mutually exclusive. *Virónu*, 'speech', is the prerogative of *Kotófu* clans: it is the magic which makes their speech powerful and persuasive, gives them authority over their followers and enables them to represent them in dealings outside the clan. *Tuturo*, which literally means 'beginning', refers to magical powers over natural elements, such as garden and weather magic. *Káe*, literally 'sickness' or 'poison', refers to both powers of sorcery and healing.

The knowledge associated with each clan's powers is ideally restricted to one elder,

magic is highest on the list of important property precisely because its many forms may be held exclusively. (Young 1971:67)

The continued ownership of these powers by successive generations of clan members depends on the transmission of the relevant knowledge by their custodian to his younger brother or eldest son. The powers of *káe* and *tuturo* are exclusive to *Sabúa* clans. (See chapter 4 on the distribution of magical powers among and within clans.)

*Koána*. Each household may possess a number of valuables inherited from its ancestors. In the context of clan *kotófu*, however, *koána* refers to the ancestral relics which are essential aspects of each clan's magical powers. These relics are imbued with potentially dangerous powers. They are usually held in custody by the magical practitioner, normally the eldest man of the senior lineage. The custodian is responsible for safeguarding them for the clan, and for the use to which they are put. He must follow strict taboos before manipulating them, or risk *gevéi* (jaundice and wasting away to death). Destroying or simply mishandling ancestral relics may result in wide-ranging devastation, the nature of which depends on the magical speciality of the clan (see chapter 4).

The most valuable *kotófu* of all are those objects which the apical ancestor is said to have held in his hand as he emerged from the hole. Those objects, imbued with the powers of a line of famed ancestors, permit the elders to enter into communication with their predecessors and to tap their powers. Furthermore, it is these objects which, in Korafe ideology, define for eternity (*evóvodae*) each clan's status as *Kotófu* or *Sabúa*, as well as its sphere of authority.
THE IDEOLOGY OF SIBLINGSHIP AND SENIORITY

Siblingship in Korafe social idiom is a microcosmic model of sociality, incorporating the full range of social relations experienced in social life: from the ideal of harmonious cooperation and sharing within a hierarchical relationship moderated by the seniors' responsibility for the juniors, to the most disruptive manifestations of competition and jealousy leading to segmentation.

The phrase *ambo bégo ghæ* (younger with elder) is frequently used to describe two individuals who are doing something together. Implicit in this phrase is the notion that siblingship is the reason for cooperation, but also that relative age determines their roles. The emphasis placed on relations of seniority is also evident in the reference system. Terms of reference for same sex siblings are unambiguously marked for relative age. Ego always refers to an elder brother as *kóro* and a younger brother as *mándako*. *Aki* and *gagára* are the terms for elder and younger sister.

Figure 4: Siblingship reference terms

Reference terms for siblings are extended to parallel cousins, so that ego's FBS, FFBSS, and FFFBSSS, MZS, MMZSS, and MMMZSSS are all classificatory brothers, while ego's FBD, MZD, and so on are classificatory sisters. The relative
seniority of classificatory siblings is determined by the birth order of the linking siblings.\textsuperscript{15}

In the final section of this chapter I will illustrate how patrilineal descent groups, at the various levels of inclusion, are conceived of as brothers, and the brotherhood paradigm is used to explain the whole range of relations occurring within and between such groups. Before looking at the articulation of ideas about brotherhood with social structure, it is necessary to discuss how ideas about relations between siblings are manifested in different contexts of social life.

**Elder and younger brothers**

'\textit{K\={o}ro} is like the father; from childhood he accompanies his father and learns from him. He goes with his father to the garden and fishing and everywhere, his father shows him men's work: how to dig out canoes and build houses; he teaches him his magic and shows him his land. Later when the father dies the \textit{K\={o}ro} has to teach his younger brothers and look after them.'

This statement expresses the ideological essence of the eldest brother's status with respect to his younger brothers.\textsuperscript{16} Through close, long-term association with his father, the eldest brother assimilates his knowledge to such an extent that he comes to replace him, assuming his role within the family.\textsuperscript{17} This places him in an unequal relationship with his brothers, who depend on him for their share of patrimony. With his father's position, though, the elder brother also inherits responsibility for his siblings' welfare. He is expected to share his knowledge and possessions with his juniors and ensure their well-being. As Young pointed out in regards to Kalauna brothers,

\begin{quote}

it is the eldest son who almost invariably receives the bulk of his father's ritual property. While it is felt that an eldest son should not divulge all his father's spells to his brothers (for their value resides largely in their secrecy, and the fewer people who know them the less likely they are to be alienated), it is also felt that a 'good' brother should not deny his younger siblings the benefit of them. (1971:38)
\end{quote}

This reflects a general attitude, crucial to Korafe social ideology, which links the possession of knowledge to power and authority on the one hand, and to social responsibility towards those who are not in possession of the same knowledge, on the other.\textsuperscript{18}

The eldest brother is entitled to his juniors' compliance with his decisions regarding the use of shared property. In turn younger brothers expect to be treated justly and to receive a fair share of land and wealth. As each brother marries, he is expected to build his house next to those of his brothers, thus forming an agnatic residential group. By cultivating different plots on the land commonly inherited from their father, each brother makes claims to his own share of that land.
As well as the family's administrator, the eldest brother is also its spokesmen in public forums. A characteristic which defines eldest brothers in Korafe stereotyping is their oratorical skill. Eldest brothers are supposed to be wise and level-headed speakers who keep common interests in mind. Holders of traditional knowledge and wisdom, they talk only after careful consideration: 'Kóro nu gégha yáru jo téfo ae arira, nu gogóre tatáya jo téfo ae arira' ('The elder brother doesn't laugh and play for no reason, he doesn't argue and fight for nothing'). In contrast, younger brothers are regarded as impulsive and hot-headed, always ready for action and fighting.

Status differences are evident in the oratorical protocol of inter-clan meetings. Although juniors may speak their minds, their often impulsive remarks or proposals are not taken seriously by listeners unless they are reiterated by their senior. By the same token, the eldest are meant to speak out only after reaching consensus with their brothers. Just as younger brothers depend on their eldest, he needs his juniors' support and depends on their labour to implement his decisions. If an elder brother is seen by his juniors to take unfair advantage of his position they can withhold their support. Without it he would be unable to establish a reputation for himself and his group.

Relations between brothers are idealised as examples of harmonious cooperation. The characteristics of eldest and younger brothers complement each other, and the inherent inequality is compensated for by the eldest's responsibility and caring for his younger brothers and his reliance on their support. Ideally, too, once their own sons grow up and marry, they build their houses next to those of their fathers, continuing to live as brothers, sharing resources and projects to increase the group's power and reputation.

**Brothers and Jealousy**

Despite the ideology of brotherly cooperation, Korafe acknowledge that the other side of the coin is antagonism and jealousy between brothers competing for the same resources.

During childhood the underlying tension between brothers is acknowledged and even fostered by parents who tell one child that he or she is their favourite, or allow an elder sibling to tease a younger one. At the same time, though, they endeavour to instill in older siblings a sense of responsibility towards the younger's well-being, and encourage all children to share fairly. During childhood the unequal status of two brothers is paralleled by physical differences but, with the moderating influence of parents, it is relatively unproblematic.

Where the age difference between two brothers is small, jealousy and direct antagonism between them may be avoided by encouraging one of them to spend
more time with other relatives, such as a widowed grandparent or a childless couple. The practice of adoption may also be seen as a way of preventing two brothers from growing up in direct competition. It is common for a family with many children to give one or more of their children for adoption, especially to the father’s clan brothers. The majority of children given for adoption are boys born in close succession to an elder brother. Being members of separate households, the brothers are not in direct competition for immediate resources or for their parents' attention. As clan brothers, however, they spend most of their childhood playing together and their youth collaborating in each others' projects. On marrying they are expected to build their houses next to each other and continue to cooperate as brothers.

In one particular case a younger brother, who had four sons in a row, gave his second son to his elder brother, who had no children of his own. Following Korafé terminology, the adopted boy became koro, 'elder brother', to his biological elder brother, who was the son of a junior brother. At the time of my fieldwork both boys were still in their teens and the physical superiority of the chronologically older boy was still noticeable. This was irrelevant in terms of the classificatory system, and their respective status in the future. Different criteria were used to judge them, according to the stereotypical characteristics associated with elder and younger brothers. Therefore the boy designated as elder was perceived as showing signs of developing into an articulate and charismatic speaker, while his older brother, classified as his mandako, was acknowledged to be a better gardener and fisherman, but was thought to show a tendency to shyness in public.

Although succession is normally from father to eldest son or from elder to younger brother, this is not always so. Fathers have the option to choose among their sons, as it is their responsibility to ensure that their heritage is handed over to someone who will administer it appropriately. A father may threaten to pass over his eldest son if he fails to perform his filial duties. Particularly if the eldest son spent a long time away from the village in the last years of his father's life, he may suspect that one of his siblings has taken his place in their father's affection, gaining access to his secret knowledge or the more powerful relics. Eldest sons who are impulsive and easily angered are also passed over, as it is feared that they would use their clan's magical powers unwisely in a fit of anger.

Favouritism is also acknowledged by Korafé. Often a widowed grandparent also develops a special bond of affection with a particular child who spends extended periods of time with him or her, providing company and performing small services. Such children are often believed to learn most of the clan secrets directly from their grandparents, by-passing their father and elder brother.

Hence, although eldest brothers are normatively advantaged, personal and historical contingencies can forestall their control over the total corpus of knowledge belonging to the descent group. As elder brothers, they are held responsible for its use, yet it may be junior brothers who have effective control
over some of their powers. When this is acknowledged, the junior men are expected to show deference to their seniors by consulting them on matters concerning their common heritage. However, ambitious younger brothers may resent their seniors' authority over them, and resort to secrecy. Suspicions generated by this kind of conflicting interest are at the root of serious and lasting breaches between classificatory brothers that result in the segmentation of descent groups.

Nevertheless, the practice of favouring first born sons results in an unequal distribution of ancestral valuables among the lineages of a clan, with the senior lineage at a distinct advantage. This leads to what Korafe refer to (in English) as 'jealousy' on the part of the junior group members. Antagonism between brothers who share a common inheritance, despite an ideology of fraternal solidarity, is not uncommon (cf. Young 1988:114, Young 1983a:91, 228-33 passim). Hau'ofa explains a similar situation among the Mekeo in terms of conflicting social values which promote sharing and cooperation among brothers but, at the same time, privileges seniors in terms of inheritance, status, and authority (1981:77-109). The resulting tension underlies antagonism between lineage elders and ultimately causes clan segmentation.

**Brothers and neighbours**

One of the factors which mediate relations between brothers is proximity. Co-residence is an expected correlation of brotherhood. By building their houses next to each other, brothers commit themselves to continued cooperation and involvement in common projects. Generalised food exchange and the sharing of fish, pork, or any food gift from outside sources, are also expected among brothers and promoted by the proximity of their dwellings.

Every time a woman cooks food she sends a child to take some to other households in the hamlet. If the food is of a delectable kind, she sends it for the father or the elder son in the household; if not she sends it for the children. Depending on the amount of food available she sends a dish to one or more households. These gifts are usually reciprocated on the same or the next day, so that when food is abundant children are almost continuously criss-crossing the village carrying plates of food. Children themselves receive dishes of food wherever they may be at the time food is prepared.

Such daily sharing of food reinforces the solidarity between brothers and their families and is considered an essential part, and demonstration of, harmonious relations between brothers. The extent and regularity of such exchanges is necessarily reduced when brothers settle in different villages. On the other hand, commonality is also extended to all co-residents. However in multi-clan villages, priority is given to sharing with closer kin first. Food is shared with other households only if their members have been cooperating on a specific enterprise, or if there is a surplus of a specific kind of food. In the case of smaller multi-clan
hamlets, where the households are related as matrilateral siblings, its members act as patrilateral brothers.

The importance of this daily exchange of food between brothers and their respective households in the village reflects Korafe attitudes to food as a fundamental aspect of social interaction (cf. Kahn 1986). Cooking and eating are always done publicly, in full view of the whole village. Anyone passing by when food is being prepared is invited to sit down and eat. This is usually done in a self-deprecatory tone, and the value of the food offered is played down. Even if everyone knows that he has caught tuna that day, a man will invite his brother to sit down with him and eat some roasted tapioca, and feed him the fish. Similarly, people attempt to conceal from view some of the food which they bring into the village. They justify this by saying that it is to prevent jealousy by those villagers who are less productive than themselves. However, if people suspect that this is done to avoid sharing, then it is considered stingy behaviour.

When, during a drought, Kabuni people told me: namāne ambárera ('we are going to die') they were not referring to a lack of food to eat, but a more general lack of surplus food for sharing. This deficiency would prevent them from 'living' as social beings. During the worst weeks of food shortage, one of the families in Goodenough village, headed by one of the more junior brothers, took to cooking and eating its meals inside the house. Although they were probably ashamed that they had too little food even for themselves and none left to share with other households, their secretive eating was considered the height of shameful and antisocial behaviour; it brought them disapproval and contempt by the other villagers. The man's mother, an old widow who lived in his house but still maintained a separate hearth, was the only one to be seen sitting on their verandah at mealtimes. She disdained joining her son's family inside, although all she had to eat were a few chunks of tapioca.

Men eat separately, with their backs turned away from the cooking area. Served the best food before the rest of the family, men pride themselves on eating little and preferring dry, hard food to soft food cooked in coconut milk (cf. Young 1986:117-18). Very often men call their brothers and adult sons to join them for an evening meal, particularly if they have sugar for making tea. Over this shared meal brothers discuss the day's events and their plans for the next day. Wives listen and make their comments; anything interesting or amusing is shouted across the village to other groups of people sitting on their verandahs. After eating, young people visit other homes and exchange betelnut, tobacco, and gossip. When the young children are asleep, husbands and wives discuss their plans for the next day, and men ask their brothers and classificatory sons to help them.

If a man has some important announcement to make, he waits for the village to quieten down as children go to sleep and women sit down with their string-bags. Then, sitting on his own verandah, he begins speaking loudly, proposing to clear a communal garden, or announcing that they have been asked to help out at a feast, with food or dancing. During a time of sickness he may warn people that spirits are about. If he heard gossip concerning himself or his brothers, or if he suspects
someone has stolen food from his garden this is the time to voice his opinions to his brothers and other co-residents, to guage their reaction. Disembodied angry voices sometimes seem to emerge from the darkness, after most people have taken their lamps inside and closed their doors. Such outbursts are often met, even after a considerable pause, with a shouted reply from another darkened verandah. Sometimes a discussion of this kind continues through the night, each participant (usually men) sitting in front of his own house, maintaining a restrained tone as he shouts his reply across the village clearing.¹⁹

In the day-time the village is quite often deserted as all its inhabitants leave it to follow their own pursuits. Although brothers own land in common, gardens are owned by individual households and divided into separate plots, one or more for each member, including children. Although land is notionally clan property, in fact each brother claims for himself those areas which either he or his father had cleared to make a garden, or on which he had planted certain valuable trees, such as coconuts, sago palms, or trees used for building houses and making canoes.²⁰ Brothers may cooperate initially in clearing the gardens, but then they leave most of the garden work up to their wives. Brothers and their sons share fishing nets and canoes to go fishing on the reef; they also help each other in other projects including commercial ventures, from which each expects a share of the return. The daily contact, sharing and commonality between brothers and their families are fundamental to fostering solidarity and ensuring its continuation in the following generations. It is also what allows groups which have formed along lines other than descent to consider themselves brothers. Since they share 'like brothers' they refer to each other as brother, and their children, especially if they continue to live next to each other, act as brothers. However, what defines a group of classificatory brothers and their children as a lineage or clan is not residence in the same village, but their shared heritage.

Korafe say that the greatness of a village depends on the presence of elders who, as brothers, work to keep their sons together by ensuring that everybody's interests are looked after. For the first two generations following its establishment, a village is thought to grow in strength and reputation. But once the sons of the brothers who originally settled together die, it is very difficult for the next generation of elder brothers to maintain solidarity among their sons. Korafe take it for granted that, when the elders of a long established village die, the village itself is close to death. Individual and lineage interests will overcome the younger men who, in the absence of their fathers' guidance, are not willing to continue cooperating with each other.

Jealousy, antagonism, and suspicions counteract the solidarity achieved by village members through daily interaction. Gossip, petty arguments, the failure to share food, accusations of thieving, as well as more serious arguments regarding the senior lineages' administration of common property, may encourage a man to move with his family to another location. When a brother decides to move away from the village he may settle on any plot of land to which he has a previous claim. He brings with him those items of patrimony which he has acquired and, if
he is influential, he may be joined by a number of households, those of his real or classificatory brothers, thereby setting the foundation for a new village.

Once a separate village is established, its inhabitants begin to be identified as a separate group with a different name. They gradually acquire status as an independent descent group, as the following generations acquire different kotófu from those of the other lineages. A man may wish to move outside the sphere of influence of his descent group altogether, in which case he asks permission to settle on another clan's land, usually that of his mother's brothers or affines. Although he maintains his clan name and identity, his children are usually absorbed by the clan of adoption, as their rights to land and patrimony in their paternal clan have been weakened. As adults, they may ask to return to their clan land, and use their father's clan name. If they remain in their clan of adoption, they refer to their hosts as brothers, forgetting the cross-link.

The main cause for the tendency of agnatic groups to segment, then, is friction between the households of brothers living in the same village (cf. Young 1971:43-6). Korafe attribute this friction to 'jealousy', which is an inevitable consequence of the inequality built into relations between brothers.

**Village and town brothers**

Although proximity is important to maintain solidarity among brothers, it is not a necessary condition. What matters is continuous cooperation and sharing. This is most evident in the case of migrant workers. In the period since colonisation, this has been an important aspect of relations between villagers and their town-dwelling kin.

The usual pattern is for those children who pass the admission exam at the end of primary school in Tufi to go to high school in Popondetta. Other school leavers simply spend some time living with their relatives in town while looking for employment. When they have accumulated some capital, some migrants return to Tufi to marry and settle in their village. They may try to put their capital to use by setting up their own business in Tufi, but mostly they share the money with their kinsmen or expend it in affinal obligations.

Other Korafe men settle more permanently in Port Moresby. Those who marry women from the Tufi district tend to keep in contact with their kinsmen. They provide a base for them and their children in the town, visit the village during holidays, and send remittances. Most intend to return to Tufi when they retire and set up businesses with their brothers. These absent brothers are considered members of the clan. They are consulted about clan matters, asked to attend feasts and expected to help out with money when necessary. When they return they expect to be allowed to settle in their brothers' village and to be given land for gardening. Other urban-dwelling Korafe marry women from other provinces and become more or less lost to the family as they never visit, send
remittances, or show interest in village matters. Their village brothers resent this and say that if they return to Tufi they will not be given any land.

The links between village and urban dwellers are a very important part of contemporary life. Their urban brothers, as well as supplying cash to the local economy, act as vital links between village entrepreneurs and agencies of government and development. Elder brothers are the first to leave the village. They contribute to their younger brothers' education by sending remittances to pay school fees and by supporting them while attending high school. When the elder brothers return home to take care of their ageing parents and assume their responsibilities as elders, it is the younger brothers, now working in town, who provide a network of support for rural visitors to the towns. They in turn send remittances to their brothers and support their children in high school.

The well-being, social standing, reputation, and ultimately the viability of contemporary Korafe social groups depends on their members' success in what might be conceived of as two separate but closely connected realms. The village-based 'traditional' realm defines people as members of a group who identify themselves as Korafe, and provides them with social identities associated with the characteristics of smaller descent groups. While living in urban centres, Korafe regularly associate with each other on the basis of their common identity as Korafe.21 The urban-based 'modern' realm of education, employment and cash economy is necessary for the participation of rural Korafe in the life of Papua New Guinea as a nation. They need money to pay taxes and school fees. Since trade-store goods have come to be relied upon, cash is also required for everyday subsistence activities and for participation in exchanges. In the absence of local sources of regular cash income, Korafe see their period of work away from the village as their only opportunity to save money.

To satisfy the necessities of life in an age of 'development', most young men have to spend a number of years far from their villages. This has resulted in a new division of roles between brothers. Generally the older brothers, after a short time away, return to assume responsibility for the 'traditional' aspects, while younger ones seek success in the urban realm. Another consequence of extensive outmigration is that, at any one time, up to a third of the Korafe population is absent from their villages. This affects the viability of localised corporate groups based on single lineages, and may explain the multi-clan villages of Kabuni.

Brothers in business: 'Komoa Brothers Guesthouse'

The following case study illustrates a number of issues discussed in the previous sections: the formation of corporate groups by matrilateral parallel cousins; the regulation of relations among group members according to the ideology of seniority; the problems which arise concerning aspects of knowledge, power and legitimacy; and the segmentation of social groups as a way to solve conflicts between brothers.
Having seen the operation of an expatriate-owned guesthouse on Tufi station, and encouraged by the availability of development grants from the Provincial government, five men of Kabuni peninsula decided to build their own guesthouse. Although the men belong to three different clans, they refer to each other as brothers because their mothers are three sisters. It was on the strength of this extra-clan matrilateral link that they decided to cooperate (other agnatic brothers of these men had migrated). Following their own usage I will refer to the five brothers and their respective households collectively as 'guesthouse members'. According to the classificatory system Robert, the eldest son of the eldest sister is classified as kóro by the rest. The link of Randellson with the rest of the group, besides being Mackenzie's patrilateral brother, is reinforced by the marriage of his sister Teresa to Robert.

The brothers chose to build the guesthouse on Komoa point, an ideal location overlooking a deep sheltered bay on one side and an easily accessible coral beach on the other. The land on which the guesthouse was built had been cleared and planted with coconuts by Immanuel, the father of Mackenzie, Teresa and Randellson who, therefore, were the current landowners. The beach, however, belonged to the classificatory brothers of the brothers' mothers. These men, of the Javosa clan, together with the only real brother of the three mothers, are referred to as the uncles (see figure 4 for terms of reference for uncles; also chapter 2, figures 1 and 4).

At the beginning Robert, as the eldest brother, was recognised as guesthouse manager. In his role as village councillor he had been instrumental in securing the first government grant. With that the brothers bought a wood stove and other cooking implements, as well as mattresses, sheets and mosquito nets. They built separate houses for bedrooms, washrooms, dining room and kitchen. One of the brothers, Alphonsus, had worked as a carpenter in Lae; he owned tools and building materials which he contributed. Another brother, Noah, had work experience in the kitchens of Westerners. He was considered the expert in European tastes and prepared Western-style dishes with the ingredients available. He became the acknowledged catering leader in the guesthouse and supervised the work of his son and daughters in the kitchen. All the brothers and their families helped with the maintenance of the buildings and grounds, as well as with catering for tourists.

The Komoa Brothers Guesthouse faced the problem, common to all guesthouses in the Tufi area, of attracting a regular stream of tourists. After a few years of irregular business, it seems that Robert had given up hope in the project. He spent a long time in Port Moresby soliciting money from his younger brothers there to set up a village trade store. During his absence, Mackenzie, the eldest of the Ameta brothers, established himself as manager. When Robert returned he took offence because his name had been taken off the Guesthouse bank book. He thought that his brothers suspected him of using guesthouse money for setting up his own business. Since then he and his wife have taken no part in work at the guesthouse. Both their teen-aged children, though, continue to work there and earn some money each time tourists come.
Figure 5: 'Guesthouse members': land owners and beach owners
The management of the guesthouse is relatively simple. Whenever tourists arrive, they are picked up at the airstrip by some of the guesthouse members. The manager buys food on credit from one of the station trade-stores. The brothers' sons and daughters help Noah with the preparation of the six daily meals offered to tourists, men go fishing and women bring fruit and vegetables from their gardens, children climb coconut trees and take the tourists snorkelling and walking in the bush. The number of helpers varies from time to time. If the tourists are numerous, and more people are required to help, they are recruited among the households of the brothers' uncles. On one very busy occasion, there were helpers from all the villages on Kabuni. Tourists pay the manager at a fixed rate (20 kina each per night). After paying for the food from the tradestore and the women's gardens, the manager shares the remaining money among all those who helped. The rates of pay vary depending on the number of tourists, the length of their stay, and the number of helpers involved. They may be as low as one Kina and as high as thirty Kina each. The manager is also supposed to deposit some money in the guesthouse account to meet maintenance costs and replace equipment and appliances.

Besides paying the helpers, the manager has to deal with a number of claims on guesthouse funds made by people who are not considered 'guesthouse members'. These include the brothers' uncles, for the use of the beach, and other kinsmen who may have helped to build the guesthouse. Every time tourists leave the manager must negotiate all these requests. Although he may think that accounts with such parties were settled on previous occasions with a substantial lump payment, they still appeal to him and expect help at times of need. Despite Robert's demise as manager, he has the status of eldest brother. As such he has the last word on the use of guesthouse money outside normal administration contexts, as when requests are made by non-members. This is a common occurrence as it is widely known that guesthouse members have money deposited in the bank. Requests are made by kinsmen who need capital for a business venture, to finance a feast, or for contributions to church funds. Their requests are reported to Robert who, as eldest, is responsible for mediating relations between the guesthouse members and other social groups. Thus, although he has no effective power over the bank-book (like an eldest brother who has not acquired the knowledge and ancestral objects from his father), Robert has authority over its use as a collective resource. Mackenzie, (like a younger brother in possession of magical powers), must consult his elder brother before he makes use of common property to benefit outsiders to the corporate group of owners.

When requests for guesthouse money are made by one of their uncles the brothers find themselves in a particularly weak bargaining position. It is not just the fact that the uncles own the beach. There have been occasions when other people (owners of a stretch of coral reef used by tourists for snorkelling) tried to claim some money; but it was refused. The issue is related to the brothers' social status in the territorial group: as middle-aged men with respect to elderly kinsmen, and as sisters' sons to mothers' brothers. Although all five brothers are elders
within their own clan since they are the most senior members alive, they are 'young boys' with respect to their mothers' brothers.

As successful entrepreneurs the guesthouse members are in an ambiguous position in the authority system. They could easily appear to be using their money to increase their standing in the territorial group to the detriment of their elders. To avoid this they share the money with their uncles, thus contributing to the wellbeing and status of their clan too. It is a feature of relations between mothers' brothers and sisters' sons in general that whenever the latter show lack of respect, the uncles may resort to sorcery as punishment (see chapter 2). The fact that their uncles belong to a clan renowned for its powerful sorcery is an additional reason for the brothers to comply with their uncles' requests. Both Mackenzie and Robert had suffered from serious illness while acting as managers. Both, in retrospect, interpreted their disease as 'punishment' by 'jealous' old men. In order to recover they both had to make substantial payments to prominent sorcerers, and they believed that they had been warned not to accumulate money for themselves. They felt sure that if they failed to share the guesthouse earnings with their senior kinsmen, they would fall victims of sorcery again, this time fatally.

The manager's decisions concerning the disposal of guesthouse money are frequently questioned by other guesthouse members. Helpers feel that their share is reduced because of payments made to greedy kinsmen; those who were not asked to help accuse the manager of favouring members of his own family. Other brothers feel that he should deposit more money in the bank in view of their plans to improve the guesthouse. The manager is often suspected of pocketing tourist's money, particularly tips, and of using the guesthouse account at the tradestore for his own family.

The forces at play in the formation and segmentation of corporate groups is evident in the history of the guesthouse. The disagreements and suspicions are similar in kind to those which occur among descent group members concerning common patrimony of a more traditional kind. On the one hand cooperation between brothers is necessary; on the other, working together and sharing resources results in antagonism and tensions which cause the group to break up. Whoever is in control of shared property has to mediate the requests by group members and outsiders. Others may disagree with his decisions, resent his position of power, and suspect him of misusing it. The resulting tensions exacerbate sibling antagonism and result in the segmentation of clans as brothers go their own way. A parallel solution was sought by Alphonsus.

Having helped to build the guesthouse, Alphonsus felt that he and his wife were not benefitting from the same opportunities to earn money as the others. After quarrelling with Mackenzie about it he decided to build his own guesthouse. With help from his younger brothers in Port Moresby he secured another development grant. He asked his uncles, of the Javosa clan, for permission to build his guesthouse on their land, overlooking the beach at Komoa. Two unmarried crosscousins, also of the Javosa clan, helped him. However, since all his 'real' brothers
live in Port Moresby, and his own children were still too young, he had to rely on the same group of helpers as the original guesthouse. Except for Mackenzie and his family, the other brothers share their labour between the two guesthouses, which are rarely patronised by tourists at the same time.

Alphonsus had not been able to buy another stove, so he used the same kitchen, albeit with his own cooking implements and crockery. Initially he also used the name 'Komoa Beach Guesthouse' for his establishment. Its similarity with the name of the original guesthouse (Komoa Brothers' Guesthouse), coupled with their location on the same beach, proved confusing for tourists, and gave rise to many misunderstandings about bookings. As a result Alphonsus was made to change his guesthouse's name, a procedure similar to the identification of separate lineages of the same clan by independent names.

**Sisters**

Before proceeding to look at how ideological statements about relationships between brothers are reflected in the social structure and relations between lineages and clans, I shall consider the role of sisters within the sibling set and beyond.

During childhood sisters form affectionate bonds with each other by playing together and helping their mother. Elder sisters learn from their mother and are expected to take care of younger siblings. They play a leading role among their younger sisters and, in turn, teach them what they know about their daily chores. After marriage women maintain relationships with sisters living in different villages, by sending presents of food, visiting, and encouraging their adolescent children to do the same. If they live in the same or neighbouring villages, married sisters continue to meet daily to go gardening, to wash clothes, or gather firewood and water. Sometimes they may use the same canoe to go to the market in Tufi station or to gather shellfish in the mangrove swamps. Their children play together and learn to relate to each other as siblings.

These relationships fostered in childhood continue into adulthood. Cooperation among matrilateral siblings occurs on a less regular basis than among patrilateral siblings, and its extent is determined by the proximity of their husbands' villages. When they do cooperate, however, they say that they want to because of mutual love, not because of any sense of obligation. When a man has few patrilateral brothers, or is unable to secure their cooperation, he is likely to turn to his mother's sisters' sons, particularly if they have grown up together.

If 'younger-elder brother' relations are taken as the model for relationships between lineages and clans, relations between sisters explain alternative relations which cut across clan boundaries. These relationships may be complementary or in some cases substitutive of patrilineal ones. They can add a further dimension to individual's sociality by allowing for friendship and cooperation beyond the
interests of corporate groups, and be relatively free from the antagonism which threatens relations between agnates.

Groups of sisters and their descendants cooperate in the performance of important ritual tasks in the context of affinal exchange relations (see chapter 2). There is a possibility that some matrilateral sibling sets, though dispersed, develop and maintain a corporate identity due to the transmission of common specific traits from mother to son. These traits may include a shared collective name, customs and even evóvo. They are genealogically shallower than clans, and normally 'submerged', coming to the surface on occasion of affinal exchanges (see chapter 2). Occasionally matrilateral kinship ties may provide the basis for the formation of a localised corporate group. This is the case Goodenough village and the 'Komoa Brothers Guesthouse'. In these cases the offspring of the eldest sister takes on the status and responsibilities of eldest brother.

SOCIAL GROUPS AS BROTHERS AND THE IDEOLOGY OF SIBLINGSHIP

In the first part of this chapter I described lineages, clans and territorial groups as different levels of social organisation, each represented in Korafe ideology as alliances of brothers sharing a common heritage. In the second part of the chapter I described the characteristics culturally attributed to elder and younger brothers, and to the relations between them. I have shown how these characteristics are used to explain relations between members of patrilineal descent groups. In this section I wish to show how cultural constructions of brotherhood and seniority are also thought to describe the relationships and division of roles between sub-groups. The same parallel was discussed by Barker (1984:172-7), who compared the Maisin Kawo/Sabu relationship to 'other asymmetrical relationships which are explicitly based on principles of genealogical seniority.' (ibid.:172).

Lineages as brothers

The distinctive identity of each lineage derives from the characteristics inherited from the ancestral brother who gave his name to it, and from those of his successors. However, lineages of the same clan continue to share those features derived from more remote ancestors shared by them. Members of the separate lineages continue to refer to each other as 'brothers', and the lineages themselves take on, corporately, the status of individual brothers in the sibling group which constitutes the clan.

All lineages of the same clan can easily be ranked in order of seniority according to the birth order of the brothers regarded as their founding ancestors.
(cf. Barker 1984:164). Same generation descendants of the eldest ancestor are referred to by members of junior lineages as Kóro (eldest brother), who refer to the members of the other lineages as mandako (younger brother), regardless of their actual age. The lineages collectively may be referred to as bégo ’eldest’, soro bebégo, ’middle’, and ámbo ’youngest’ respectively (see figure 4). Thus the senior lineage performs the functions of eldest brother within a clan. The elders of the senior lineage, as eldest brothers, tend to act as spokesmen for the clan as a whole, being considered wise and authoritative speakers. Other lineage elders speak too, but conventionally they accord priority to their kóro.

With respect to shared patrimony, the most important magical powers associated with the clan are thought to be in possession of the elders of the senior lineage. However, other lineages may be acknowledged to be in possession of different strands of the same or different kinds of magical powers. Although lineages may act independently of each other in most respects, decisions concerning shared clan patrimony cannot be taken without consultation with the elders of all lineages. Lineage elders thought to be in possession of magical knowledge, for example, are expected to consult other senior men in their clan before using it. However, the same problems concerning authority, jealousy and legitimacy among brothers may affect relations between lineage elders. If a junior lineage leader acquires a reputation as magician, he may resent the authority of the senior lineage's elders over the clan's powers. If one elder's magical ministrations do not have the desired effect, he may suspect the elder of another lineage of counteracting his efforts, perhaps with stronger powers than his own.

This sort of conflict results in endless discussions between clan elders, aiming at a clearer definition of each elder's sphere of magical powers. In this way, each lineage becomes associated with a more distinct kind of magical power, and the differentiation of the lineages' future heritages is initiated.

As I mentioned above, the Korafe ideal is for lineages, as brothers, to continue cooperating and living harmoniously side by side, thus establishing large and powerful villages, widely renowned for the powerful elders residing there. However, in the absence of the unifying influences of elders who have at least grandparents in common, the conflicting interests of various lineages are thought to prove too disruptive for the harmony of a village. Once the last of that generation of elders die, their sons, unable to cooperate peacefully with each other, are likely to disperse in separate settlements with their families.24

Clans as brothers

The clans which come together to form a territorial group are similarly thought of as brothers. Relations between younger and older brothers are the conceptual basis for the distinction made between Kotófu and Sabúa clans, which are thought to originate from ancestral 'elder and younger brother' pairs. The rank and status differences between Kotófu and Sabúa clans are attributed to the birth order of
their respective primal ancestors. Their roles within the territorial group are parallel to those of older and younger brothers in a sibling set.

As Schwimmer pointed out, the use of sibling terms of address to refer to other clans within a local group serves to emphasise the obligations of mutual support between clans (1973:205). In Korafe (and Maisin) social ideology however, this usage also carries with it assumptions about the respective roles and relations between junior and seniors (cf. Barker 1984:162, 174).

Traditionally elders of the Kotófu clan, like Goodenough Island's Kaiwahu, organised the Sabúa within their territorial group to participate in competitive exchange feasts (Young 1971:248-53). All the Sabúa clans in the group were expected to give their support by dancing or providing food for the feasts. Besides organising feasts, the Kotófu's traditional functions included military and political leadership. Following pacification and, more recently the introduction of elected village councillors to make and enforce local laws and regulations and promote local 'development', these two roles have been taken out of the hands of the Kotófu. (The village councillor for Kabuni peninsula was a man of the Kandoro clan until 1988 when a Beghuma man succeeded him; the church councillors belong to the Javosa Ameta and Bubu clans). Nevertheless, the Kotófu retain authority over the other clans, particularly in traditional matters, and exercise their privilege to open and conclude discussions at inter-clan meetings (cf. Barker 1984:171).

Each Kotófu clan ancestor emerged from the hole bringing with him the emblems of his status as Kotófu as well as the instruments of Kotófu powers: drums, conch shells, and elaborately decorated lime pots and lime sticks. These objects define the realms of Kotófu responsibilities and powers: conch shells were used to summon followers for fighting and drums to attract and lead dancers. The large and elaborately decorated lime pots and sticks, the most important Kotófu symbols, are associated with their magical powers of speech. Words spoken by Kotófu elders after rattling their lime-stick and chewing betelnut with the lime from the Kotófu lime pot, assume a power that only they possess. Even if spoken quietly the words are carried far and listened to by all. Fighting and quarrelling stops and everything becomes quiet as the Kotófu speak with wisdom and authority; their words are heeded and acted upon by the followers. Words spoken by the Kotófu are said to have the power to act on listeners' ghámo (seat of emotions). Although they could use their arts of persuasion to summon their followers to fight, the aspect which is emphasised was their ability to calm a quarrel before it escalated, and to negotiate with their enemies, transforming them into feasting partners and allies (see chapter 3). In this respect the role of Kotófu recalls the Mekeo's peace chiefs (Hau'ofa 1981:186,190). Kotófu are therefore portrayed as representatives of their territorial groups in dealings with outsiders, whether allies or enemies, and their role as peace negotiators is emphasised over that of warfare leaders.

In contrast, the Sabúa ancestors brought with them minor decorations and white-feathered headdresses. Each one of them, however, carried in his string bag
the implements of his clan's magical powers. While the minor decorations clearly indicate the Sabúa's lower status, the implements which their ancestors brought with them from the hole in the ground define their respective fields of power over gardening, fishing, hunting and warfare or sorcery, all of which are denied to Kotófu clans (see chapter 4). In contrast to the Kotófu's wisdom and diplomacy, Sabúa are described as trouble-makers. Like younger brothers, Sabúa are associated with work, action and warfare as opposed to the Kotófu clans' association with oratory, alliance-making and peace-keeping. This distinction is also fundamental in the Maisin Kawo/Sabu clans and, according to Barker, it is on these characteristics which the Kawo clans' superiority is predicated (1984:171 and 1990a:189).

The restriction of all other magical powers to Sabúa clans emphasises the social distance between the two ranks. Although all magic powers can be used for both good and evil purposes, those belonging to Sabúa clans are easily blamed for misfortunes to the community, while the Kotófu's lime-pot is associated with the socially valued qualities of eldest brothers. In their position as leaders, Kotófu have to appear as 'good men' and cannot be associated with evil powers. These powers are attributed to their younger brothers, the Sabúa, whose cooperation is essential to the Kotófu. It is in this respect that the clans grouped around one Kotófu in a territorial group are seen, in Korafe ideology, to resemble a group of brothers working in harmony for the benefit of all. The Kotófu, as eldest, look after the overall interests of the group, and use their authority and powers of persuasion within the group to promote harmony and cooperation.

Kotófu mediate the territorial group's relations with outside groups by acting as spokesmen and providing them with symbols of common identity. They coordinate their Sabúa's efforts in feasting and competitive exchanges, and ensure that the gifts received are shared among them. As I will argue in chapter 3, the Kotófu's organisation of exchange feasts is fundamental for the overall well-being of all clans in their territorial group, and for the reproduction of the system of magical specialisation. It is in the context of exchange feasts that clan members obtain pigs which they exchange with their ancestral spirits for magical assistance.

In other respects, too, the Kotófu's function is parallel to that of eldest brother, again by virtue of their power of speech. At inter-clan meetings, they wait for the impulsive Sabúa to finish discussing and arguing before summing up, providing the overall definition of the situation. Their powers of speech are not directed solely at their followers, for they also act as spokesmen for their group with outsiders: negotiating with allies and rivals, and organising feasts. In all cases Kotófu should act like eldest brothers by speaking for their group only after consulting with the Sabúa elders.

The services of Sabúa elders with their various magical powers are necessary, on the one hand, to ensure that ordinary subsistence activities are rewarded by adequate results, and on the other to ensure the group's success in competitive feasting. The services of sorcerers are necessary for the punishment of
wrongdoers, to kill enemies and to heal people poisoned with sorcery unjustly or by jealous outsiders. Like younger brothers, the Sabúa are men of action, but they are supposed to consult the Kotófu before making use of their powers to aid or hinder the members of groups other than their own.

Nevertheless, ritual experts have some autonomy from the Kotófu, to the extent that they are able to use their powers secretly. While this allows Kotófu to deny involvement in any evil magic performed, it also acts as a moderating influence on their power. Like elder brothers they must be seen to be acting fairly and responsibly towards their followers. There is always the covert threat that magic or sorcery might be used against them by their own Sabúa if they are perceived as being too autocratic or not to be 'looking after' their followers.

The implications of 'looking after' are very wide. They include ensuring that their followers have enough food, maintaining harmony between them, and protection from enemy encroachment, as well as sharing their resources or other benefits with them, as an eldest brother would with his junior siblings. As an example of this, the elder of the Gaso clan explained the defection of the Beghuma clan to the Bubu clan's territorial group with the following story.

Beghuma ancestors repeatedly asked their Kotófu to decorate their trading canoe with emblems of the Gaso clan, which would assure them of safe passage and successful trading among all villages in which Gaso had allies. The Kotófu elder procrastinated so long that the Beghuma men asked their uncle of the Bubu clan to do it instead. When he accepted they moved to his land so they could work in his garden while he worked on their canoe. By the time he had finished they had established themselves on land given to them by Bubu.

From this story the clan elder told me he draws the following moral which he teaches to his sons: never to neglect their remaining Sabúa, to take them along every time they are invited to a feast in another village, and to share among them all gifts which they receive, as eldest brothers do with their juniors.

As brothers go their separate ways when the ideal of harmonious cooperation ceases to withstand the test of antagonism and jealousy, so Sabúa clans may decide that their Kotófu are not fulfilling their side of their bargain, and leave for a different territorial group. Thus Bubu clansmen, traditional rivals of Gaboru, used to tell me that the reason for Javosa's decision to leave Gaboru to associate themselves with Bubu instead, was the fact that the Gaboru ancestors, alone among Kotófu clans, had access to powers of sorcery and weather magic. This made them less reliant on their Sabúa, and they did not look after their younger brothers properly. Kotófu and Sabúa clans have different roles in territorial groups. If they cooperate, the group as a whole thrives and its status improves through its success in competitive exchange feasts.

'Elder-younger-brother' pairs, then, are used by Korafe as conceptual and ideological models of social organisation. They are at the centre of a complex
cultural nexus of ideas concerning status, knowledge, power, and authority. As a model, the brotherhood paradigm encompasses the whole range of possible relationships between people, from the harmonious cooperation aimed at, to the divisive jealousy marring relations between competing brothers. Ideologically the brotherhood model indicates the preferred options within this range and provides a charter for unequal distribution of valuable attributes and rights according to seniority. Conceptually, it explains extant social relations, colours people's expectations about social and political relations, and explains antagonism and divisiveness. As Korafe themselves are aware of, however, this model is not exhaustive of all possibilities of sociality. Korafe social experience includes relations with people other than brothers, although these do not find much expression in ideological statements. In the next chapter I will describe relations between brothers and sisters, and their articulation with affinal relations.
ENDNOTES - CHAPTER 1

1 Cf. Williams (1930:101) for a similar usage among the Binandere.


3 Although Kerebi clans are autochthonous, they are so integrated into Korafe social structure that they are likely, unless they are concerned with making a point about their distinct origins, to identify with the migratory group of the other clans among which they are living.

4 Sometimes the term *Oro Bondo* is used to refer specifically to clan, but normally the context is sufficient for people to know what kind of group is being referred to.

5 Maisin *Kawo* are associated with those *Sabu* which are said to have migrated together (Barker 1984:173).

6 Gaboru’s main village used to be Kikita, but most of its inhabitants moved to Kofure to build a tourist guesthouse on the beach.

7 In fact territorial groups correspond to the definition of ‘parish’ in the ethnographic literature about other groups in Papua New Guinea (cf. de Lepervanche 1973:2, Hogbin and Wedgwood 1952-4). I have chosen not to use the term as I wish to maintain the distinction between territorial groups as a ‘federation’ of clans living in a common territory, and parish in the sense of ecclesiastical district. The relevance of this distinction will become apparent in later chapters dealing with the Mission and the contemporary social composition of feasting groups.

8 These figures relate to the census which I carried out during the first part of my fieldwork. At the time of the census there was only one household living at Komoa, although it was soon to be joined by another household from the village of Lelioa. Baga is the largest village, and includes three distinct hamlets.

9 Similar origin myths are common to many Non-Austronesian speaking peoples in this area of Papua; for example the Binandere (Waiko 1982), the Orokaiva (Williams 1930), and the Koiari (Dutton 1969).

10 Patterns of land-ownership and transmission of rights to land are similar to those described by Barker in Maisina. (1984:156-7)


12 This can be done to mark a special relationship of the outsider with the clan, but it always involves complex negotiations, an elaborate feast and gift exchanges. Most commonly, it occurs at initiation of first-born children, who are invested with the dancing ornaments belonging to their mother’s brother’s clan (see chapter 2).

13 According to Williams (1930:206) the Baruga used the word *Kotopo* or *Kortopo* to refer to plant emblems and ornaments used as ‘clan badges’. In Maisin many objects ‘displayed inherited designs, insignia and natural materials known collectively as *evowi*, owned by and denoting particular social factions.’ (Barker and Tietjen 1990:228).

14 The same distinction between ordinary dance ornaments and those which indicate the wearer’s clan membership is also made by the Orokaiva (see chapter 3 for a description of the ornaments and a discussion of the difference between Orokaiva and Korafe usage).

15 See chapter 2 for cross-cousin terminology and affinal relations.

16 Although the assumption in this statement is that *koro* refers to the eldest brother, the underlying attitudes to seniority operate serially. Within each pair of brothers, one is elder to the other, and acts as *koro*.

17 The terms for younger brother and sister are formed by the addition of the diminutive suffix -ko.
to the words for son and daughter respectively (*mándi* and *gagára*: *mándako* and *gagárako*). This reflects the notion that the elder sibling is like a parent to his or her juniors.

18 This feature is crucial for understanding contemporary Korafe attitudes to knowledge acquired from outside sources (see chapter 5). As Barker (1990a:182) discusses in the Maisin context, this is also a key to village people’s attitudes to those among them who are seen as having access to ‘Western’ knowledge.

19 This style of airing grievances about one’s fellow villagers is in direct contrast to Gapun women’s *kroses*, cf. Kulick (1990).

20 Women too may be allowed by their father or brother to make use of clan land. The land may sometimes be considered a gift to her husband, but more often it remains property of the wife’s brothers’ clan.

21 For example, they formed a ‘Tufi Dance Group’ to perform at public functions. During the drought which affected the Tufi area in 1988, Korafe living in Port Moresby pooled their resources to buy a boat load of rice. Through their relations in Popondetta they organised its shipment from Oro Bay to Tufi, where it was shared among Korafe clans.

22 ‘The same egalitarian values that compel rich households to distribute at least part of their wealth inhibits the accumulation and expenditure of capital by corporate groups’ (Barker 1984:237).

23 As I will show in chapter 2, rules of *exogamy* only apply to lineages or local clan segments. The ideal of brotherhood is an ideological representation; it does not imply the existence of actual kinship ties.

24 ‘Nothing is so divisive in Kalauna hamlets as the rupture of bonds between full brothers, and few things are more conducive to rupture than rivalry over magic, especially when juniors might be accused of appropriating the authority conventionally accorded to their seniors.’ (Young 1983a:130)
CHAPTER 2

BROTHER - SISTER PAIRS IN AFFINAL RELATIONS

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter I described relations between elder and younger brothers as a conceptual model for those between lineages of a clan and clans of a territorial group. In this chapter I will show that Korafe explain the cooperation and exchanges which take place between affines in terms of the bonds between brothers and sisters and, consequently, between their children. By mediating exchange relations between the two descent groups involved at different stages of a marriage's life-cycle, brother-and-sister pairs create affinal alliances and construct the social identity of the couple's children by ensuring their rights to a relationship with both groups' ancestral spirits.

Iteanu and the 'du' couple of the Orokaiva

In his book on Orokaiva cycles of exchange, Iteanu points to the fundamental roles of du (brother and sister) couples in all rituals involving ceremonial exchanges between affines (Iteanu 1983:114, 174, 247, 265, passim.). This he attributes to their particular position as operators of the articulation of the relation of two levels of exchange: those between men, at individual and village level, and those between men and spirits (ibid.:116). The latter relations, he argues, encompass all other relations in Orokaiva society:

L'englobement des divers parcours d'échange dans celui supérieur de la relation entre hommes et esprits, constitue l'ordre hiérarchique qui régit cette société. (ibid. :178). ¹
Although affinal exchanges primarily mediate relations between affines, overall these exchanges are only a part of the more encompassing cycle of exchange between men and spirits.

In Iteanu's model of Orokaiva society men exchange pigs, which they obtain from the realm of spirits, in order to establish and maintain social relations at individual and group levels. In return for these, spirits claim the lives of men. During initiation ceremonies men offer up their children's lives in exchange for game. However, through the key intervention of a brother-sister pair (the child's mother and her brother), the direct exchange of human life for pigs is transformed into a deferred exchange. At mourning ceremonies the debt is finally paid, again through the intervention of a brother-sister pair, this time the widow and her brother. Therefore, for Iteanu, the role of brother-sister pairs in all the ritual exchanges of the 'global cycle' is one of mediation between the worlds of men and spirits, necessary for the transformation of a direct exchange between the two spheres into a deferred exchange, and therefore for creating a space of time for human life to occur (ibid.:272).

From an analysis of Orokaiva myths, Iteanu concludes that in order for the du couples to effect the 'magical transformation' of direct exchange to deferred exchange, it is necessary for the brother-sister pair to be separated by marriage (ibid.:179, 248).

Chaque fois que la disjonction entre le mariage et la germanité est réalisée, les du apparaissent immédiatement avec leur influence magique sur les hommes. (ibid.:258). 2

This, however, involves affines in a series of exchanges, which explains the Orokaiva preference for sister exchange marriages. These give rise to harmonious affinal relationships because they result in the formation of two couples which are in a du relation to each other, and because they involve direct exchange between affines (ibid.:249). In all other forms of marriage the debt which the husband has incurred towards his wife's brother is only cancelled by a final exchange after his death. Thus the processes of mourning effect at once the closure of exchanges between affines opened by marriage, and those between the living and the dead, opened at initiation.

Iteanu's analysis relies on an ideal reconstruction of traditional ritual practices and cosmology drawn from ethnographic descriptions from the 1920's (Chinnery and Beaver), 1930's (Williams) and 1970's (Schwimmer). Although he carried out fieldwork among the Orokaiva between completing the manuscript and its publication, he did not incorporate any of his own observations into the text, limiting himself to assuring the reader that they confirmed his analysis (Iteanu 1983:avant-propos). Thus he is able to reconstruct a model in which the various levels of exchange feed back into each other to result in a global system:

La société orokaiva nous présente l'image d'un monde où tout est parfaitement ordonné et où, cependant, chacun semble 'libre' de
mesurer son rapport à l'ordre des rituels (ibid.:286).³

This illusion of personal freedom and choice in matters such as marriage results, according to Iteanu, from a peculiarly Orokaiva conception of the person. He argues that unlike the Western conception of empirical individuals, Orokaiva persons are defined relationally; their identity fluctuates between states as subjects and objects of exchange (Iteanu 1990). This, like everything else, is subordinated to and defined by the superior value of the cyclical re-affirmation of the Mythico-ritual pattern. Thus, for Iteanu, what appears to observers as indeterminacy of social rules or fluidity of social groups is an illusion; it does not imply individual freedom since everything is allowed as long as it ultimately conforms to the encompassing ritual cycle.

This analysis, however, is only sustainable if the last eight or nine decades of history are overlooked and the complexity of contemporary ritual and cosmological notions ignored.⁴ Contemporary Korafe, like many other Papuans, define themselves as Christians and almost unanimously subscribe to the Anglican church. While not implying a refutation of 'traditional' values and beliefs, this and other consequences of the colonial experience has resulted in radical changes in beliefs and practices.

The very idea that a society is a neatly-bounded self-sufficient 'thing' co-substantial with a 'closed' ritual system sustaining it (even if it could be argued that such a society ever existed in pre-colonial situations) is brought into question by the widening of social horizons and amalgamation of Christian cosmology with the indigenous one.⁵ Korafe themselves, when talking about their customs, constantly draw comparisons with what their ancestors used to do before they became Christians like them, and at the same time contrast themselves to Westerners, who they see as representative of Christianity. The contemporary world view includes traditional and Christian elements, all valued and utilised consciously by Korafe for different reasons.

Korafe brother-and-sister pairs are joined in ideology by lasting bonds of affection, and, as in Iteanu's account of Orokaiva, they appear as principal players in all affinal exchanges. In this chapter I attempt to follow the vicissitudes of brother-sister relations through their life cycle. However, I wish to avoid reifying Korafe practice as an immutable cycle. I accept at face value the Korafe definition of themselves as Christians, and try to show how relations between brothers and sisters, groups of affines, and between the living and spirits articulate in contemporary experience, where ideas and practices of Western origin articulate with 'tradition'.
BROTHER AND SISTER RELATIONS

Relations between cross-sex siblings, and those which derive from them, differ from the same-sex sibling relations described in the previous chapter in that age and relative seniority are irrelevant to them. Beyond childhood, the relative age of cross-sex siblings is overridden by gender differences in shaping their respective roles. Thus, unlike the reference terms used by same-sex siblings, which are normally marked for relative age, the terms more commonly used for cross-sex siblings are not marked. Sisters can refer to younger and older brothers as *ruka*, and brothers can use the term *ghasovu* to refer to all their sisters, regardless of age differences.

As children, brothers and sisters play freely and spend considerable time together. However, from an early age they learn different skills, girls from spending time with their mother or older sisters, boys from following their father or older brothers. The difference between brothers' and sisters' activities, and their separation, becomes more marked as they grow to an age where they are expected to contribute to the household's work. Children are allotted small plots in their parents' gardens; teenaged boys help the men during the clearing phase, then ask their sisters to weed and harvest their patches. While girls, like their mothers, consider it part of their daily routine to harvest some garden produce and cook a pot of food, boys go fishing almost every day.

Tufi station provides some opportunities for school leavers to earn money. Girls may sell garden produce in the market while boys sell the larger fish to the fisheries plant. Other sources of cash for young adults are the tradestores and guesthouses. Adolescents normally use part of the money they earn to buy some tradestore food which they bring home. This contribution, like the fish and garden food which they contribute to the household meals, is often made in the name of the younger siblings. Like parents, elder siblings take pleasure in 'feeding' their juniors. As they reach an age at which they become interested in courtship, boys are encouraged to direct their attention outside the circle of their lineage and village siblings. Teenagers frequently visit and live for some time with kin in different villages, where they have the opportunity to meet with others. Throughout their pre-marital life, girls continue to take care of their younger siblings, with whom they form lasting attachments. Older boys, in contrast, have little to do with their sisters at all.

Once they become *gimása* (bachelors) and begin experimenting with love magic, youths acquire substances which are dangerous to all women, but to their own sisters in particular. Contamination with a brother's love magic substances is thought to affect the woman's reproductive system. One girl, for example, suffered severe abdominal cramps in association with menarche. This was blamed on her habit of playing with her brothers' possessions. Adolescent boys are conscious of these dangers and jealous of their secrets. They obtain for themselves a separate room to sleep in and in which to keep their possessions away from their sisters.
However, bachelors are not completely cut off from their sisters, and relations between them remain friendly and relaxed. Like the care and garden food given by older sisters to their younger siblings, the boys' contributions of fish and trade store food is thought to develop lasting bonds between siblings.

Although a woman marries and moves to her husband's village when she marries, the purpose of marriage should be to promote cooperation between the descent groups of the bride and groom. The ideology of cooperation is expressed in terms of work. Together husband and wife are thought to work to make a family and, by providing all that is necessary for the well-being of its members, promoting its prosperity, and thereby ensuring its continuity as a viable unit. In addition, a woman should work to 'help' her husbands' kin, and a man his wife's. In the first months of marriage a woman has to demonstrate to her in-laws her ability to work for their welfare. It is particularly important that she demonstrates willingness to cooperate with the other women in the village and under the direction of her mother-in-law.

Soon after settling in her husband's village a woman is expected to perform the ritual of *aja jighári*. She rises before dawn and, before anyone else awakes, she sweeps the area under and around the house of her mother-in-law. Then she fetches water and a bundle of firewood for the main hearth of the household. When she has performed these matinal chores for her mother-in-law, she proceeds to the next house in the village and does the same there. She works her way gradually around all the households in the village or hamlet. Other young women in the village (her husbands' unmarried sisters or sisters-in-law) may take up their own brooms and help her to show, in turn, their willingness to work with the newcomer. This help, however, is conditional on her having established friendly relations with them.

Once she has swept all the village and brought water and firewood to all the houses, the women she has 'helped' give her a small gift from their reserve of implements: a clay pot, a saucepan, or some new plates or mugs. On subsequent days she may perform the same service for the households of neighbouring villages, headed by men who are classified as brothers or fathers by her husband. *Aja jighári* is very important for establishing the marriage. It demonstrates the woman's capacity to perform the tasks required of her, her willingness to work for the husband's family, village, and wider kin group, and establishes her relations with the other women involved.

The groom too is expected to show his ability and willingness to work for his in-laws by a form of *aja jighári*. During the first months of marriage he is expected to help his affines in any major project they might engage in, such as clearing a patch of forest for a garden, making a canoe, or building a house. These tasks are considered to be a husband's counterpart to the wife's daily jobs of collecting water and firewood, sweeping under and around the house, and lighting the fire. By performing them for his in-laws, a young husband demonstrates his capacity to take on the responsibilities of a married man as well as his willingness to help his affines.
As a result of these obligations, newly married couples visit the wife's village frequently. If the distance between the two villages is great, they live for periods of weeks in the village of the bride's brothers. Sometimes they may be offered some land for a garden. Quite apart from the formal exchange relations between affines, these visits involve informal exchanges of food. The woman brings food harvested from her garden to give her brothers, and returns with food from her brothers' garden, which she shares with her affines. These exchanges are conceived of as gifts exchanged by brothers and sisters as an expression of their mutual affection.

Although, especially once they have children, the productive life of a couple is more oriented to the husband's descent group, the affection of brothers and sisters is thought to persist and determine relations between the two family groups. Even if, in later years, the husband may feel that he has discharged his obligations to his in-laws, his wife may feel a longing for her brother's village. A man cannot stop his wife from travelling to her brother's village to help them on occasion of illness, death or a feast. The affection of brothers provides women with a haven from marital discord and a protection from ill-treatment. If a woman seeks refuge with her brothers, they will not permit her to return to her husband until he brings them a pig. Women know that, especially if they have young children who are likely to go with them, they can use the threat of returning to their brothers' village against their husbands. This, however, entails a serious breach of personal and affinal relations and the threat is seldom carried out, as shown in the following case study.

One young man from Goodenough village left his bride (a young Miniafia woman from the hinterland of Uwe) in the care of his father to visit his classificatory brothers in Port Moresby. His wife, meanwhile, lived in his father's house. She was expected to work in their garden, help her mother-in-law, and cook her own pot of food to share with the members of the household. She spoke hardly any Korafe at all and used English to converse with her younger affines, but could not communicate directly with her mother-in-law. The older women, and her husband's unmarried sisters, were unhappy with her work habits. They considered her lazy and bad tempered. One of the frequent criticisms against her was that she had never performed *Aja jighāri* in their village. There were frequent arguments in the household, and she was constantly being told off by her father-in-law. Several months passed this way as the husband was waiting in Port Moresby for his 'urban' brothers to save up his return fare.

One day she saw a canoe bringing people from her brother's village to Tufi. She decided to take the opportunity of a ride to visit her brothers. When her intention was discovered the other members of her husband's village stepped in to mediate. Her father-in-law's older brother persuaded her to remain in Goodenough village; she could live in his household until her husband returned. This man, and his brothers, had a vested interest in the success of this marriage: it was the first affinal link with a distant village and had already cost the groom's kin group a boat-load of tradestore food, bought from the proceeds of the guest-house.
Affection is not the only aspect of the relationship between brothers and sisters to carry on after marriage. Brothers continue to have power over a woman’s reproductive system. Without the aid of spells or magical substances, a woman’s brothers, as well as her mother and father, can prevent her from conceiving. They are thought to use this power if they are displeased with their sister’s choice of husband, or with the couple’s discharge of affinal obligations.

In the next descending generation the relationship between brothers and sisters is carried on by their children, cross-cousins to one another. Unlike patrilateral parallel cousins or brothers, cross cousins do not have a heritage to share, and they do not compete for its control (cf. Barker 1984:169-70). Unlike parallel cousins, who are classified as siblings and refer to each other by terms marked for seniority according to the relative age of their parents, cross-cousins refer to each other as gháto, a term undifferentiated for age or seniority. Further, in genealogical accounts all the brothers in a sibling set are listed first in order of birth, followed by all the sisters, also in birth-order. While it is important to know the birth order of same-sex siblings in one's ancestry as it determines the seniority relations between descendents, the age difference between brothers and sisters does not affect the relative status of their descendents, and this information is not preserved in genealogies.

**Figure 1. Terms of Reference: Parallel and Cross Cousins**

As children, cross-cousins spend time together on the many occasions their parents exchange visits, and they learn to play and work together. Adolescents are encouraged to visit their mother’s brothers and live some time with them, thus strengthening their bonds with their cousins. Some children, especially the first-born child of a couple, spend more than half their time living with one of their mother’s brothers, who is likely to assume responsibility for the child’s initiation.

As adults, a pair of gháto often become dance partners, hunting or fishing companions, and turn to each other for support in times of need. Korafe consider the friendship between cross-cousins as the most genuine and least strained of relations, characterised by honesty and pleasure in each other’s company. The
expression 'Nimo ghîto!' ('You are my cross-cousin') is used to vouchsafe the truth of a statement, as if to say that one never lies to one's cross-cousin. In myths cross-cousin pairs are often portrayed as taking on the greatest dangers together.

**AFFINAL RELATIONS**

Marriage results in a series of exchanges between the kin of the two spouses. These exchanges are formal occasions at which participants identify with their lineage or clans, which are taken as points of reference for the sharing of the food exchanged. Nevertheless, as we shall see, it is on the basis of personal kinship ties that individuals participate on one side or the other of the exchange.

Affinal exchanges constitute two overlapping series of prestations, one relating to the transfer of a woman’s allegiance from one kin group to another, the second concerned with the couple’s eldest child. Taken overall these exchanges tend towards balanced reciprocity, the ideal state of affinal relations. The most important exchanges are related to brideprice, the initiation of the first child and mortuary ceremonies. There are a number of other smaller exchanges which are considered appropriate or necessary, though they are not regularly entered into by all groups of affines. The strictness with which the formal pattern of exchange feasts is followed varies in individual cases depending on factors such as the previous state of relations between the kin of the spouses. Since the recruitment of helpers on either side of the exchange is done along kinship lines, there is scope for considerable variation in the size and composition of the exchanging groups. Thus, as I will show below in the section about brideprices, the exchanges may involve two lineages or two clans as the exchange parties, or, in some cases, even larger groups. The social and physical distance between the two marriage partners is one factor in determining the scale of the exchanges and the range of kinsmen and women recruited as helpers by the two sides.

**Marriage preferences**

Korafe express no positive marriage rule. When asked, they say that two people with the same grandparents should not marry, however this rule is made vague by the classificatory system in which practically anyone of the right generation could be classified as a grandparent. In practice marriage is discouraged between members of the same lineage or between people living in the same village and who grew up referring to each other as brother and sister. Once a relationship of affinity is established between two groups, the frequent exchanges and mutual visits increase the possibility of further marriages between them, sometimes resulting in sister-exchange situations.
I collected information on 61 married couples in Kabuni. Of the 61 men, only six were married to a woman of the same clan. In all these cases the wife belonged to a different lineage and/or lived in a different village. In the remaining 55 marriages the two partners belonged to different clans. Besides the preference for village and lineage exogamy, the majority of marriages between people living in Kabuni (as opposed to migrants) are between members of clans of the same territorial group. Of the 61 married men living on Kabuni peninsula, only 3 had wives originally from outside the Tufi district, 9 men married women from the district but belonging to a different language group (4 Maisin, 3 Veniapie, 2 Yega), and 49 men married Korafe women; of which 38 were from the Kabuni territory and 11 were Korafe belonging to other territorial groups.

Table 1: Origin of Kabuni Men’s Wives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origin of Kabuni Men’s Wives</th>
<th>Kabuni Territorial Group</th>
<th>Other Territorial Groups</th>
<th>Different Language Groups in Tufi</th>
<th>Different Language Groups Outside Tufi</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KORAFE</td>
<td>38 (62%)</td>
<td>11 (18%)</td>
<td>9 (14%)</td>
<td>3 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAME CLAN (diff. lineage)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>MAISIN</td>
<td>MINIAFIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIFFERENT CLAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the villages in one territorial group are thus linked in a closely-knit network of affinal relations. The meshing of mutual obligations at different levels across clan boundaries contributes to the overall sense of kinship between the members of clans in one territorial group. As relations between two groups linked by multiple affinal ties become closer, individuals may interpret the classificatory reference system in alternative ways, depending on their desire to emphasise affinity and exchange on the one hand or consanguinity, sharing and cooperation on the other. This is possible because mothers’ sisters’ sons are classified as brothers. Since the majority of affinal links is between the clans in the same territorial group, the generalised sense of kinship between these clans underlies the ideology which views the clans in a territorial group as a group of brothers.

According to Schwimmer, Orokaiva affines are 'transformed' into 'notional consanguines', thus setting up the conditions for clan fusion (1973:212). Korafe
villages, however, are smaller than Orokaiva ones, and the groups of intermarrying affines retain their separate village and clan identity. Instead of assuming a common name they postulate 'brotherhood' at a different level, that of clans. Thus, when dealing with clans outside their own territorial group, members of all clans within it are referred to by the same name, that of their Kot6fit. They nevertheless retain their clan names, and clear distinctions are made between them; the clans themselves are described as 'brothers' and differentiated according to seniority. Further, the relationship of 'brotherhood' which is maintained at clan level does not prevent people of the same territorial group who are related as affines from using affinal terms of address for each other when they wish to stress that aspect of their relationship.

Marriages outside the territorial group are also desirable since they create new alliances and widen the scope for exchange relations. They provide access to resources which are not available locally. People from the dry peninsula of Kabuni, for example, benefit from affinal relations with people living in the riverine plains of Uwe. Through them they have access to garden food and sago during dry months, as well as nipah leaves for thatching and large tree trunks for making canoes. On their part, being closer to Tufi station, they have access to cash and tradestore goods, which are scarce resources among their affines in Uwe.

The advantages of such marriages are weighed against certain disadvantages. Courtship is more difficult as there are fewer occasions for the couple to meet casually. Once married, the integration of the new bride into the life of an unfamiliar village may be problematic. However, the same unfamiliarity is considered to be an advantage by some. One young woman explained that it is better for a man to marry a girl from a distant village. Men who married girls from neighbouring villages were always jealous and suspicious of their wives because the sexual partners of their youth were living nearby. If the wife came from a long way away, she would have left her old boy-friends behind and could no longer be affected by their love magic.

Marrying a woman from another territorial group is also harder precisely because it involves creating new relations with an unfamiliar group of people. Unable to rely on previously established relations, a man must be prepared for greater demands on the part of his affines. The brothers of the bride are likely to demand immediate brideprice payment, and to be more exacting in their other demands. In general, the greater the physical distance between the bride and groom's villages, and the greater the social distance between their descent groups, the higher the brideprice. Affinal relations in these marriages are more formal than in marriages involving members of closely linked descent groups. The size, timing, and form of exchanges are less open to negotiation, and the consequences of disagreement are more serious in the absence of other mediating interests in maintaining friendly relations.

Korafe affinal relations are sometimes based on sister exchange between friendly groups; at other times such relations begin with hostility and formal
exchanges are necessary to establish friendly relations between the groups. Schwimmer describes this pattern among the Orokaiva as a cyclical movement of relations which a group has with its affines, both phases of amity and enmity being necessary for the reproduction of corporate groups which, although patrilineal by ideology, are in fact the product of a fusion of affines into a single descent group (1973:211 ff.). In the following pages I aim to show that the nature of affinal relations, and the form of exchanges between them, are not determined by an overall cyclical design; they are negotiated by the parties involved depending on the state of existing relations between them, and on their objectives.

**Courtship and marriage: reminiscing about the old days and the contemporary ambiguities**

Older people are fond of reminiscing about their courting days, when boys and girls participated in night-long courtship songs and games on the beach. In their time, as now, it was normal for young people to have a number of *kmbo* (partners) before they married. The 'proper' way for these affairs to be conducted was for a bachelor to visit the girl's house in the evening, eat with her father and brothers, and sit talking and chewing betelnut with the girl until she went inside to sleep. Then, with the consent of her father, he would go inside to join her.

Courting couples were not supposed to have sexual intercourse, and the old men enjoyed demonstrating the way they were supposed to sleep holding each other while lying still. The amusement of the young people in the audience was greatest when one of the elders told of the times he got carried away and began 'moving too much' or tried to lift the girl's skirt. Invariably, in these stories, the girl would scold him and send him away. Dejected, he would have to make his way through the dark night back to his own village, frightened of spirits and sorcerers. The girl would also gossip about him with her girlfriends, spoiling his future chances with them. Normally the young man would remain until shortly before dawn. Then he would slip out of the house before anybody could see him, leaving a gift for the girl's father. If he had been invited by the girl he was not expected to make a gift. After a bachelor had been visiting a girl regularly for some time, she would ask him to marry her.

As old people are wont to do, the narrators often concluded these accounts by moralising about the different ways of modern young people. Similarly, when talking about marriage elders tended to emphasise the more formal arrangements, which were considered 'traditional', although they were probably never very common. *Datu dighári*, for example, was an agreement which could take place when the couple were young children or youths up to was of marrying age. It was linked to sister exchange marriages, obviating the need for brideprice. A bachelor's parents, having noticed a hard-working girl, would take a tapa cloth skirt, decorate it with their clan's *kothfu*, and present it to her parents. They in turn would show it to the girl, who accepted it only if she agreed to marry the interested boy.
Following such an agreement, the formal marriage took place, according to the elders, in the following way. On an arranged day, the bride, decorated in ceremonial garb and wearing a sāra coiffure of hardened clay, was escorted to the groom's village by her kin. She walked between two of her brothers linking her little fingers with theirs. As they approached the boundaries of the groom's village they halted. Except in cases of sister exchange the groom's father or elder brother would have to declare his intention regarding brideprice payments (kotía gatári). With each promise he made, the girl and the two brothers advanced a few steps until, satisfied with the promises, the brothers allowed her to sit on the groom's verandah.

Having agreed on the brideprice, the groom's kin would provide a feast for the guests, then most of the guests returned to their own villages. Only the bride's immediate family slept in the groom's village. Early the next morning the bride's mother and sisters would help her to perform the aja jighári ritual. The couple's parents would speak to them, reminding them of their mutual obligations to their respective clans. The spokesman for the bride's group would tell her to work hard for her in-laws and look after her husband; the groom would be told to treat his wife well and not to beat her.

Soon after the bride's kin would send a message to the couple, requesting their help. The groom was expected to perform aja jighári for his affines. When the bride's sāra began to crack and peel off, it was time for her kin to reciprocate the feast. For this occasion the bride, accompanied by her husband and affines, returned to her village of origin. Her hair was shaved and her scalp was decorated. A shaved head was the sign of a married woman and this ceremony established the marriage as definitive. Having demonstrated their willingness to work for their affines, and having been accepted by them, both partners could now 'sit down' together.

The exchanges between the two kin groups did not end there. Except in direct sister exchange marriages, brideprice (minó) had to be paid. Important items in a traditional brideprice were pigs, pigs' tusks, and shell ornaments, as well as clay pots, pandanus mats, and tapa cloths. This prestation did not involve a feast or shared meals. The bride's kinsmen would storm the groom's village by surprise at dawn, loudly demanding payment. Once the startled groom had collected the promised items and handed them over, his affines would simply walk away. They returned to their own village where the bride's father or elder brother shared out the brideprice and distributed it among his supporters.

Besides the minó, a married couple was expected to raise a number of pigs destined for the woman's brothers. These pigs were given specifically for the sake of the couple's children, particularly the first-born child. The first pig was given when the woman became pregnant. Another pig was given after the birth, before the mother and child could leave the house where it was born. Another one was killed before the mother's brothers were shown the newborn child. The final pig to
be given to the mother's brothers was raised for the initiation of the child at puberty.

Against the ideal picture painted by nostalgic older people, contemporary courtship and marriage practices seem confused. This is not to suggest that they were not so in the past. As reminiscing elders themselves were the first to admit, courtship in their days did not always follow the rules, marriages and the exchange relations they entailed also deviated from the ideal pattern. Women sometimes eloped with their lovers, violent fights occasionally broke out between affines, the groom's kinsmen sometimes defaulted on their promised payments, or a child's parents might neglect to kill pigs for its uncles. To ensure against these eventualities a woman’s brothers were (and still are) thought to have powers to prevent her from conceiving, to cause her to miscarry, or to kill her children. The very fact that children got sick and died indicates, by this logic, that not all the marriages of the past resulted in ideal affinal relations. In most cases, perhaps, some agreement between the groom's and bride's kin would have been reached and brideprice payment would then establish amicable relations between them.

Contemporary marriages are also the result of negotiations involving individual and collective choices. Courtship takes place much as before: young people meet at nightly events such as 'disco nights' in Tufi station, at events organised by youth groups, or at clan feasts. They use friends and younger siblings as messengers, and arrange to meet on some pretext. Sometimes boys try to sneak into a girl’s house at night undetected by her elders, although the adults often say they would prefer young people to court openly as they used to do. Particularly at times of tension and sickness, when the villagers are preoccupied with spirits and sorcerers, adults remind young bachelors not to lurk around houses at night as they might be mistaken for sorcerers and attacked.

*Datu dighāri*, with its corollary of feasting and complex exchanges, is no longer practised. After a time of courting the girl asks her boyfriend to marry her. If the couple live in distant villages, the groom asks his father and brothers for help. They gather together some gifts which they bring to the girl's kin on the day when they go to fetch her. Other couples arrange to elope on a certain day. The girl packs a few things in her stringbag and they go to sleep in the house of a sympathetic kinsman, normally the groom's father's or brother's. It is not unheard of for a girl to present herself at the house of her boyfriend saying that she has come to marry him.

In cases of elopement the girl’s family, alarmed at her disappearance, search for her. Her mothers and sisters are expected to follow her and try to persuade her to go back with them. Although they act as if they were outraged, their persistence, and even the timing of their arrival, vary according to how much they actually object to the marriage. Sometimes the women wait until the next morning before chasing after the couple. If the girl's family are truly angry, then her fathers and brothers go with the women, and a serious fight might result. Normally the girl's resistance and the groom's family's pleas for her to stay, are enough to
discourage her mothers and sisters. They leave her and return to their village with the news that she is going to be married. Even when they do succeed in dragging her back with them (usually because of lack of support by the groom’s side) the couple may persist and elope a second or third time, until both families are resigned to their marriage. Determined opposition is met only in cases when the marriage is thought to be unfavourable, perhaps because of unresolved conflicts between the two lineages, or because the couple are too closely related.

Sometimes a marriage does not work out and young couples separate, though this is problematic once brideprice has been paid or children have been born. Some men who had spent many years living in urban centres say that they had been married there but left their city wives when they returned to Tufi. A church wedding is sometimes performed and considered an indication that it is a ‘real’ marriage; often it is performed only after the couple has been married for some time.

BRIDEPRICE

Depending on existing relations between the bride’s and groom’s kin, different kinds of agreements are made concerning brideprice. It is in the interests of the woman’s brothers to wait until the groom and his brothers have prepared themselves for the presentation. This gives them time to muster help from their kin, including migrant workers who contribute a large part of the monetary component expected nowadays. In cases where there is a breakdown in the negotiations, the bride’s kin may storm the groom’s village at any time. When this occurs, the groom’s kin rapidly gather whatever they can contribute at such short notice, and the bride’s kin have to content themselves with that, although they may extract promises for further instalments at a later date.

Marriage to a woman from a distant village requires a higher brideprice than one from the same territory, especially if there are no previous affinal ties between the two lineages involved. The scale of the event depends on the groom’s ability to call on his clansmen’s help, and therefore on the advantages which they can expect from an alliance with the bride’s group. With the widening of the Korafe social horizon since the increased mobility and participation in political and economic life of the nation state, there have been a number of marriages involving men or women from other parts of the country. Some can be of political advantage, particularly those involving women belonging to tribes from neighbouring districts in the Oro Province. The brideprice feast described below, for example, was the grandest in the Tufi area during my fieldwork.
A 'political' brideprice feast

The hosts were Gaboru, one of the six Korafe Kotófu, whose elders are also prominent in the sphere of provincial politics. The bride's kin had travelled for a whole day on their canoes to reach their village. Both these factors were put forward to explain the scale of the event, and the wide network of kin from which the groom drew help.

The men in the groom's clan built platforms for storing the food and shelters for the guests to sit under. Women had been busy storing garden food and piles of firewood, while men went fishing or hunting and smoked the catch for the feast. On the day when the guests were expected, the groom's kin from various villages travelled on foot and canoe, carrying loads of garden food to the village. It was added to the piles of food to be cooked for the guests during their stay, and that which was to be given to them to take home.

I accompanied a group of supporters from the villages on Kabuni. They were mainly women: classificatory or real sisters of the groom, married into clans from Kabuni. Except for a few elders of renown, the Kabuni men refrained from going. They said that they had no 'boss' there. They had no authority over the proceedings and no rights to claim or duties to perform, therefore they preferred to stay away. The women went along to bring food in support of their brothers, and to help the women with the cooking. Their role as supporters of the giving side was marked; they gathered around the hearths where the food was being prepared and, after resting from the journey, they joined in the villagers' work of preparation.

The arrival of the bride's kin was greeted with shouts of 'Orokaiva Orokaiva!' They did not respond to these but proceeded stonily to the places set out for them to sit. The women gathered in small groups on the verandah of a house. The men sat under a specially built shelter in the centre of the village. They sat in silence around the edges of the shelter. Some young men of the hosting clan brought bunches of betelnut, green coconuts, and sugarcane. These offerings were placed in front of the older men who received them diffidently. They shared them brusquely among their party, sending a young man to take some to their wives.

Only after the guests had refreshed themselves and chewed some betelnut were they ready to greet their hosts. This was done with great formality. Following the clan elders, the groom and his supporters filed under the shelter to shake hands with all the guests in turn, stopping to exchange a few words with individual acquaintances. The clan elders sat down and joined their guests in chewing betelnut, the others returned to their work. The elders of the groom's clan addressed the bride's father and brothers, referring to the long trip they had undertaken. They explained that, given the distance which they had travelled they would not, as is customary, hand over the brideprice and farewell their affines straight away. Today they would prepare some food for them to eat, the following day they would make the formal prestation.
Soon the first dishes of rice with tinned fish and corned beef were brought for the men to eat; their wives were given theirs separately. This was followed by dishes of taro and sweet potatoes boiled in coconut cream with pieces of pork and fish. Tea with sugar and condensed milk was brought last, and a fresh supply of betelnut. Having eaten and chewed betelnut with their hosts, the bride's kin began to relax. Meanwhile the groom's helpers were sharing a quick meal of boiled rice and tinned fish. As night approached, the women who had come from Kabuni decided to start for home. They knew that the payment would not be made that day as the groom's brothers, who had gone to buy a cow for the occasion, had not yet returned with it from Tufi peninsula.

As it turned out, the feasting continued for three days. There was dancing by the guests one night, and a group of young men organised a 'string band'. According to the gossip in Goodenough village, the groom's clan were delaying the payment of the brideprice because they were waiting for some cash to be sent from Port Moresby. In the meantime they kept feeding their guests and 'telling stories' with them. Finally, on the afternoon of the third day they brought out the large domestic pigs, bundles of taro, sacks of rice and sugar, cartons of tinned fish, and the money, taped to a stick. At dawn the following day the bride's kin loaded the goods on their canoes and left.

This type of protracted feasting, with dancing, is not considered usual for brideprice payments. The groom's kin were stalling in order to present a more impressive sum of money to their affines. It was also in their interests to make the occasion a grand one, as they were keen to establish exchange relations with a new group of people from a different district in the province. Having transformed the brideprice feast into a dance feast they set a precedent for similar events in the future. The following year the groom's clan was invited to dance in the bride's brothers' village, and they asked dancers from all the Korafe clans to go with them to share in the return feast (See chapter 6).

**A widow's brideprice: her brothers and her sisters**

The only other brideprice feast which I had the opportunity to attend was also unusual. The couple in question were elderly; both partners had previously been married and widowed. Relations between the clans involved, all belonging to the Kabuni group, were close and multiple (see figure 2). The husband belonged to the Bubu clan lineage of Baga village. The wife, Brigitta, was an Ameta woman whose brothers lived in Goodenough village. Her previous husband was a Javosa man of Maruta.
Brigitta's marriage to Justus had caused a stir because the woman's older daughter had been married to the man's son, and had died. The mourning restrictions for the young woman had hardly been removed when Brigitta eloped to marry her son-in-law's father. Her brothers suspected the groom's kin of being responsible for her daughter's death, and were totally opposed to her marriage into the same family. When she eloped to Baga her brother Mackenzie had 'shown' her their clan evóvo, signalling that he had now severed all communication with her (see chapter 1). He was also angry because the woman had four unmarried children, who were being brought up mainly in Goodenough village by their uncles, and he did not want them to go to Baga with their mother.

When rumours that Justus was preparing to pay brideprice reached Goodenough village, people began debating what role they would have in this exchange. The elder men decided that since they had received brideprice from their sister's previous husband they had no claim to make, so it should go to the Javosa clan. Having severed relations with Brigitta they were not prepared to help her, and their presence in Baga would be misconstrued as an attempt to claim a share of the brideprice for themselves. Therefore they decided to stay away.

However, many of the women in Goodenough village were also related to Brigitta. The wives of the two Kandoro men in the village were her classificatory sisters, while her mother and two daughters were living with the brother who had showed her the evóvo. Since her first husband's death the woman had spent considerable time in her brother's village with her children, and all of these women were attached to her. So they decided at the last minute that whatever the men did, they would go to Baga to help her. They searched around and each woman found two Kina to contribute to the brideprice, as well as some food and a clay pot. Seeing their wives' determination to go, the men relented somewhat. While still refusing to go themselves, they gave the women twenty Kina from the Guesthouse earnings to contribute to the groom's prestation to the Javosa men (the brothers of Brigitta's previous husband).

By the time the women had found a canoe and we had crossed the bay to Baga, it was eight thirty in the morning. We saw some Javosa men carrying a small pig from the village to their moored canoe. According to custom the
receiving party had gathered in Baga, outside the couple's house, before dawn. The couple had been woken up by the loud rattle of limestick on limepot. The groom had offered betelnut while his wife made tea and his son went to alert the other clansmen. A small domestic pig had been presented to the woman's previous brothers-in-law by the groom's clansmen, as well as a stick on which were taped seventy Kina. As soon as these things were handed over, the Javosa clan had stood up and gone home, just as the woman's sisters were coming to bring their contribution. None of the women dared to stop the departing men, and they rushed to Brigitta's house instead.

They tried to hand over their contributions to Justus but he refused to take anything. As they had feared, it was too late to add their contribution to the payment. The husband explained that although the brideprice had not been very large, it was sufficient for a widow. His wife insisted that her kinswomen remained to share the food which she was preparing for all the people who had contributed to the brideprice. She was moved because since she had married and her brother had shown her the clan's evovo, she had been unable to visit Goodenough village, and this was the first time that they had visited her in her new village. Meanwhile, the members of the Javosa clan had paddled back to Maruta village where they butchered the pig and feasted all day before sharing out the money and returning to their respective villages.

Although the circumstances of this brideprice were unusual, it is interesting for what it reveals about relations between brothers and sisters. First it illustrates the close interweaving between affinal and cognatic ties among the clans of the same territorial group, and the freedom of interpretation this allows to individuals. The woman's brothers could not participate in this exchange: having broken off relations because of her marriage, they would be shamed by appearing to claim for themselves some of its benefits. Their wives, however, were able to trace cognatic links to her and define themselves as sisters and ignore the affinal relationship between them.

A second point of interest is that, as sisters, the women did not choose to stand on the receiving side of the exchange, but sided with their sister as givers. Brideprice, then, is not the simple concern of two groups of men exchanging women for goods or money. Although the main transactors are the groom and his clansmen on one side and the bride's brothers on the other, the composition of the exchanging groups cannot be assumed to be coterminous with the bride's and groom's clans or lineages respectively. The alignment of sisters and brothers on opposite sides of the exchange emphasises the separation of the pair that occurs at marriage. Once she is married, a woman may help her brothers when they are making a payment to their own affines, but she contributes to the work of her husband in making gifts to her brothers. And her sisters can side with her to make gifts to their brothers.
Children are taught to fear their mother's brothers' powers, to act properly and respectfully towards them and to obey them. They often spend some time in their uncles' village, living and working with their cousins. In exchange for their work teenagers hope to obtain some knowledge of love magic from their uncles. The parents, on their part, raise pigs to give to the uncles at various stages of their first child's development. If the woman's parents or one of her brothers are childless, they may ask to adopt one of the woman's children on a more or less permanent basis. If the child's father has not given enough pigs to his affines, he stands in a weak bargaining position to resist such requests.

The timing of these exchanges is a crucial factor in maintaining harmonious relations between affines, and plays an important part in the strategic planning of married couples. It is important that all the woman's brothers who will have a say in her child's initiation are present to receive their share. If one of her brothers is absent there is a possibility that he may, on a later occasion, object to the child's initiation on the grounds that he had not received his share of pig. It is not easy to find a time when there is abundant food, a large pig, and all the uncles available. This is one of the main reasons for delaying brideprice and initiation feasts, and it is a source of arguments between affines.

Every time that a pig is given by a couple to the wife's brothers, the parties involved haggle over its definition as part of the mother's brideprice or as a payment for the child. The husband's kin are keen to conflate the two in a single payment, and to consider themselves free of any further commitment. On the wife's brother's side, too, different people may have interests in defining the exchange differently, as it affects the future obligations of the recipients. Anyone who receives part of a woman's brideprice is committed to helping her brother when his turn comes to pay brideprice. Anyone who eats of the pig given for a child is committed to contributing to that child's initiation exchange. Such factors affect people's decisions concerning their participation in the feast.

Nixon, for example, was a young bachelor; his father was dead and his mother recently re-married into another clan. His older brothers lived in Port Moresby. He divided his time between the village of his father's brothers and that of his mother's brothers, though he considered himself a member of his father's clan. When the members of another lineage were preparing a feast for his gháto (father's sister's son), Nixon was unsure whether he should participate as a recipient or not. His father had already received some meat of a previous pig which had been killed as brideprice for his father's sister. When Nixon asked for advice, he was told to wait until the motive for the gift was settled. If the pig was considered to be a second instalment of the woman's brideprice, then he should claim the portion of meat which was destined for his father. If the pig was given for his cousin's initiation, then he should not accept any of its meat unless his
father's brother told him to, implying that he would help him when it came to making a contribution to his cousin's initiation. This shows the two kinds of gifts involved from Nixon's point of view: by claiming his father's share of the pig, he is also committing himself to making a gift in the future.

Another strategic decision on the part of a child's parents is to choose one of the mothers' brothers as the principal recipient of the pigs. There are many individuals who qualify as mother's brother, but the choice is limited by structural considerations. The most obvious choice would be the mother's actual eldest brother. However, if that man has already been responsible for the initiation of another sister's child, he may not want to commit himself to another large scale exchange. Another likely choice may be a brother who had formed a particularly strong attachment to the child's mother in childhood. Classificatory brothers are eligible too, and it is said that the choice is made by designating all men of the mother's generation who share descent from one of her grandfathers. They all qualify for receiving a share of the pig. Of these, the most senior usually plays the leading role. He receives the invitation to his sister's village and invites his juniors to accompany him. He receives the pig and is responsible for sharing it among them, thus securing their support when he comes to organising the initiation of his sister's eldest child.

Sometimes parents may want to involve more than one set of affines. They will give pigs to the wife's matrilateral and patrilateral brothers. More commonly, when a couple has access to sufficient goods, they decide to initiate more than one child. The pigs for the first-born child would be given to one set of affines, who would then assume responsibility for his or her initiation; other pigs would be given to another set of affines, who would then be responsible for the initiation of subsequent children. In some cases of sister-exchange marriages the two sets of parents reciprocate the gifts of pig and initiate each other's child. The following example is unusual because of Leticia's life history, and because the profits from the tradestore enabled the parents to plan the initiation of three children.

As a baby, Leticia (daughter of a Gobe man and an Arere woman) had been given by her mother to her uncle Godfrey (Arere clan). She grew up with his family in the village of Karikari, but when he left to work elsewhere, she remained in the village. She was looked after by Godfrey's widowed sister Beoda, and her son Robert. Later Leticia married Dios (Bubu clan). They lived away from Tufi for many years, and saved some capital with which they returned and set up a tradestore. Due to the careful balancing of kinship and affinal obligations and the reinvestment of profits in the store, this is one of the most successful local enterprises in Tufi. When their eldest daughter was about to leave for further education in Port Moresby she was initiated by Godfrey's son Roger (Leticia's adoptive brother). At the time of my fieldwork they were planning to organise two more initiations for the next two children. The second-born was to be initiated by Alphonse, Leticia's 'real' brother, of the Gobe clan. The third child was going to be initiated by Robert, Leticia's older brother by virtue of being her MeZS, who had been partly responsible, with his mother, for looking after her after Godfrey's
departure. On their part, Leticia and Dious had undertaken to reciprocate by initiating Kennedy, Robert's son. Although the arrangement was a reciprocal one, it was only possible by virtue of the quasi-sister-exchange marriage between the two sets of parents. Robert's wife Teresa is a classificatory sister of Leticia's husband Dious, both their mothers being of the Bubu clan.

**Figure 3: Initiands and Initiators**

![Family Tree](image)

- **Initiands (numbered in birth order)**
- **Main Initiator (marked to indicate which child)**

**Pig giving feasts**

Like the brideprice feast with which they are often combined, feasts in which pigs are given to the children's mothers' brothers are planned by the child's parents. They are supported by the husband's brothers and the wife's sisters: all, in Korafe terms, the child's classificatory fathers and mothers respectively. People participate in these feasts according to individual kinship ties, not as clan members. Even nuclear families may be split on these occasions since those who classify themselves as the child's mothers act as givers while those who claim to be among the child's uncles participate as recipients. In some families, husband and wife may be classified as belonging to opposite sides of the exchange. Their children would also, then, have the choice of contributing to one side or the other. Some would help their mother and some their father. All these variations are important and people remember what role everyone played in these exchanges as it affects their rights and responsibilities at the time of the child's initiation.

All those helping the child's parents in assembling the gifts for the uncles gather near their house with their contributions. A record of the total amount of different kinds of food is kept by the child's father. Young men are sent to fetch the pig. It is wrapped in a new tapa cloth and bound by its legs to a long pole. When everything is ready, the givers' party take up their load and rush to the place where the receivers have assembled in the mother's brothers' village. The pig is brought in and tied under the uncle's house. The child's father makes a hurried
speech stating his reasons for making the gift, and the spokesman for the mother's brothers reply with *kotūa gatāri* (promises of return gifts to come, also made on occasion of marriage ceremonies). Only after these speeches, and normally after most of the givers have returned to the place where they had gathered, is the pig slaughtered by the receivers. It is laid on a new pandanus mat and covered with its tapa cloth. After the feast the mat and cloth are given to the child's maternal grandmother who, having washed the blood, uses them herself. The explanation I was given for this is that a pig raised by the child's parents is like their own child. The mother feels sorry that it is going to die so she dresses it up in a new tapa cloth. They are given to the grandmother because she 'carried the weight' of the child's mother. The woman's brothers share and eat the flesh of her 'child', her mother washes its blood off and wears the tapa cloth.

This feast, like the brideprice feast, is not an occasion for commensality between affines. The givers return to their place of reunion, where their elders are still waiting, and a smaller gift of food is brought to them by the child's mother's brothers. Each party individually cooks the food received. The uncles, under the direction of the senior recipient, share the pig among themselves. Some will be cooked and eaten on the spot, some will be taken home by all the participants. Once in the village the participants share the pig meat with their neighbours according to normal patterns of intra-village sharing.

'Vujāri' and 'Birthday Parties'

Among the rights of a woman's brothers, the most important is to preside over the initiation, *vujāri*, of her first-born child during which they invest him or her with their own *kotōfu*. One of the greatest offences for first-born children is to participate in a dance before being decorated by their mother's brothers. To do so is certain to provoke their uncles to punish them with sorcery. Subsequent children can dance with their father's *kotōfu* only, but it is still considered safer to inform their uncles, and make a gift to them, before their first public appearance.

The ceremony of *vujāri* involves the child's parents and mothers' brothers in a large-scale reciprocal exchange. This is by far the largest of the exchanges between affines, and concludes formal obligations of parents to a child's maternal uncles. Therefore it can only take place if the uncles are satisfied that the child's parents have fulfilled all their previous obligations. The uncles see *vujāri* as their privilege, not an obligation, and may refuse to initiate a child if affinal relations are not satisfactory. The Maisin used to perform similar initiation ceremonies for first-born children, *kisevi*, which differed from the rituals accompanying girls' tattooing at puberty and from the male induction rites for junior sons. According to Barker and Tietjen induction ceremonies have been forsaken by contemporary Maisin; first-born ceremonies are only performed occasionally, while tattooing, with its emphasis on individual rather than clan identity, has survived in a traditional form, albeit with a changed significance.
The first-born ceremonies were and remain by far the largest of the three rites of transition. They capped a series of exchanges between the kin of the mother and the kin of the father which began with the birth of the parent's first child. First-born boys and girls held an ambiguous social identity until the time of this ceremony. They were not allowed to decorate themselves and, in particular, to wear their father's clan's insignia. The mother's classificatory and real brothers organised the kisevi ceremonies, thus signalling their continued interest in their sister's first child. The mother's people came to wash and dress their sister's child; and at the climax of the ceremony, they placed necklace upon necklace upon him or her. Frequently these ornaments included some insignia of the mother's clan, although the first-born so honoured could rarely pass these on to his or her children (Barker and Tietjen 1990:226-227).

Korafe initiations, as in Maisina, involve months or even years of preparation for the exchanges. The child's mother carefully stores away various items of wealth for the occasion. Especially important among these are clay pots obtained from the Maisina, tapa cloths, stringbags and pandanus mats. Various items of Western clothing and household goods such as sheets, pillows, cooking implements and bush knives are also bought from the tradestores for this purpose. When the parents consider their first-born child to be of the right age, and to have sufficient goods to give, the mother visits her brothers' village to make arrangements. If her brothers agree, the mother begins making preparations with her husband. The couple will plant more gardens than usual that year, and procure some pigs. The father's kinsmen will also be warned so they can begin preparing.

If the child is a girl, she must first get her face tattooed. It is normally one of the girl's classificatory mothers who is charged with this duty, although a woman is chosen on the basis of her reputation as tattooer, rather than her relationship to the girl. Throughout the painful process and for a few weeks afterwards, until the swelling on her face subsides the girl remains in seclusion.

If the initiand is a male, his uncles find a pretext on which to ask him to accompany them to the stream. Then, catching him unawares, they bathe him and cut his hair. Without allowing him to touch the ground they bring him back to his parents' house. The uncles spray clay from their mouths on the child's hair and use a hot blade to press it into the rounded shape of the sara coiffure. Tortoise shell rings are applied along the rims of his ears, a larger hole is pierced in the lobe, and one in the septum.

Sometimes a group of adolescents go through the ceremony together; traditionally they were secluded together in a house built for the purpose. Otherwise, the initiand is simply restricted to one room of the parental house. While wearing the sara the initiand must be careful not to crack the clay. He is fed small morcels of taro and, like the girls during tattooing, avoids eating pork and coconut. At night, to prevent the sara from being crushed, he rests his head on a wooden head-rest, held by two classificatory sisters who sleep either side of him. The duration of seclusion has become progressively shorter over the years due to scholastic commitments. Now it may be as short as one day. As a result the
initiand's hair is not molded into a sára, and the ears and nose are no longer pierced.

On a pre-arranged day the child's uncles bring the kotófu they want to bestow on him or her and spend the whole morning in the house decorating the initiand. The body is oiled with coconut oil; girls' hair is sprayed with red dye, boys' is teased out into long ringlets decorated with tassels. In English, Korafe refer to vujári as 'decorating'. For the first time, the initiand wears ceremonial tapa cloth, feather headdress, shell ornaments, and the curved tusks of a pig raised by the child's maternal grandfather. Some of the ornaments worn by the initiand are decorated with the particular designs belonging to the mother's brothers. He or she will henceforth be entitled to wear those particular decorations. Other ornaments, those of common use and those belonging to the father's clan, are also worn by the initiand.

As soon as the decoration is completed, the uncles escort the child out of the house. A row of mats leads from the verandah to the spot where the exchange will take place. Some new stringbags, replete with taro, will have been hung from the steps of the house. The child's maternal grandmother (the one who received the blood-soaked tapa cloth on the occasion of the pig payment) kneels at the base of the steps, and the child is supposed to step gingerly on her back on the way down. Without allowing the initiand to touch the ground the uncles accompany him or her to sit on a pandanus mat on which are set three overturned clay pots. Leaning against one of the pots, the initiand sits between two uncles.

The child's mother begins the next phase of the ceremony. She takes one clay pot and, after circling it over her first-born child's head, throws it on the ground to smash. Taking a second pot she repeats the gesture, but this time she places it on the ground behind the child. Depending on how many things she has to give away, and on whether she has decided to give all the gifts to her patrilateral brothers only, or to give some to her matrilateral brothers, she makes one or two piles of goods. Each of these piles (known as diti, 'eyes') is based around a claypot. Goods of many kinds are circled over the initiand's head and placed on the piles by the child's mother: claypots, saucepans, mats, stringbags, tapa cloths, bed sheets, items of clothing, necklaces, armlets, cane belts, fishing nets, torches, spears and money. If a particular item is destined to a specific recipient the woman circles it over her child's head and gives it to the individual concerned. Other women from the village, and the mother's sisters (all classificatory mothers of the child) bring their contributions which they add to the child's mother's piles. The nature and size of their contributions are noted, however, as they expect to receive an equivalent share of the return gift.

As the piles behind the initiand grow in size, people become emotionally excited. Some cry, others shout insults as they bring their gifts. Korafe say that sometimes in the course of these exchanges, people's jānje erāri (breath/emotions rise up) and they become carried away in a frenzy of gift-giving. They start ransacking their houses for more things to give away, their neighbours also become
affected, and the whole village ends up giving more than they anticipated. Even babies are sometimes given away by their mothers in the excitement of vujāri exchanges.

Once the child's 'mothers' have exhausted their resources, it is the uncles' turn to reciprocate. Their wives begin circling goods over the child's head and heaping piles of gifts for the child's parents and their helpers. When the aunts have finished bringing their gifts, the initiand's father on one side, and the senior maternal uncle on the other, begin sorting their gifts and sharing them among their respective supporters. Again, as in the previous exchanges of gifts for a couple's eldest child, the two parties do not eat together; each side gathers separately to cook some of the pig meat and food received, then they share the rest and take it back to their own villages.

With this ceremony the child attains social maturity. From then on he or she has the right to wear dance decorations, both those of the father's and uncle's clans, though they cannot transmit the latter to their own children or younger siblings. Their junior siblings, upon reaching an appropriate age, can participate in dances wearing the kotufo belonging to their father's clan. The initiand's decorations are not removed for some time after the ceremony. Meanwhile the child visits neighbouring villages to be admired by friends and kin. Often the initiated child returns to the uncles' village with them, to spend some time with his or her ghatumane (cross-cousins).

Even more so than brideprice and the minor pig-giving feasts, vujāri ceremonies have become difficult to organise. Migration to the towns, the emphasis on money, the necessity to include tradestore items in the gifts, and the school commitments of many teenagers, all create difficulties. In some cases, if the ceremony is delayed too long and the child can no longer be expected to refrain from participating in adult social life, the parents and uncles may agree to opt for a modern version of vujāri. This is referred to as a 'birthday party'. It involves a smaller feast and more limited exchanges.

The uncles comb and cut the initiand's hair, give him or her some new clothes, and may hang a string of one Kina coins around the child's neck. The parents reciprocate with similar kinds of gifts. Although the items exchanged between the initiand's parents and uncles may include traditional items, they are mainly of tradestore origin. The salient moment of the ceremony is when the uncles present the initiand with a comb and a mirror to look at his or her reflection, surrounded by the goods exchanged on this occasion.

Not all initiation ceremonies for the eldest child now take this more restricted form. Ironically it is the children of urban workers or successful business men who are more likely to opt for the more 'traditional' vujāri. Also, parents whose children are planning to leave Tufi to go to High School in Popondetta are more likely to plan their vujāri in advance as they foresee difficulties in organising it.
It is perhaps more important for these children to make a symbolic statement of allegiance to village kin by means of this ceremony.

**What do the uncles want? The significance of 'Vujári'**

All affinal exchanges following brideprice relate directly to claims made by brothers on their sisters' children. Brothers, as I have shown, have 'natural' powers over a woman's womb. However, their love magic is dangerous for their sister's reproductive system, and only sterility and death would result from a marriage between brother and sister. Once a woman has produced a child, these powers extend over that child. The pigs, raised by parents as if they were their own children and given to the uncles, are to prevent them from taking the child or using their powers to harm him or her. This, however, does not account for the uncle's outrage if the child is decorated with the father's kotófu, nor their specific interest in their sister's eldest child.

It appears that vujári, although marking the passage to adulthood of children and enabling them to participate in extra-clan social situations, is not performed primarily for the child. After all, junior siblings are thought to function just as well with only one set of kotófu, and it is only the fear of their uncles' sorcery which prevents the eldest from doing the same. It is to the uncles that it matters to 'vujári' their sisters' children. The same ceremony is sometimes referred to as táno ári (putting the mark or marking the boundary) and dangió ári (making the reflection/image). As well as being forbidden to decorate themselves for feasting, uninitiated children were traditionally forbidden to comb their hair, wear any kind of ornament, or look at their reflection (dangió) in the mirror. Although these prohibitions are no longer followed, uninitiated children still avoid using combs and mirrors in front of their mother's brothers. To do so would be considered disrespectful and could provoke an irascible uncle to make sorcery. Hence the minimal version of the ceremony in which uncles give the child a mirror.

Before eldest's initiation, then, the social identity of a couple's children is ambiguous. They cannot dance, participate in exchange feasts, or get married - all activities which involve dealing with people other than their clan or village members. What the mother's brothers are concerned with then, is putting their mark of identity (táno ári) on their sister's eldest child, thus publicly asserting their de-facto contribution to the social and spiritual makeup of all her children. Since in extra-clan social situations the eldest brother is considered to be the bearer of his junior sibling's identity, the uncles' preference for bestowing their kotófu to the eldest child, is explained. At the same time, the children are freed to become full members of their father's clan. As adults, it is up to them to maintain relations between the sibling group which they represent and the clan whose kotófu they share. 14

Everyone is entitled to the kotófu of their own clan, but those who have been initiated also have a lifelong right to the kotófu which they received from their
maternal uncles. Every time initiated men participate in a feast, they bear on their bodies the mark of their uncle’s clan. Kotófu are used as markers of boundaries between clans and lineages and are, therefore, rarely exchanged outside vujári ceremonies. However, kotófu are not simple ornaments or marks of individual identity: they constitute and signal the wearer’s relationship to the group which owns them and attest to their common ancestry. As well as being symbols of clan identity in extra-clan contexts, at a more phenomenological level kotófu are implicated in the actual making of their possessors' identity. They are not just symbolic of a relationship with the ancestral spirits they derive from, they embody the spirits themselves. To have a kotófu is to be able to summon the spirit with which it is associated, and the common identity of group members is derivative of their claims to shared ownership of the same kotófu, and shared relationship to the same ancestors.

Orokaiva initiation ceremonies also involve bestowal of dance attire and symbols of identity on initiands. Schwimmer (1973:175 ff.) draws the distinctions between otohu, (ornaments worn as markers of identity), hae (plant emblems) and hambo (dance ornaments with no relation to the wearers' identity). The hambo can be exchanged freely as they are not linked to social identity, though they are imbued with magical powers. Hae, normally natural objects, cannot be exchanged, and are never lent or borrowed. Their possession is the direct result of filiation and symbolises the owner's membership in a corporate group. The otohu, however, is an ornament to which is added a special mark of identity; it can only be exchanged in ceremonial circumstances, usually initiation, and it symbolises the wearer's commitment to the social rules of exchange between members of different corporate groups. These moral precepts are those spoken by the sacred flutes, the voice of ancestral spirits which the Orokaiva initiand hears for the first time through the mother’s brothers' mediation, and which he or she vows to abide by when presented with the ornaments.15 Breaches of these norms are punished by sorcery.

In contrast, Williams (1930:206) reported that the Baruga, neighbours of the Orokaiva and onetime enemies of the Korafe, use the word kotopo or kortepono for both plant emblems and honorific ornaments. This, according to Schwimmer, is an indication that they are more strongly patrilineal than the Orokaiva. Since initiation is a matter for clan members only and does not involve maternal kin, receiving ornaments does not implicate the Baruga initiand in the morality of extra-clan exchange. Among Korafe a distinction is made between initiated first-born children who acquire rights to two sets of kotófu ornaments, and uninitiated children who may only use the kotófu of their father's clan. This distinction emphasises the leading role of the eldest sibling, and is most apparent in events involving large-scale exchanges between many different clans.

It is the other side of the three-way distinction drawn by Schwimmer which is problematic in the Korafe context: that between otohu and hambo. Korafe too make a distinction between ordinary dance ornaments, obtainable by anyone and worn by all for aesthetic reasons during dances, and those which are specifically
linked to clan identity. Unlike kotoju ornaments, ordinary ones are freely exchanged and can be lent or borrowed regardless of clan membership. These ornaments, for the Orokaiva, suppress the wearer's individuality and subsume dancers' identity to their common identification with ancestral beings. It is only by the atohu that personal identity, at the level of clan or lineage membership, is given expression. According to Schwimmer, this lack of individual identity is associated with the fact that a hambo: 'always belongs essentially to the ancestors and is thus alive with spirit' (1973:185). Thus, the exchange of hambo mediates different kinds of relations, as it presupposes a shared origin in the spirit world and implies amity between the transactors. For the Korafe, the same is true as far as the suppression of individual in favour of social identity is concerned, but it is precisely in the kotoju that ancestral spirits are embodied. And it is this presence which enables kotoju to define their owners' social identity.

By dressing their sister's child in their clan's kotoju, the uncles bestow their clan's dangiō upon him or her. As well as the image that can be seen in a photograph and a mirror, dangiō is a living person's spirit: that part which can leave the body in dreams or during sickness and can be seen wandering by others. After initiation, the child carries with him or her the ancestral spirits of both the father's and uncles clan. The initiated child has thus acquired an autonomous individual identity, neither quite that of his father, nor quite that of his mother. Its conferment gives the eldest the responsibility for the relationship between his sibling group and the ancestors embodied in his kotoju.

Until that stage children's sickness or death is thought to be caused by mother's brothers, who can harm the child through their mutual connection with the woman's womb, and who are usually motivated by an offence committed by the parents. After the child is given the uncles' kotoju, it is the spirits themselves who ensure that initiands maintain appropriate relations with their mother's brothers. This explains the mother's symbolic gesture when she circles a clay pot over the initiand's head and smashes it on the ground. In Korafe myths the rounded clay pots often figure as substitute wombs. By smashing the claypot after her brothers have decorated her child the initiand's mother indicates the end of the initiand's childhood and the beginning of adult life. From that point the child's identity no longer depends on hers, and her brothers will no longer act on her wellbeing through her womb.

The ancestral spirits embodied in the kotoju act as moral guardians over the adult child's conduct at inter-clan exchanges. While wearing or displaying their kotoju, for example, Korafe refrain from eating and sexual intercourse for fear of offending the ancestors embodied in them. Ancestral spirits are not only dangerous or punitive. They are powerful beings who are summoned by dancers to accompany them at feasts to make them stronger, more beautiful, and better performers. With ancestral support dancers attract sexual partners and gifts from the spectators. In this connection it is interesting to note that love magic and the magic to make exchange partners give generously are related. Unlike other types of magic which are transmitted mainly in the patriline, these types of personal magic
are often obtained by adolescents from their mother's brothers. Like their uncle's kotófu, this knowledge is intended for personal use only and the initiand is not expected to transmit it to his juniors or share its benefits with them. The wearing of kotófu belonging to the uncle's as well as the father's clan distinguishes eldest brothers from their juniors, and directs the eyes of potential partners to them, representatives of the group.

Transactors and transacted

Once brideprice has established the separation of brothers and sisters and made affinal exchanges possible, the child's parents make gifts of pigs and food to the mother's brothers. Although these are not feasts in which the participants share food, the gifts of food are reciprocated immediately by the uncles. Only the pigs are given by the child's parents as a precondition for the gift of their kotófu which the uncles will make to the child.

Huge pigs raised by the child's parents as if they were children are given alive to the mothers' brothers who, in turn, give the child the maternal grandfathers' pig's tusks. Tusks, like teeth, are associated with social standing and power. Powerful elders chew so much betelnut with magical lime that they eat virtually nothing else. Their teeth appear to be growing because of the buildup of blackened residue, and are likened to the curving tusks of an adult pig. This is the ultimate mark of their power. When an elder's teeth fall out, he hides them from his sons until they give him a pig to pay him back for the hard work of bringing them up. Only then does the father relinquish his teeth and leadership to his eldest son. His teeth are kept by the sons. When the old man dies they become relics of the dead, and continue to embody the power of the man who was so powerful in his life and is now a spirit.

The tapa cloth and pandanus mat on which the pig's blood is spilt are both items of woman's wealth. The child's maternal grandmother, who bore the weight of the initiand's mother, washes off the blood and uses them herself. Later the initiand steps over her as he/she comes out of the house wearing kotófu decorations for the first time. For bearing that weight, the grandmother is given stringbags, also woman's wealth, and taro. The pig and the taro are, like children, considered to be the products of the combined labour of the child's mother and father.

The final and major gift exchange of vujári, is also reciprocal, and the gifts given and received by the two parties should be equivalent. The couple's obligations to the woman's brothers in relation to their children have been discharged; now the initiand can begin to engage in extra-clan exchanges. However, for this final ceremony, the child continues to play a passive role as recipient. The uncles, in turn are assured of their sister's child's lifelong allegiance to their clan and ancestors. In this exchange it is the child's mother who engages in exchanges with her brothers by making gifts to them which are reciprocated by their wives.
As in the brideprice and pig-giving ceremonies, the two parties to the exchange can be thought of as brothers and sisters. Although husband and wife pairs on both sides cooperate to accumulate goods to exchange, at previous affinal exchanges the men figured prominently as transactors; in this final exchange it is women, the child's mother and her brother's wife, who make the gifts. The recipients, those responsible for sharing the gifts among their supporters, are men. These men, furthermore, are the women's brothers. From the initiate's point of view, the people involved in the exchange are two couples classified as brother and sister. First the mother (aya) makes a gift to the maternal uncle (ebe), her brother; then the latter's wife (tata) makes a gift to the father (afa). In Korafe terms the word tata refers both to FZ and MBW; thus in classificatory terms (and in cases of marriage by sister exchange in actual fact) what occurs at initiation is a double exchange between two reciprocating brother-and-sister couples (cf. Iteanu 1983:83).

**Figure 4. Terms of Reference: Main Protagonists in Ego's 'Vujári' Exchanges**

A. Usual Case

B. Ideal Case (sister exchange)

With the initiation of a woman's eldest child, the formal affinal obligations relating to her children are brought to a conclusion. However, the relationship between brothers and sisters continues, throughout their lives, to be reinforced by reciprocal hospitality and exchanges of informal gifts of food. The formal conclusion of affinal exchanges initiated by marriage only occurs after the death of a person who is simultaneously a partner in a marriage and member of a brother and sister couple. In the section that follows I will describe in some detail the processes of mourning, underlining the roles of brothers and sisters in the exchanges involved.
MOURNING

When somebody dies, the people who were connected to him or her in the social network have to readjust to a world without the deceased. This is one of the main purposes of mourning ceremonies and exchanges. An individual’s position in the network, therefore, affects the kind of funeral that will take place, and the roles which people will play in the ceremonies.

Affinal relations are necessarily affected when a husband or wife dies. The cross-sex siblings of both deceased and bereaved spouse have important parts to play in the processes of mourning. When a woman dies, her brothers come to the village where she had been living with her husband. They sit on the mat on which their sister is laid out and request her husband’s clan for *etu da minó* (bones’ price). Until they obtain a pig from their affines they continue to sit on the deceased’s mat, obstructing the burial. Sometimes, particularly if the woman was young or affinal exchanges had not been concluded, the deceased’s brothers claim the body back to bury in their own land. Brothers’ demands and manners are harsher in cases where the widower is thought to have been a bad husband, or when affinal relations were not smooth. The widower’s sisters, on the other hand, come to the village to help during the period of mourning. They bring food with them and help to cook for the visitors.

The death of a man also calls into question affinal relations, and the brother-sister couple of the widow and her brother have a major role to play in the mourning processes. The other brother-sister pair, that of the deceased and his sister, is dissolved by his death, and sisters also play an important role in mourning. It is their arrival which opens the public phase of mourning, and the intervention of the widow’s brothers which concludes mourning restrictions.

**Mourning practices: variation and change**

Korafe mourning practices are broadly similar to those of other people along the Papuan coast: common themes can be identified in mourning customs of the Orokaiva (Williams 1930), as well as the Maisin (Barker 1985). Korafe accounts of 'traditional' mourning customs allow for local variation even within their own clans, some of which have maintained traditions peculiar to themselves as their *evóvo*. One clan for example, has substituted beating of drums by men for the women's wailing. Korafe elders relate a particular sequence of events which they consider to represent their traditional mourning customs. Any deviation from this sequence is either determined by particular contingencies associated with the death being mourned, or attributed to the contemporary allegiance to Christianity and the adoption of practices more compatible with 'modern' ideas.

Both mission and government played active parts in persuading Korafe (like other Papuans) to change some of their mourning customs, which were offensive to
Western sensibilities. For reasons of hygiene the government prohibited burial within village confines, and special areas have been cleared for cemeteries. Other practices associated with the expression of grief, such as self-wounding with rocks, glass, and knives, have also been discouraged. Such practices, as well as widow seclusion, her ritual beating by the deceased’s sisters, and the appropriation of the deceased’s property by distant kinsmen, were interpreted by missionaries as punitive. As such they were deemed to run counter to Christian ideals, and missionaries discouraged converts from following them.

Even the protracted period of collective wailing and lamenting seemed distasteful to most missionaries, and they objected to its interference with church attendance. They introduced the idea that too much grieving is inappropriate because Christians believe in Paradise as the soul’s ultimate destination. Missionaries also campaigned against practices such as divining, which were too closely associated with spirits of the dead for their ideological comfort. A funeral service was introduced, the function of which is to ensure the acceptance of the soul to God’s presence.

According to Barker’s account of the changes and continuities of Maisin mortuary practices, similar pressures were brought to bear on Maisin Christians (ibid.). However, he notes that different pressures came in successive waves, the most recent being a campaign in the 1970’s against protracted mourning and mortuary feasts. These changes were prompted by certain sections within the Maisin community itself, reflecting the conflicting interests of mourners and those who have to support them. The range of alternative attitudes and practices of mourning among the Korafe probably results from similar processes. Although there may be other issues at stake, as suggested by Barker, it is often in terms of a choice for the ‘Christian way’ that people discuss how to mourn each particular death.

Korafe use of Christian rhetoric in these discussions is exemplified in the following case study by the response of mourners to the demands of recently converted members of the Seven Day Adventist Church.

When an elder of their clan died, the Seven Day Adventists were even more adamant than the Anglicans about the inappropriateness of traditional mourning customs. They maintained that it was a sin to cry for the deceased at all: people should be rejoicing that his soul was going to Paradise. Consequently they posted a man at the entry of the village to turn back mourners from other villages. Finally though, an elder from another village argued that they had every right to cry for the death of their brother, just as the Virgin Mary had cried for the death of her son Jesus.

While some 'traditional' practices such as burial in the village and self-injury by the mourners are only a memory, others remain contentious. People normally agree with the more moderate Christian ideology which condemns cruelty and discourages the observation of restrictions by mourners and the seclusion of
widows. However, mourners themselves often seem unwilling to give up the privileges implied in some of the mourning restrictions, and they claim the right to express their grief according to their ancestral customs. On the other hand, the family of the deceased, while mourning themselves, may have their own reasons to limit mourning to a restricted circle, and they may use the arguments of Christian teaching to 'close' mourning (see chapter 6). While contemporary practices often deviate from what Korafe consider to be their ancestral customs, they have not simply switched from one set of rules to another. Every death, occurring in specific circumstances, gives rise to its own mourning, and the people involved negotiate in each case what form their mourning will take.

Many features of Korafe mourning practices resonate with Iteanu’s (1983) description and analysis of Orokaiva mourning, convincing for its inclusion of ancestral spirits in the scheme of relations which need to be re-adjusted every time there is a death. As he argues, the relations to be re-defined include those between individuals, between groups, and between the living and ancestral spirits. To this list, however, I would add the relations with their past and future. Korafe are aware of the cultural changes which have taken place in the space of a few generations, and of the political potential of subscribing to the ideology of custom or Christianity. Both are acceptable and people alternate between the two according to the situation at hand. Both discourses offer themselves as rhetorical justifications for the choices people make.

'Guméma'

When a man dies, particularly if he has been ill for some time, his family, fellow villagers, and closer kin are likely to be already gathered around him. Depending on his importance and the extent of his connections, people may have come from considerable distance to participate in guméma (a visit of commiseration). Visitors bring with them food to share with the family of the sick man. While women and youths help his household members in their chores, the older visitors spend time by the side of the sick man. As the illness draws to its conclusion, his wife and sons take turns to support him when he wants to sit up and help him to shift position. Other close kin, often the man’s sister’s sons, relieve them from time to time.

During the last hours of his life, those who support him are careful not to let him move off his mat, as his spirit is thought to slip out through his anus and the gaps in the flooring. Even that may not be fatal, for spirits are thought to return to the body if the kde (sickness) is expelled. Death proper only occurs when the kde has run its course. In the interval between the leaving of the spirit and the death of the body, the dying man is thought to acquire knowledge of his sorcerers and may try to communicate this to those surrounding him. After death the spirit is thought to hover around the village; it is often angry and dangerous, especially to women and children.

When death occurs a woman bends the arms and legs of the deceased at the joints, so that he will be able to 'walk'. The widow and helpers prepare a new mat
and sheet. They wash the body and lay it inside the house. Some thought goes into packing the dead man's jàvo stringbag. These stringbags, whose name also means name, are intimately connected to their owner's identity. It is sometimes decorated with the wearer's kotûfû. Adult men always carry theirs with them when they leave their village or attend a public event. In it they carry personal possessions and the necessary implements for chewing betelnut. The widow packs in her dead husband's stringbag all those things which he used to carry with him when venturing outside his own village. Meanwhile messengers are dispatched to nearby villages, summoning mourners to his house.

'Sorâra'

Once the body is ready, people begin to let grief take over, and sorara (crying and lamenting) begins in a rather subdued way. Grief is expressed according to certain conventions as inarticulate crying is considered to be senseless and childish. Adults, it was explained to me, should give meaning and sense to their grief, whatever its motive. To do so they modulate their mournful cries to a lament tune, which differs for different clans and which, for Koräfe of Kabuni, is the same tune as the Oro lament danced to commemorate their ancestors' migrations during warfare. Standard words or phrases are also used by mourners in accordance with their relationship to the deceased. A widow or widower refers to the dead person as 'nanda kombo' (my sexual partner); a mother refers to her dead child as 'my egg'; brothers mourning for a dead sister cry 'nanda êmbo' (my skirt); and sisters cry 'nanda bôka' (my loincloth) for their dead brothers. There are also a number of conventional verses which mark different stages in the mourning. These verses serve as prompts to the mourners, who use them to start the lament. Once started, they recite any sad thought occurring to them to the conventional mourning tune.

Meanwhile, the dead man's sisters, if not already present, are being summoned. Their arrival marks the beginning of the first phase of mourning. They can be very angry at the loss of their brother. Entering the house where the widow is crying over the body, they begin to shout, scolding her for being an unfaithful wife or neglecting to look after their brother. They may even hit the widow, angry that she is not crying properly. The laments begin in earnest at this time. Mourners crowd around the dead man and his widow, reaching to stroke his limbs or kiss his face. Lamenting is mainly done by women; men visit the body and may join in briefly, but, except for the deceased's sons, they soon return to join the other men sitting on the verandah outside. As different people enter the house, they attempt to stop the crying of those already there, either by scolding them or by shouting words of greeting and encouragement. Invariably they too are overcome by grief as they see the body and hear the laments of the others, and they add their own voice to the chorus.

Women have an opportunity to include accusations and recriminations in addition to expressions of grief in their laments. While they are inside the house crying, the men sit outside on the verandah, separated from the women by a thin
wall of split sago. The men can hear every word spoken inside. While they are keen to maintain friendly relations, and spend considerable energy mutually reassuring each other that there is no ill-feeling or suspicion of sorcery, the women, are likely to voice suspicions or make accusations (ijujdri). Once heard these accusations have to be acted upon, and there are accounts in oral history of clan fights after a bereaved woman had made an accusation in a mourning lament. Mindful of this possibility, men sometimes intervene, trying to curb the wailers when they refer to conflicts or disputes which may be construed to have caused the death.

The wake continues for the whole night. Only the people in the village and those summoned by the messengers have a chance to reach the village before dawn. The news would have begun to spread, however, and the mourning villagers have to prepare themselves for a constant influx of visitors. Before dawn the women who are not too distraught prepare a hurried meal which is shared by all those present; this is the last chance to eat for some time as the village enters a more public phase of mourning. Those who share in this meal form the 'core' group of mourners.

**Farewelling the deceased**

All those present rush to the deceased's house to see him for the last time before he is wrapped in a sheet and taken away. Everyone crowds around, crying and trying to touch the dead man. The widow chants a verse explaining to her husband that she must now let him go as it is dawn. The body is removed from the house to be taken to the grave. It is usual, nowadays, to take the body to the church or the cemetery for a Christian service before the burial. It is there that more distant acquaintances from neighbouring villages have a chance to see the dead man before he is buried.

For the duration of the religious ceremony and until the body is brought to the grave, sorara is generally more subdued. It is mainly women who accompany the body to the cemetery, singing Christian hymns. Most of the men stay behind, and shout farewell to the deceased as he is carried out of the village towards the cemetery, a specially made clearing in the coconut groves. It is at this stage, when the first handfuls of earth are thrown into the grave, that the women abandon reserve and begin wailing again. Like the men, they bid the deceased farewell; they tell him to go serenely, without anger. Some remind him that they will soon meet again in Paradise. The widow is escorted back to her house by other women, and the mourners from all the other villages follow her.

According to 'custom' the house of the deceased was closed, and most of his possessions were given to kin living in another village. The deceased's garden was not entered by his widow or sons; some other kin were given the right to harvest it and, in exchange, provided food for the widow until she established a new garden for herself. Not all these customs are followed now. While the women join the
widow inside the house, the kinsmen of the deceased take the opportunity to make announcements to the mourners from the other villages about their wishes concerning the form of the mourning and their intentions regarding the seclusion of the widow.

**Seclusion**

The idea that secluding the widow is a form of punishment is common among contemporary Korafe, who also mostly agree that to impose such punishment on a widow is contrary to the Christian doctrine they subscribe to. At all the mourning ceremonies I attended reference was made to this idea, stressing that since the widow involved had been a good wife and beyond all suspicion of involvement in the sorcery attack that killed her husband, she should not be secluded. In all cases, however, the widow did spend some time in seclusion. In most instances a compromise was found: the widow would be mostly confined to the house, only coming out when strictly necessary; but after the first few weeks she would also be expected to leave her house on Sunday to attend the church service. Despite the presumed punitive nature of seclusion, the widows themselves seemed to favour the possibility of grieving in their own house, and when they did venture outside to go to church, they felt shame. They tried to conceal their faces and be as inconspicuous as possible, entering the church after the service had started, and leaving as soon as it finished. They returned to their own house without speaking to anyone and were always escorted by other women.

In the following weeks the deceased's village is visited by numerous parties of mourners. Initially the villagers are too distraught to organise food for their visitors, and it is their kin from neighbouring villages (usually the deceased sisters' sons and their wives) who assume this responsibility. They remain in the village for some time to help their bereaved kin. On an appointed day the people from all the villages of the territorial group gather in the village once more. The women join in the sorara, the men sit on the verandah talking. At the end of the day the helpers of the bereaved family prepare some food, which the visitors share with them before returning to their own homes. They are then considered free to return to their village and take up everyday life again.

As news of the death spreads further afield, more groups of mourners come to the village, each spending one day in guméma and leaving at nightfall. Gradually, the wives of the deceased's sons are expected to take charge of the cooking and eventually their husbands resume fishing and hunting themselves. Members of the bereaved village assume the responsibilities of looking after their guests themselves, and their neighbours return to their own village. Throughout this time the widow remains secluded in her house from which, from time to time, the sound of sorara can be heard. Each group of mourners visits the widow inside the house and the women join their voices to her lament.
During this period the widow and closely related mourners used to sleep under the house, on top of the actual grave. Now the body is buried in a cemetery some distance away, and no one sleeps on the ground. However, mourners gather to sleep on the verandah and platforms. They sleep outside 'in the cold', because they feel 'sorry' for the dead man, sleeping alone 'in the cold' outside the village.

**Divining**

The phase of yāura avāri (sleeping in the cold) is concluded after another shared meal of garden food, when the neighbours leave the village. The deceased's family sleeps indoors again; at dawn they perform another ritual to despatch the spirit. This simple ritual can be performed in different ways, all involving a sharp breaking sound. One way is to insert a stick between the floor boards of the house and snap it, another is to crack open a coconut and pour its juice over the grave. This ensures that the spirit will come back, when summoned by descendants' magic, willing to help them and in a benevolent frame of mind. To some extent these rituals have now been replaced by the religious service performed before the burial, when prayers are said to ensure the soul’s entry into Paradise (cf. Barker 1985:280).

It is during the first period after the deceased's kin have been left alone by the other mourners that, still angry at his death, they may try to communicate with the spirit. One common divining technique according to my informants involves making a fire with a bundle of three sticks to which is tied a piece of string. One man holds the other end of the string and summons the spirit of the dead man. He tells him that he wants to avenge his death, then begins to recite the names of the villages in the vicinity. When the spirit hears the name of the village where the man who poisoned him is living, it lifts the fire brands high in the air so everyone can see them and smashes them against the post of his house. Then the diviner begins reciting the names of all those living in that village. As he pronounces the name of the person responsible, the spirit picks up the firebrands again and flies away to the culprit's village where he drops them on his verandah. In the morning, coming upon coals on his verandah, the culprit will be terrified in the knowledge that his guilt has been revealed.

Another, more frightening, technique involves cutting down one of the dead man's coconut trees near his grave. A few nights after the burial the spirit of the deceased is thought to emerge from the grave. This is the most dangerous and scary form of spirit and is described as having lights shining from his eyes. A brave man hides under the fronds of the felled coconut tree and awaits that moment. Perceiving the hidden man, the spirit tests his courage by shouting angrily and challenging him to suffer the consequences of trying to talk to him: "If I tell you who killed me, would you take revenge? Are you brave enough? You are only a small boy. What do you think you are doing, hiding under that fallen coconut tree?" This experience is said to be so frightening that the man's friends hide nearby, ready to rush out and restrain him, lest he harm himself by rushing
If he is brave and responds satisfactorily to the spirit, the latter tells him who was responsible for the sorcery which killed him. It is then his responsibility to carry out the revenge. Since the spirit too is thought to be grieving for his family, his own sons cannot hide under the coconut leaves to await him. On seeing his son the spirit would feel 'sorry' for him and, instead of revealing the culprit, would only weep.

Although these divining techniques are talked about in the abstract as common occurrences, in fact there are many restraining factors. The greatest is the fear of spirits. It takes a brave man indeed to hide in waiting for a spirit, and his anger at the death must be great to bolster his determination. Since the deceased's closest kin are excluded from doing it, potential candidates are few. The most likely people to face this test are the deceased's sisters' sons. The divination must also be done in comparative secrecy, since a guilty sorcerer would strike again quickly if he thought that someone was going to discover him and try to kill him. In addition, contemporary Christian ideas are opposed to contacting spirits and attempting revenge.

'Kanángara' and 'Rovárova''

The widow is not the only one among the mourners to be subjected to restrictions. All the members of the deceased's family, his village folk and other close kin wear distinctive signs of grief on their body, called rovárova. As the secluded widow used to manufacture for herself a hood and cape of Job's tears, the mourners used to wear armlets and legbands decorated with the same seeds. Neither of these customs are generally followed now, dark Western clothing being adopted by widow and mourners instead. The widow does not change or wash for the whole period of her seclusion, and the mourners neither shave nor cut their hair. Accompanying these restrictions are individual self-sacrifices made by mourners in memory of the deceased, kanángara. Each person declares his or her intention to give up a type of food or activity associated in some way with the dead person. His widow, for example, may give up her husband's favourite food; a friend may give up a particular type of fish which they once caught together; a dependant may give up sugar which he used to ask the deceased for; a dancing partner may give up dancing, and so on. Each individual mourner declares his or her intention to the deceased's kin when visiting the village. All these restrictions are ended at a later stage in the mourning process by a reciprocal exchange of gifts between the mourners and the deceased's kin. Although they are individual affairs, the bereaved family try to organise a single feast to remove all prohibitions from all the mourners at once.

These restrictions too are considered to be opposed to the ideas of Christian charity towards mourners. They are interpreted as punishment for the bereaved on the one hand, and then payment for the performance of a Christian duty on the other. Although this view is generally accepted, there is some resistance to foregoing this practice. In certain cases the bereaved families themselves attempt to
restrict the observance of mourning customs to a limited group of people, perhaps because they feel it to be a hypocritical gesture by people whom they consider responsible for the death (see chapter 6), or because they want to avoid future obligations to those who assume *rovárova*. The Christian position on these customs is a useful justification for preventing others from observing them without saying why.

'Ghaséga' and the sisters of the deceased

The deceased's sisters are responsible for organising the release of his widow from seclusion. The following account is a reconstruction from the recollection of two old women. Since widow seclusion is very low key nowadays, the rituals attached to its end have not been performed for some time.

One night the deceased's sisters summon all the mourning kinswomen to gather in front of the widow's house. They sit in pairs, an older woman sitting next to a younger one, forming a wide circle. Following the lead of the senior women, they all join in a mourning song called *ghaséga*. They do not dance and there is no drumming involved, though they may beat out the rhythm on their limepots. It is an occasion of great sadness because it marks the end of yet another phase of mourning. This thought saddens the women, who have gathered to cry just one more time. As in *sorára*, sadness has to be given form and meaning, and the verses of the song provide a framework for the women's expression of sorrow.

They narrate an imaginary journey of the body of the deceased through the landscape. The device for narrating this journey is very simple. As in the following example, each verse begins with the words of the widow's lament: *nanda kombo* (my partner); she then proceeds to describe the leaves in which the body has been wrapped, and the memories they bring back to her, then conclude with a request to unwrap the body for her to see it once more.


\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Nanda kombo, doriri komaru} & \quad \text{My partner, mountain } \text{okare} \\
\text{Itido doghedo. Besuge gaone.} & \quad \text{Smoked and bundled. Unwrap and I'll see.} \\
\text{Nanda kombo. Besuge gaone} & \quad \text{My partner. Unwrap and I'll see} \\
\text{Besuge gaone, besuge gaone.} & \quad \text{Unwrap and I'll see, unwrap and I'll see.}
\end{align*}
\]

Senior women told me the song was composed as if each verse was sung by the widow as she accompanied her husband's body from the top of the mountain where he died to the beach where he was buried. At each pause the body is wrapped again
in different leaves, typical of the place where they had stopped. In this verse, the okare leaves remind the widow of occasions when she went into the bush with her husband to collect the nuts, which they smoked and wrapped in small bundles of leaves. The shape of the okare tree is thought to resemble a house, and it evokes images of the house she used to share with her spouse.

In subsequent verses the women take the widow's memories to the gravelly shores of a stream where she went with her husband to collect pandanus leaves, reminding her of the mat they shared and on which she now sleeps alone. On the beach they unwrap the body of its saida leaves, and wrap it in bibiu leaves. Within this framework, each woman is free to improvise new verses, commemorating events in the couple's shared life.23

The significance of this journey becomes clearer when it is put in the context of other references about the journeys of the dead. Korafe believe that shooting stars are the souls of recently-deceased people flying back to the place of origin of their ancestors, where they join the other ancestral spirits in deep caves.24 There is one cave in the vicinity of Tuﬁ which is thought to be the place where the ancestors of the Kerebi gather, from which the sound of their drumming can be heard on the surface. But this is not the only journey which the deceased undertakes. Missionaries have taught that the souls of the dead join God in Heaven. In addition, some myths suggest that the process of decomposition of the body is conceived of as a 'homeward' journey, parallel to that of the spirit.

In one myth a very beautiful young boy is killed by jealous men in a village near Keppel Point, where he had gone with his sisters to look for obsidian. The weeping sisters wrapped him in a mat, put him on the platform of their canoe, and set out for home. At various stages of their journey, people living along the coast were attracted by their wailing and asked the girls to show them the body. Each time the body was in a more advanced state of decomposition, and people tried to persuade the sisters to bury it there. But each time they refused and pressed on. Only when they had reached their own village and unwrapped the body for their parents to find only the bones remained, were the sisters persuaded to bury him.25

It will be recalled that the body's knees are loosened before the burial so that he will be able to 'walk', and his stringbag is packed as if for visiting another village. The mourners farewell the body when they inter it, and a few nights later the spirit is expected to leave the grave. While he is still angry his kinsmen may try to obtain from him the name of his killers, but he is dangerous and unpredictable. Soon the living perform a ritual to dispatch him peacefully to join their ancestors. The widow, meanwhile, is secluded in their house.

In another myth, the stark separation of the dead from those they loved is stressed. In this myth Beriaberia Ghimasa's widow hides behind a rock to wait for his spirit and then follows him despite his entreaties to stay behind. They come to a river of blood and pus which he flies over, but she is determined to follow him and begins to swim across. Convinced by her determination he bends back a young tree
as a bridge, but warns her that she will not be able to go back that way. Then he
tells her that ants will eat his flesh and they will not be able to sleep together, but
she answers that she didn't follow him to sleep with him. Finally he relents and she
accompanies him to the world of the spirits from which she never returns.

It is essential to establish the separation of the deceased from the world of the
living. The spirit travels to join the ancestors while the physical body decomposes
in the grave. Meanwhile grief, which for Iteanu (1983:122) is what remains of the
decedent's social relations after his death, is gradually being dispelled by the
mourners. At the end of this process there will be no more flesh, only bones; and
the living no longer relate to the deceased as a man, or as a dangerous amorphous
entity in the village, but as an ancestral spirit. It is significant that these parallel
journeys of the body and the spirit correspond to the widow's seclusion, and it
indicates that she has a role to play in the process which ends when the flesh is
decomposed and only the bones remain (ibid.:144).26

The ghaséga goes on all night, as the women grieve because the separation
between themselves, the living, and the spirit of the dead man is becoming
definitive. Even his wife is leaving behind her grief as she is reintroduced to
village life. The women mark the arrival of dawn, and the end of ghaséga, with a
verse about standing on the beach, looking as the sun rises over Kofure point. They
accompany the widow as she sings a verse about rising to her feet and going down
from the house into the clearing in front of it. The women lift the widow to her
feet and help her outside onto a mat spread on the ground. The deceased's sister
takes a rolled-up tapa cloth and hits the widow over the head. Crying and scolding
her, the sisters remind the widow that she had been happy with their brother who
had looked after her and her children. They reproach her for 'leaving' him already,
coming out of seclusion, and perhaps contemplating marriage to someone else. It
was during this ceremony that the jacket of Job's tears was removed. After
ghaséga the widow's movements became freer: she could leave the house and go to
her garden, she could be seen in public and participate in household work.

The removal of mourning restrictions

After the widow has emerged from seclusion, arrangements are made between the
family of the deceased and more removed mourners regarding a feast to remove
the individual, self-imposed mourning restrictions. Nowadays, the two occasions
are sometimes combined into a single event.

Rovárova and kanángara are taken on individually by mourners; their
removal involves a reciprocal exchange between each mourner and the kin of the
deceased. The unkempt beards and hair of those who had taken to wear rovárova
are shaved by one of the deceased's family, who may be shaved in his or her turn
by the other mourner, and the two parties exchange a gift of some bright item of
clothing or a new stringbag. In a series of reciprocal exchanges all the individual
rovárova are removed. This stage may last a number of days as different parties of mourners are released on separate occasions.

All those who had given up a particular type of food bring a gift of that kind of food to the family of the deceased, who reciprocate with a similar gift. Before eating any of each kind of kanángara food, one of the dead man's sons offers a portion of it to the spirit, explaining who had given it up in his memory and who now, wishing to start eating of it again, had brought some to them. Under ordinary circumstances, this is the first time that the deceased is addressed as an ancestral spirit, as opposed to an angry, dangerous, and uncontrollable spirit. With the end of the widow's seclusion the grief has been almost totally dissolved, and the emotional attachment of the living has been transformed into the respect appropriate for ancestral spirits. By the end of the mourning period, the deceased comes to be considered an ancestral spirit. At the same time as the new status of the spirit is acknowledged, the individual relations between the living are re-established by the exchanges of food, the mutual cutting of hair and gifts of clothes and stringbags.

Usually on the same occasion, the sons and brothers of the deceased exchange gifts of feast food with mourners from other lineages in the vicinity who have helped them throughout the process by providing food for them and their visitors. Thus social and exchange relations at lineage and clan levels are also normalised and mourners are now free to participate in dances and feasts involving other clans.

'Vujári' and the widow's brothers

The last person to be freed of kanángara and rovárova restrictions is the widow. Like the other mourners she is given a haircut and some bright clothes by the deceased's sisters in a ceremony which is referred to as vujári, like the initiation of first-born children. A feast which follows this ceremony puts a definitive end to all mourning. The widow's brothers play a vital role in this feast, as they must provide a pig for the kin of her dead husband. Now that the widow has performed her duty by remaining in seclusion for the time necessary for her husband's body to decompose and his spirit to become a clan ancestor, she is freed of the last sign of mourning - the Job's tears hood - and reintroduced to social life. Affinal relations are among the most important social relations affected by the death of a married person. With this pig the widow's brothers conclude the series of exchanges which began when their sister married.

As implied by its name, there are parallels between this ceremony and the initiation of adolescents. Both involve a period of seclusion followed by decoration with new clothes which mark the subject's entry in the world of inter-clan sociality and exchanges. As in the vujári of adolescents, the exchanges mark the conclusion of affinal obligations concerning the subject of the exchange. In this case the widow herself is the subject, and it is her brothers and her husband's brothers (and
siblings) who are the transactors. After the exchange she is free to remarry, thus initiating another series of exchanges. As in all the other affinal exchanges which take place at various stages in the life cycle of a married couple, brother-sister pairs have important roles in this exchange. The deceased's sisters free the widow from her mourning obligations and give her new clothes; her own brothers give a pig to her ex-affines.

CONCLUSION: ITEANU REVISITED

To conclude this chapter I shall return to Iteanu's descriptions of relations between the living and spirits among the Orokaiva. He argues that Orokaiva corporate groups are relatively unimportant because they are transcended by the global system of exchange (1983:14). He thus explains away the problems which both Williams and Schwimmer had in reconciling clan membership and membership of plant emblem groups in terms of unilineal filiation (ibid.:6,186). These problems are irrelevant for Iteanu, as it is the village which forms the basic social unit and all relations between villages are subsumed to those of the encompassing ritual cycle of feasting (ibid.:196-9). This view, however, implies an amorphous group of ancestral spirits, unconcerned with the internal social organisation of the living. Korafe ancestors, however, are strongly linked to the ideology of clan and lineage membership. From them derive the diacritical symbols of clan membership, and the rights and obligations which come with them, including those connected to certain kinds of magical knowledge requiring the intervention of ancestors (see chapter 4).

In Iteanu's model the point of marriage rules and affinal relations is not to manage the relations between individuals or allow the reproduction of society, all that matters is 'La réaffirmation cyclique d'un Système global' (ibid.:241, italics in original).27 Spirits exchange pigs for the life of children, offered up during the trials of initiation. Thus affinal relations, with their reproduction of du couples, are necessary for the transformation of a direct exchange to a deferred one.

Brother-sister couples play important parts in Korafe affinal exchanges, but precisely because they are the parties concerned. They are the ones to be separated by marriage, while still sharing ancestors and childhood. Ancestral spirits do enter into initiations because they concern the membership of offspring into a descent group - something which concerns the ancestors. Ancestral spirits are also important in the context of mortuary rituals since they effect the transformation of the soul of a living man into an angry ghost attached to his body and immanent in his village, and thence into a clan spirit. Thus the deceased's relations to both the living and spirits have to be transformed accordingly, as well as those between the living who are no longer linked through the deceased.
It is perhaps significant that Korafe initiation lacks the more frightening component of Orokaiva ceremonies, in which the initiands are faced with representations of the spirits who pretend to kill them (ibid.:59ff.). Unlike the undifferentiated spirits who send pigs to the Orokaiva and claim their lives in return, Korafe ancestors enter into exchange relations with their own descendants only, who own exclusive rights to their powers, and who repay them by wearing their emblems, respecting their kotofu and evovo, and by sacrificing pigs to them. These pigs are the objects of exchange at competitive feasts between territorial groups under the aegis of their respective Kotofu clans. These feasts, their implication for inter-clan relations and the relations between the living and the dead are the subject of the next chapter.
1 'The encompassment of the various exchange paths within the superior one mediating relations between men and spirits, constitutes the hierarchical order which governs this society.' (My translation).

2 'Each time that the disjunction between marriage relations and relations of siblingship is realised, the du’s magical influence on men becomes immediately apparent.' (My translation).

3 'Orokaiva society presents us with the image of a world where everything is perfectly ordered and where, nevertheless, each person seems 'free' to regulate his relations with the ritual order.' (My translation).

4 For a similar critique of Itesu’s approach see (Van der Grijp 1989).

5 Oral accounts of the pre-contact migrations and mingling of tribes in the whole Papuan region makes it highly unlikely that there ever was such a group (cf. Waiko 1982).

6 It is likely that, as among the Maisin, Korafe boys are also worried about the debilitating effect on themselves of their mother’s or sisters’ stepping over their sleeping mat, but I did not come across this explanation (cf. Barker 1984:216).

7 For similarities with affinal relations among the Maisin see Barker (1984:178-203).

8 Sister exchange marriages are stressed in the ideal representations of elders, but they do not seem to be very common in practice. I never came across anyone who consciously tried to organise such a marriage.

9 The clans of Kabuni owe allegiance to Bubu, traditional rival of Gaboru, therefore they felt uneasy about spending time in their village (see next chapter). As well as being vañi rivals, the men from Goodenough village in which I was living were also business rivals of the men from the village where the feast was taking place. Members of Gaboru also owned a guesthouse, the main competition for the Komoa Brothers Guesthouse. Their wives, and therefore I, only attended the first day of the proceedings. For an account of the proceedings of the following days I had to ask the bachelors from my village who had remained, despite the dangers of spending the night in one’s vañi’s village.

10 Some money is an expected component of all brideprice payments in Tufi but the sums involved have not reached the astronomical levels found, for example, in some areas of the Highlands. A few months before my arrival the largest sum ever paid in the Tufi district was given to his affines by a man from the Javosa clan, a successful business man in Lae. The cash involved was over 2000 Kina.

11 The wife’s identification with the husband’s clan is less surprising if it is remembered that brideprice payments are often delayed for a number of years, when the wife is wholly integrated into the life of her husband’s village.

12 Not all the girls now choose to be tattooed. Although a bare face is acceptable and even desirable for those who wish to emphasise their modernity, girls without tattoos are thought to age more quickly. The absence of starkly contrasting patterns on their face makes them look like older women, on whom the tattoos have blended into the complexion of the face.

13 The procedures of tattooing are similar to those of the Maisin for a detailed account see Barker and Tietjen 1990.

14 Similarly, Maisin kisevi: 'appears as a counter-claim to brideprice, an assertion that the matrikin retains an interest and rights in the first born child.' (Barker 1984:208).

15 This aspect of initiation, in which initiands are subjected to the frightful experiences of facing the spirits, is absent from Korafe vujdi.

16 Orokaiva initiations include a similar ritual in which the mother cuts a taro top then throws the
taro peeler over the initiand's head to the feet of a man who smashes it with a stick. This is interpreted by Iteanu as a ritual ending the prohibition on secluded initiands having anything to do with women and eating their mother’s food, thus terminating the danger of women for the initiand (1983:104).

17 The mostly 'normative' descriptions of mourning in this section will also serve as a foil for my descriptions of the events which followed the deaths of some central figures in Kabuni ritual and political life (chapter 6).

18 Sharing betelnut is an important part of sociality, and it is shameful for a man to have to refuse a request for betelnut, therefore men always ensure they carry at least one betelnut in their javo.

19 During mourning all activities are stopped in the village where the death occurred. Those living in other villages of the territorial group also refrain from obvious activities. The sound of drumming, chopping wood, or the sight of smoke (an indication that garden land is being cleared), are all considered offensive to mourners who might resort to sorcery against the offenders.

20 The location of the cemeteries among coconut trees is significant. Coconut groves are planted around villages, and an abandoned village is recognised from the coconuts standing above the surrounding vegetation. While people remember that their ancestors are buried there, they remain significant landmarks, usually for a few generations after they have been abandoned.

21 According to Barker (1985) Maisin widows compete with each other: the longer the seclusion, the greater the virtue.

22 The word ghasega also refers to dance practice and to lullaby. It is distinct from other laments used during mourning (sordra), and from other songs (ydru) or dance tunes (dvarti).

23 See Waiko 1982 for an analysis of the processes by which Binandere incorporate new songs into the standard repertoire, gradually replacing verses about the more remote past with verses regarding the deeds of more recent ancestors.

24 The direction of the meteorite tells knowledgeable Korafe which group of people was affected by a death recently, as it indicates which place of origin it was returning to. A wavy path represents a man’s loincloth fluctuating in flight. A straight path indicates that the deceased is a woman. The duration of the light indicates how many children the deceased had, as it is thought to be farewelling them one by one. Every time a shooting star is sighted people engage in a sort of guessing game to identify whom might have died.

25 In another myth two bereaved sisters are tricked by a sorcerer into burying their father in the sand so that he could secretly dig the corpse up every day and eat some of it. This may be the reason for the sisters’ refusal to bury their brother in foreign territory. It might also be a reason for the tradition of sleeping on the grave and for widow seclusion, to guard the body from sorcerers until only the bones remain.

26 The same idea holds for the reverse situation. One young widower re-married too soon, according to the deceased woman’s sisters, who shamed him publicly by asking him why he had remarried when his wife was still smelling in the grave.

27 'The cyclical reaffirmation of a global system'(my translation).
CHAPTER 3
VASAI FEASTING

In chapter 1 I discussed the way in which ideals regarding relations between brothers are extended, in Korafe ideology, to relations between corporate groups. Thus the ideals of general reciprocity, sharing of resources, cooperation, and hierarchical ranking according to seniority apply equally to relations between lineages of a clan and clans of a territorial group, as to those between brothers. In chapter 2 I showed affinal relations to be mediated by brother-sister relations, and maintained through a series of reciprocal exchanges which cut across clan and lineage lines. Individuals' participation in these exchanges depends on personal kinship links to one or the other spouse rather than membership of agnatic groups.

Beyond kinship and affinal relations there is a third dimension of social relations, also mediated by exchanges, which belongs to the political domain (cf. Young 1971:195). Traditionally Kotofu clans, supported by the Sabúa in their territorial group, competed against each other for political ascendancy and prestige through large-scale exchange and dance feasts: vasáí. These feasts were the main occasion for clans in a territorial group to act jointly in relation to other similar groups. Vasáí feasts were thus the context for the operation of 'complementary institutions which tie clans together through relations of formalized opposition and enjoined cooperation.' (Young 1971:69). Operating at corporate group level, these relations transcended the vagaries of individually-based kinship and affinal ties. Individuals' participation in one or the other side of the exchange was determined largely by clan membership, while their clan's status as Kotofu or Sabúa determined their role in the feast. At the level of practice, however, it was the clan leaders' ability to coordinate the efforts of their clan's members, attract supporters from other clans, and persuade their rivals to accept an invitation to vasáí, that defined them and their clan as Kotofu.

Contemporary dance feasts are organised mainly on the occasion of Christian festivities and involve parishes, which in practice are coterminous with territorial groups. In this chapter I focus on the aspects of feasting characterised by continuity with 'traditional' vasáí feasts as they are described by Korafe elders. Though no longer held, vasáí feasts remain important in Korafe social ideology as
they are used as a standard against which 'Church Day' feasts are constructed and compared. Even for those aspects in which the Church Day feasts are purposefully and emphatically different from vasāi feasts, it is in opposition to the traditional feasts that the contemporary ones are constructed. In the context of feasting, whether vasāi or 'Church Day', different levels of social, political, and cosmological relations are negotiated and expressed.

Feasting is a major feature of social and cultural life throughout the Papuan region (cf. for example, Seligman 1910, Haddon 1920, Williams 1930, Malinowski 1988). The symbolic and political uses of food-giving in the Massim region have been the subjects of studies by Young (1971) and Kahn (1986). Similarly, Schwimmer (1973) has analysed Orokaiva feasting as an important way of managing relationships with other groups. In what follows I shall describe Korafe feasts, and outline the social relations and processes which they involve. Besides the economic and political aspects of feasting, which are prominent in the exchanges of pigs and taros, I shall pay particular attention to the ceremonial aspect of feasting, as it is given expression in the dancing. Dancing is considered by Korafe to be a fundamental part of their feasts, one of the cultural features which distinguish them from other ethnic groups.

In his introduction to 'The Natives of Mailu' Young comments on the difficulty which Malinowski encountered in his efforts to identify the 'ceremonial' or 'magico-religious' sides of Maduna feasting which appeared to be pragmatic economic transactions (Malinowski 1988:64-7). Dancing, taken as an integral part of feasting instead of 'mere' entertainment, would probably have provided Malinowski with the key he was looking for. Andrew Strathern (1985:119-20) asserts that dances, if seen as an integral part of the social processes of exchange feasts, can be assumed to have a specific role within the feasting context. As for Spencer (1985:2), it is not dancing as an individual experiential phenomenon but in its institutional aspects which concerns me. As an aspect of ritual process, dancing is an important vehicle for expressing and manipulating relations between clans, territorial groups, and between the living and ancestral spirits. Dancing is a symbolic act with various levels of meaning (ibid.:38). By examining aspects of the dance the articulation between the politico-economic and the religious domains in the context of feasting becomes apparent.

'KOTOFU', SENIORITY AND 'VASAI' PARTNERSHIPS

In chapter 1, all Kotofu clans were said to be 'elder brothers' in relation to Sabúa clans. Within the Kotofu category, however, notions of seniority also apply; some Kotofu clans are considered senior to others according to the birth order of their mythical founding ancestors. One fundamental aspect of vasāi feasts was their association with 'traditional' rivalries between pairs of Kotofu clans. The existence
of these rivalries is still an important factor in the dynamics of relations within territorial groups, and shapes the political relations between clans belonging to different territorial groups. In the context of feasting the rivalry inherent in relations between elder and younger siblings is emphasised in the ideology on relations between Vasá partners, while the ideology of fraternal cooperation is stressed within territorial groups. As in Kalauna, competitive exchange feasts lead the two rival communities to unite against each other as the existence of enemies outside is emphasised and internal rivalries underplayed (Young 1971: 210).

Elders of different clans disagree on the absolute ranking of all the Kotófu taken serially as a sibling group. There is less contestation, however, in pairing Kotófu clans as elder-younger-brothers. Of the four Kotófu clans of the Aga da Mándi migratory group, Bedada is considered to be Bubu’s elder, and Toru (now extinct) the elder brother of Gaboru. Among the Eva da Mándi Kotófu clans, Gaso and Tevari, the latter is sometimes referred to as elder brother. However, Tevari’s claim to seniority is contested by Gaso elders who argue that it is not grounded on the birth order of their original ancestors but on subsequent historical events. When they migrated to Cape Nelson, Tevari say, Gaso ancestors followed Tevari’s canoe.

Similarly, there are also alternative explanations for Bedada’s seniority to Bubu. It appears from accounts of clan migrations that Bubu and Bedada ancestors were members of a single clan, known by the name of Baure, after their common original ancestor. After settling on Cape Nelson, senior and junior lineages of the Baure clan separated as a result of conflicts which erupted in the course of a feast because of competition for the role of feast leader. In one narrator’s words:

They sat down in Cape Nelson and made a feast for the people of the place (Kerebi), but people were asking "Who is beating the drum? Is it Bubu or Bedada?" A boy was killed with sorcery and there was a fight. After that Bubu elders took their younger brothers with them and went across the bay to Kabuni.

The senior lineage remained in the recently settled territory and became known as the Bedada clan. The junior lineage moved to a neighbouring peninsula, attracting some Sabúa, and became established as Kotófu in their own right. The two clans have separate territories and different follower clans. Since members of both clans descended from the same primal ancestor, they retained the same kotófu decorations. Only subtle differences indicate their relative seniority; both clans have rights to the same types of feathers and shells, for example, but Bedada can use more of them than Bubu. There are few occasions at which both clans preside, for which the relative seniority of Bedada is marked. Having established itself in a separate territory and with a separate group of follower clans, Bubu has asserted its right to act as independent Kotófu - a typical Korafe solution to sibling antagonism. With independent status assured, Bubu clansmen acknowledge their juniority to Bedada, whose members they continue to regard as 'elder brothers'.

These clans do not compete among themselves. It is those Kotófu clans whose relations cannot be established by reference to their ancestors’ relative age which
vie with each other in competitive exchanges. Clans which compete in vasādi feasts refer to each other as Vasādi. It is likely that such partnerships were continuously being formed and dissolved in historical contexts, as the clans waxed and waned in importance, and as the relationships between them changed. Further, the political fortunes of clans could be dramatically changed by their success or otherwise as sponsors of vasādi feasts. However, since the demise of vasādi feasts proper, the partnerships which were operating at the time have become objectified as traditional relationships and described as originating in the mythical times of primal ancestors.4 Vasādi partnerships operated within each migratory group. Thus in the Eva da Mándi group, Tevari and Gaso, whose seniority is disputed, are Vasādi partners. Among the Aga da Mándi those Kotófu whose seniority is unstated are paired as Vasādi, the two 'elder brothers' competing against each other on the one hand and the two 'younger brothers' on the other.

Figure 1: pairing: 'Vasādi' partnerships among the 'aga da mándi'

Korafe elders describe the development of a vasādi partnership in terms of the following stereotyped scenario. The leaders of a Kotófu clan invited their enemies to a feast in their village. The rivals accepted the invitation and came to the village in force, decorated as for warfare, but carrying drums instead of weapons. After dancing in the village ground they collected the pigs and food given to them by the hosts and went away to share it among their followers. After eating the feast they decided to reciprocate and, as soon as they could collect sufficient pigs and taros, issued a counter-invitation. In order to demonstrate their own power and strength, they attempted to make a bigger prestation than the one they had received. The roles of the two parties were reversed, and their guests, in turn, performed their dances before taking home their gift. In time, by alternating in their roles as hosts and guests, the clans became Vasādi.

This scenario naturally offered ample opportunities for ambushing enemies and for the resurrection of old quarrels, particularly among the bellicose Sabúya. The intervention of the Kotófu was necessary to prevent fighting and allow the feast to continue. For their part, Kotófu clans relied on the cooperation of their Sabúya clans, both to amass food for the prestation and to impress the hosts with their dancing.

Vasādi partners, then, are rivals and potential enemies. Some, though not all, vasādi partnerships are thought to have their origin in peace-making feasts between
fighting clans. Both Young (1971) and Kahn (1986:81) have discussed feasting as an alternative to warfare in dealing with enemy groups. Schwimmer described periodical feasting as a strategy to interrupt the normal state of warfare between rival Orokaiva groups, thus resulting in a cyclical alternation of fighting and feasting (1973:54-7).

Within each grouping the relationship between Kotōfu and Sabúa were also given expression in the context of vasāi feasts, which are still used as exegetical models in which the social ideology was realised. The Kotōfu's influence and their powers to make peace with enemies by organising feasts is considered one of the main sources of political status and their authority over Sabúa clans. Barker remarks on a similar use of idealised accounts of joraga feasts among theMaisin as 'somewhat of a mythic charter of the Kawo/Sabu relationship.'6 (1984:172-3). In Korafe social ideology, only Kotōfu clans may organise feasts or accept invitations to dance; Sabúa can influence the Kotōfu by denying their support, but once committed to participate they do so as followers of their Kotōfu. On any single occasion, their cooperation as food providers or as dancers and eaters of feast food depends on their allegiance to one or the other Kotōfu clan. It is principally the Kotōfu's reputation which is at stake in the exchange. The participation of Sabúa clans is said to demonstrate the might of their 'elder brothers': in practice the Kotōfu's status as leaders is dependent on their ability to muster the support of their juniors.

Over the years, however, some Sabúa clans have repeatedly faced each other as supporters of rival Kotōfu: 'subsidiary' vasāi relationships have therefore developed among them. While contributing to the prestations of their Kotōfu, the elders of these Sabúa clans also set aside some pigs and bundles of taro specifically addressed to their own rivals. These prestations occurred within the context of the wider vasāi exchange, and were counted as part of the overall gifts exchanged between territorial groups. Nevertheless, they were acknowledged by the Sabúa partners who kept a record of the quantities involved, in order to reciprocate appropriately. Informants were more vague about the composition of the subsidiary partnerships, which were probably more unstable than those between Kotōfu, partly because Sabúa clans could switch their allegiance from one Kotōfu to another.

As well as relations between the constituent clans of rival territorial groups, vasāi feasts also promoted the formation of affinal ties between individuals belonging to them. Those who were thus related acknowledged these ties during feasts by providing hospitality within their own homes and cooking separate pots of food for their affines. Although these services were reciprocated at successive feasts, they were not considered vasāi since they were provided on the basis of individual ties rather than clan relations.
According to Schwimmer, Orokaiva feasts are held because of a perceived need to offer a feast to a specific group (either to return a feast or as a peace-making exercise), and because of the leaders' desire to raise their own and their group's prestige (1973:148-9). Similar considerations were the motivating force of *vasāi* feasts, although elders often simply referred to 'custom' as an explanation. Contemporary feasts coincide with Christian festivities and are planned every year on a given date, although their scale varies with the abundance of garden produce. The following is an elder's account of the planning of *vasāi* feasts.

When the season in which the taro grows abundantly approached, Bubu would summon his *Sabūa*: Kandoro, Ameta, and Javosa. He asked them to join him that evening around a fire to chew betelnut. He showed them the position of the Pleiades in the sky and asked about the state of the gardens and the number of pigs in their villages. The *Sabūa* would know that he was thinking of inviting his *Vasāi* and, if they thought that they had enough taro and pigs for a feast, they told him to break off his armlet and send it to Gaboru (Bubu's *Vasāi* partner). A messenger would be sent to tell the *Vasāi* to prepare his feathers for dancing. If he accepted the invitation, Bubu and his *Sabūa* would start preparations in earnest.

Now all the young men worry about earning money, they go to Port Moresby, they are lazy about gardening; they don't want to make fences, so they don't keep pigs any more. To do *vasāi* each man planted three or four taro gardens, to make *bondo ghando* [a structure to which were tied bundles of three taros for the feast prestation]. The *Kotōfu* could not make a feast for nothing, they had to have forty or eighty pigs; some were also given by the *Sabūa*.

The reliance of the hosting *Kotōfu* on the *Sabūa* went beyond their contribution of labour and produce. In order to ensure the success of the feast, they had to secure the approval of the *Sabūa* elders who had magical knowledge and powers not legitimately available to the *Kotōfu*. Garden magicians went to work on the communal plots planted for the occasion, and weather experts strove to ensure the most favourable conditions. It is often emphasised that although only *Kotōfu* can organise feasts, they cannot do so without prior consultation with the *Sabūa*.

Young men worked in the village of the *Kotōfu* clan to build storehouses, platforms for the visitors, and the *bondo ghando*. In a prominent position near the dance ground, clan elders directed the construction and decoration of the *Kotōfu Oro* (*Kotōfu* platforms). These covered platforms could only be built by *Kotōfu* clans, and only for feasting, though they were left standing after the event. Each *Kotōfu* clan owned particular styles of building, carving the beams, and finishing the thatch. Inside, the *oro* was decorated with carvings of the *evōvo*, and other *kotōfu* motifs, belonging to the hosting *Kotōfu* clan. Like the Maisin *Kawo va*, these platforms 'symbolized the traditions, the cultural identity and ultimately the power of the clan.' (Barker 1990a:191). During the feast the *oro* was enclosed by plaited sago leaves, and was used to host the *Vasāi* leaders. *Kotōfu* elders sat...
inside, apart from the feasting, and chewed large amounts of betelnut while they talked.9

As the time for the harvest drew closer, the men went fishing and hunting, and smoked their catch in preparation for feeding the dancers' party. Sago was made and formed into loaves which were tied in bundles of four. Coconuts and bunches of betelnut were collected and stored away. The gardens were harvested and the bondo ghando decorated with bundles of taro. The pigs were examined: smaller ones were selected to be slaughtered for feeding the dancers' party during the feast, and the larger ones reserved to be given live during the final prestation.

Having accepted the invitation, the Vasāi invited their Sabūa, to go with them to 'eat their pigs'. One of the ways in which Kotōfu maintained a status difference from the Sabūa was by abstaining from eating throughout the feast and refusing a share of their Vasāi's gifts, which they distributed amongst their followers. Sometimes this is referred to as 'payment' for the Sabūa's hard work, and it is an expected aspect of the Kotōfu/Sabūa relationship. In some respects this relationship is reminiscent of that between fofofo partners in Kalauna. Fofofó, like Sabūa, provide food for prestations to the nibai ('enemies'), and eat the food received from them by their partners (Young 1983a:45). However, the fofofo relationship is reciprocal and does not involve difference in status (Young 1971:69-70) while the Sabūa/Kotōfu relation is hierarchical and the roles are never reversed. Perhaps a more appropriate parallel is with the roles of inuba and fofofo in the Modawa and Fakili festival cycles, in which the former, as organisers and main providers, gain prestige but affect aloofness, while their fofofo perform the executive tasks (ibid.:233-4).

In both vasāi and 'Church Day' feasts the guests' dancing is as important an element in the feast as the hosts' prestation. The invited Kotōfu aim to impress their rivals by bringing a great number of supporters, wearing impressive kotōfu ornaments, to dance with them. Kotōfu elders had access to various spells and substances to make the dance ground 'sweet like sugar', or to make the sound of their drumming irresistible, so that once they started beating the drums in the danceground dancers were compelled to join them.

The cooperation of Sabūa clans could not be taken for granted by the Kotōfu on either side of the partnership. Sabūa elders would only commit themselves if they thought that the feast could be successful. This, in turn, depended on the status of relations internal to the group. If there were tensions or grounds for disagreement within the territorial group, or if the Sabūa questioned the Kotōfu's authority over them, they would refuse their help. It is at this micro-political level of the day-to-day organisation of provisioning and establishment of allegiance that transformations occur within the public and 'timeless' macro-political arena. Even in the case of contemporary 'Church Day' feasts the clans belonging to a parish decide autonomously whether to respond to the leader's calls for help in organising a feast or a dance group.
When Uwe parishioners invited Kabuni clans to go to their 'Church Day' feast Baga villagers responded in a non-committal manner to the calls for dancers made by the leaders of the senior Bubu lineage. Each Sunday, after the religious service was over, elders of all Kabuni groups gathered on a platform to discuss the coming event. Without stating that they refused to join the dance group, Baga villagers simply failed to turn up at any of the practices announced to be held in Goodenough village. The Kotōfu's efforts to persuade them to cooperate failed to the extent that each week fewer of them even attended the church service in Goodenough. Eventually they opted to hold independent prayer meetings in Baga, led by one of the evangelists residing there, himself an elder of a junior Bubu lineage. Although they justified this decision by saying that it was the windy season and many elderly or sick people found it hard to cross Fesaba Bay to attend church, it was obvious to everyone that Baga elders were asserting their independence from the rest of the territorial group.¹⁰

Their reluctance to join the dance group was explained by saying that they had not been involved in the organisation of the 'Church Day' feast held the previous year by their parish, and therefore did not feel entitled to join in on this occasion, when they were going to claim the return prestation. This argument was couched in terms of traditional vasāi feasting conventions, and on these grounds it was rejected by the senior Bubu elders who responded that it was not a vasāi feast that they were going to, but a Christian festivity.

Although never acknowledged openly, the issues at stake in this standoff were revealed by the terms of the discussion. Baga villagers, all members of junior groups in the ideology linked to Vasāi and Kotōfu, thought it inappropriate that the Kabuni Bubu elders, as Kotōfu, should have assumed leadership of the dance party in the context of a 'Mission' festivity. They thought the leadership should go to members of the mission elite, like evangelists and Church Councillors.¹¹ The Kotōfu's reply, therefore, while still skirting the main issue, was successful in communicating to the elders from Baga that they acknowledged the limits of their sphere of influence by emphasising that they were not operating in terms of vasāi feasts. Among other things it was immediately made clear that the main dance leader was to be the evangelist from Kabuni, who qualified on both grounds as traditional owner of important Kabuni dance songs and as evangelist. 'Common wisdom' suggested that Kotōfu elders were still the only leaders who would be able to organise a dance group successfully. Sabūa would not have the requisite knowledge and powers to bring together all the clans in the group. Finally, the Baga villagers expressed their agreement with the compromise solution by turning up en masse for service on the last Sunday before the dancers were due to leave for Uwe. From that night, Baga villagers joined the practising dancers, swelling their ranks by half.

As well as displaying the numerical strength and power of the clans within their own group, Kotōfu also gained prestige by showing their external alliances with other clans. They made use of their affinal or kinship links to leaders of clans belonging to 'neutral' territorial groups to ask them to join their group of dancers.
Particularly valued was the participation of Kotófu leaders who could swell the number of dancers with some of their own followers, and dance leaders who could bring their own contribution to the dance repertoire. Often the two rivalling Kotófu would be competing for the support of the same outsiders, employing all their diplomatic and magical skills in the contest.

Throughout the period of preparation, clan elders discussed which songs and dances should be performed, and who should lead them. Specific clans owned the rights to different dances, regarded as clan kotófu. Within the owning clan one elder was considered dance leader: the man with knowledge of the beat, steps, and words to the song. Owners' participation had to be secured before their dance was included in the program. Only he had the right to lead the group in the performance, or delegate the task to another. It was believed that anyone unrightfully attempting to lead a public performance of a dance would fail, exposing himself to ridicule and sorcery.

These issues are still carefully considered in the context of 'Church Day' feasts. One of the main concerns of the Kabuni clan elders when they were preparing to dance at Uwe was that they would be expected to perform dances closely associated with their clans' identity. An obvious choice was the Oro lament, narrating events connected to their ancestors' migration from their place of origin to their present territory, and which was part of the Bubu clan's kotófu. However, they considered the dance a lament (sorára), and therefore inappropriate for the celebration of a Church festivity. Their decision not to perform that particular dance earned them criticism from their disappointed hosts, who were hoping to witness the dance in which the alliance between their ancestors is celebrated.

Dance practices

In order to achieve a satisfactory degree of coordination between leaders and followers, and a choreography which emphasised the unity and impressiveness of the group, practices (ghaséga) were held nearly every night during the weeks leading up to the feast. Practices take the form of small feasts characterised by the sharing of food which is cooked and eaten together by all participants. Kotófu elders practiced their magic skills of persuasion to entice followers to join them, and invoking their ancestral spirits to the dance ground and render the dancers indefatigable. During this time, recently initiated youths and girls were taught to dance, and they were sorted into pairs of (same-sex) dance partners. These partnerships, usually life-long, often involved an elder-younger-brother pair or two cross-cousins. Partners of similar build were chosen. Over the years of partnership they were thought to develop a style of dancing which, while conforming to the group's overall style, was recognisably their own.

During ghaséga each dance leader demonstrated the beat and movements associated with his songs, and dancers practiced the steps. After practising the
dancers were able to recognise from the first beats of the leader's drum which
dance they were to perform. Those men and women who were too old to
participate in the actual dancing surveyed the overall effect of the dancers as a
group, correcting those who were out of step, encouraging those whose energy was
flagging, and caricaturing those whose flourishes were too individualistic, thereby
shaming them into a more restrained style.

Ghaséga continued all night. Each clan brought its own contribution of food,
often including a wild pig and fish, which were cooked by women of all clans
together. After a few hours of dancing the pots of food were distributed according
to clan membership. However, people sat to eat in mixed-clan groups,
spontaneously formed according to age and gender rather than clan or village.
According to Schwimmer, the sense of communion engendered among Orokaiva
by sharing a meal by all those cooperating in organising a feast is essential to
remove internal hostility and ensure the success of their enterprise (1973:150).
At the end of the meal elders would encourage younger dancers to continue practicing
to develop their staying power, while they sat down to discuss issues of
organisation. At dawn people returned home for a few hours' rest. The main
activities of the afternoon were also concerned with the forthcoming dances. Those
not engaged in gathering more food for the next ghaséga were busy assembling
their dance decorations.

Dancing decorations

Decoration was (and is) an important element in the success of the dancers' party.
At both individual and collective levels the assumption of ritual attire, beautiful
feathers and valuable ornaments, conferred stature and power on the dancers,
marking them off from the hosts. As A. and M. Strathern wrote about dancers'
decorations in Mount Hagen festivals:

All decorations worn for formal group occasions in Hagen can be
described as epideictic: they communicate to members of the group,
and to outsiders, information about the strength of their wearers. They
also set the occasion apart from ordinary, everyday life, and mark out
certain men as members of a common group opposed to other similar
groups. (1971:100)

Another aspect which they commented upon is the way in which decorations are
used to differentiate 'the statuses and roles of different groups and individuals at
festivals' (ibid.: 105). Korafe adornment is similarly composed of many elements
which, worn in different combinations by the individual dancers of a group, are
expressive of social relations at many levels. However, the wearing of kotófu is
more than a communicative act. As I have shown in chapter two Korafe believe
that ancestral spirits are embodied in the kotófu. Spirits join their descendants on
the dance ground, endowing them with their powers. The following description is
based on my observations and discussion of decorations for 'Church Day' feasts;
the dancers' transformation as a result of wearing ancestral ornaments is discussed below.

Each dancer's attire conforms to a general aesthetic model of dress considered appropriate to dancing, which is basically uniform for all participants. Within these standard conventions, there are a number of possible variations, which allow dancers to express their individual and clan identity. Dances are now the only occasions in which tapa cloth skirts and loincloths are worn. These are acquired from the neighbouring Maisin, and are already painted in characteristic red and black patterns which, for the Korafe, have no particular meaning and are chosen for purely aesthetic reasons. However, each clan owns rights to particular ways of adding decorative motives to the tapa cloth, such as cutting the edges to form a fringe, coloured with trade-store red or blue dyes, or making a row of incisions representing pig tracks, or sewing parrot feathers or small white sea shells to them.

All these ornaments are named elements of each clan's kotófu, and only members of the relevant clan, or those offspring of the clan women who have been initiated by their mother's brothers, may wear them. The patterns on woven belts leg-bands and armlets are also considered clan kotófu, as are the pigs' tusks and different kinds of shell valuables. But there are a number of items of decoration, easily made new each time, which anyone can wear. These include necklaces made of ordinary shells and seeds, turtle-shell earrings, coconut-shell armlets, flowers and croton or palm leaf fringes which are tucked into belts, armlets and leg-bands. In order to participate, each man must also have a shell mouthpiece and assemble a headdress.

The conventional male headdress is mounted on a helmet-shaped structure on which feathers are tied in layers of different colours, shapes, and sizes. The front layers of the headdress are made of small colourful feathers, offset by white cockatoo feathers cut into various shapes. The central part is formed by three or four layers of red bird of paradise feathers from which emerge the long rooster tail-feathers which top the headdress. Behind the bird of paradise are attached some bunches of cassowary feathers, each tipped by small white plume. A piece of tapa cloth or an animal pelt is tied to the back of the 'helmet' and covers the back of the dancer's neck. The tall rooster feathers and the white-tipped bunches of cassowary are mounted on mobile frames to enhance their swaying movement amid the bird of paradise feathers. This effect is very carefully checked by each dancer as he assembles his feathers to the best effect. The final touches to a headdress are the leaves tucked into the front, partially obscuring the wearer's forehead and eyes. Women's use of feathers is more simple and limited than that of men. They usually make use of the feathers left over after the men in the household have made their own headdresses, or even simply wear flowers or, nowadays, Christmas tinsel.

Most of the kotófu decorative elements are not exclusive to a single clan and there is considerable overlap between them. It is only the overall combination of different kotófu elements which indicates each dancer's clan. Among the kotófu decorations, some have the additional feature of distinguishing between Kotófu
and Sabúa clans. Only Kotófu clans can crown their headdress with black rooster feathers, whereas the Sabúa can only use white ones. Similarly the fui (cowrie shells) are reserved to Kotófu clans. Among those clans with rights to the same decorative elements, distinctions are marked by different ways of mounting them. Different Kotófu clans, for example, are entitled to different numbers of fui shells and black feathers.

Numerous considerations go into each dancer's decoration, the first factor being the availability of the more valuable kotófu. The father or eldest brother shares the family's possessions between all the members participating in the dance. Some shells and feathers can be borrowed from affines who are not participating. If the father is a very old man, who does not expect to dance much, he sometimes keeps the bare minimum for himself, privileging his sons' appearance over his own.

Within his or her resources, each dancer strives to stand out from the group, thus attracting potential partners and gifts from the crowd of spectators. Bodies are oiled; girls' hair is sprayed with red dye; perfumed flowers and magically-treated aromatic leaves are threaded in the dancers' armlets to arrest onlookers' gaze. Variations on the common themes can be pointedly used by dancers to transmit specific messages other than clan membership and status. One elder of the Arere clan, for example, decided to wear a plain tapacloth, which he dyed entirely yellow like the loincloths traditionally worn by men who had killed an enemy. This, he explained, was to remind certain people of his clan's reputation for sorcery, and warn them to respect him. However, these messages must be carefully calibrated. Of his clan, only he could get away with it, he explained, because he was in possession of the dangerous powers he was alluding to. A younger man would be taken for an upstart and would risk the sorcery of someone more powerful.

In general, the fear of sorcery has a tempering effect on the more individualistic tendencies of dancers. The decorations of the two dancers in each pair must be roughly equivalent, and the group of dancers as a whole must be impressive for its overall powerfulness. Anyone who stands out too much is prone to provoke the 'jealousy' of his companions and risks 'punishment' by sorcery. In addition, great care must be taken not to use kotófu decorations belonging to another clan, also a provocation to sorcery. Throughout the period of preparation, elders are constantly consulted about the details of their clan kotófu and they carefully check younger dancers' attire for elements which might attract criticism.

The decorations of a dance group communicate various messages simultaneously. At one level individuals seek to startle onlookers with their appearance and to win their hearts with love magic. At another level, they mark themselves with their clan kotófu, thus claiming membership in a particular corporate group, and descent from the ancestors from whom the kotófu derive. Individual variation within each clan's kotófu may attest to a particular lineage's attributes or past feats, or to rights obtained by individuals because of their special relationships with other clans.
On the whole, however, there is a tendency to submerge individual identity in the creation of a group display (cf. A. and M. Strathern 1971:138, also M. Strathern 1979:249). This is also true at the level of clans. Clans participate as members of a confederation, the territorial group. It is the dance group as a whole, representing the territorial group, which should awe the spectators by its members' combined efforts. Even the individual love magic worn by the dancers is thought to have a cumulatively overpowering effect on the onlookers, to win their admiration. By showing off their strength as dancers, and their wealth of feathers and shells, dancers contribute to the prestige of the Kotófu clan which brought them together. The overall effect of the bird of paradise feathers, crowning the heads of the dancers and undulating in unison is to emphasise the unity of the dancers in the group. Black feathers stemming from the bird of paradise bundles indicate the Kotófu dancers. Their ornaments, on the whole, should be the most striking.

In some cases, members of clans which are not as powerful as they once were are afraid of wearing all the kotófu decorations they would be entitled to. Thus the Arere clan, whose ancestors were Kotófu among the feared Doriri tribes, came to Cape Nelson 'on the Bubu clan's canoe' - or as their followers. Elders tell of past dances after which members of their clan died of sorcery because they overshadowed the other dancers with their ornaments. For this reason they now publicly declare themselves as Sabúa and refrain from using their more showy kotófu. It is clear, therefore, that there is a dynamic relationship between the changes in the political status of clans and the kinds of kotófu which their members can wear, or what they can express in the context of dancing. But there is more to dancing, and to decorations, than just displaying rich finery, or expressing social relationships.

A. and M. Strathern noted, in Mount Hagen, a link between decorations emphasizing group display and the presence of ancestral ghosts among the dancers (1971:137-8, also M. Strathern 1979:255). Orokaiva dancers are also transformed by their decorations in ways which suggest their identification with ancestral spirits (cf. Williams 1930:239, 254ff., Schwimmer 1973:27, 63, 151-2). Similarly, there is a very real sense in which Korafe dancers are transformed by their kotófu decorations. As I discussed in chapter two, Korafe clan ancestors are embodied in the kotófu. Their presence is marked by the taboos which prevent dancers from eating or drinking while wearing kotófu decorations in order to avoid offending their ancestors. To wear a kotófu is not only to claim membership to its owning group, but to summon the spirits with whom it is associated and commune with them. This is the reason for the anger felt by the owners of a kotófu if it is used illegitimately by someone else. Beyond claiming membership in a group to which they do not belong, they are also attempting to usurp its magical powers.

The immanence of ancestral spirits contributes to the dance group's impressiveness and gives dancers the strength to withstand the rigours of hours of uninterrupted dancing. It is to this end that Kotófu elders perform rituals intended to ensure ancestral participation throughout the period of ghaséga. The reverse of this coin is that any mistake or weakness by the dancers amounts to exposing a lack
of ancestral support, and renders them subject to ridicule. This point was repeatedly emphasised by elders during the practices. Everything had to be perfect, or they would be exposing themselves to the dishonour of being ridiculed by their Vasáí.

THE FEAST

In a situation in which two groups compete for primacy through food exchanges, the timing of the event is a crucial aspect of strategy. In the case of vasáí, the hosts determined the day. Once they finished their preparations, they sent a message to their Vasáí telling them to come and get their food. At this stage the guests had an advantage over the hosts, for the latters' success depended on the quality of the food presented and they were therefore concerned that the dancers would come before the food began to deteriorate. (Taro, the main feast food, must be eaten within a few days of harvesting.) The timing of the guests' arrival is still a source of anxiety for organisers and subject to strategic moves, as indicated in the following example.

For the feast of St. Thomas Day, the dancers had gathered on the shores of the opposite side of the bay from Utukwaf, where it was to be held. During the night before the festivity they could be heard practicing from the village of the hosts, who expected them at dawn. Some came to take part in the choir during the service but, as soon as it was over, returned to the meeting place where the rest of their group were preparing. Messengers were sent by the guests' leaders to say that some of the dancers had still not arrived, and requesting some food for the night. This infuriated the hosts, some of whom wanted to cancel the whole thing as they thought that the dance should be held on the Saint's name day. Others harangued their fellow villagers telling them not to pay any attention to the dancers when they did come, returning the humiliation. Still others wanted to refuse the dancers' request for food. However, the elders decided to send food, with a message to come across before nightfall. When the dancers failed to materialise and the sound of the drums was heard again from the other side of the bay, Utukwaf villagers began to dance themselves. They did not decorate themselves, however, and claimed it was only a ghaséga. At daybreak, when the guests' party was finally seen crossing the bay on their canoes, one of the offended elders from the village conspicuously poured some liquid onto the path they would have to take to enter the village. The warning quickly spread among villagers to avoid walking on the path as those who trod on the medicated water would become clumsy. His purpose was to make the dancers stumble and fall, ruining their performance and exposing them to ridicule.

It was customary for the dancers, having spent the night in the bush completing their decorations, to 'rush' the hosts' village at dawn, in a manner
recalling an attack by enemy warriors, then began dancing immediately in the centre of the village as the hosts gathered around to watch.

**The dance formation**

Particular attention is paid to the formation of the dance party. Most Korafe dances start with two double columns of dancers facing each other in the centre, in a formation that resembles a mirroring of the Orokaiva dance group as described by Williams (1930:234). Thus the dance group is divided in two halves, each of which consists of two lines of equal length. There are no rules as to the composition of the sides, though in each case the *Kotófu* elders and dance leaders discuss how to arrange the dancers to create the most powerful impression. At the Utukwaf 'Church Day' feast, for example, the dancers came from a parish which included some Arifama and some Yega clans; each language group constituted one of the two sides. When Kabuni dancers went to Uwe, Bubu elders had secured the support of some *Kotófu* of the Tevari clan, who brought with them a contingent of dancers so numerous that it was decided they would form one of the halves, facing the Kabuni dancers.

Each side has six leaders. These positions are named, and the dancers in them are held responsible for the success of the performance. Both *Sabúa* and *Kotófu* dancers can be dance leaders. The selection criteria are ownership and knowledge of dance songs, and staying power as performers. The four centremost leaders, two on each side, are called *Muni*. They are followed by the *Oroso*, who are followed by the main body of dancers forming columns of variable length, closed by two *Simbira*. Unmarried women dance behind the men; the few married women who participate, the young and childless, dance on either side of the formation, flanking their respective husbands.

**Figure 2: dance formation, the starting position**

![Diagram of dance formation](image)

- Unmarried girls
- Married women
- *Muni* dance leaders
- *Oroso* dance leaders
- *Simbira* dancers
- Ordinary dancers
- Direction of movement
The elders who own the dances in the program are positioned among the central leaders. At the end of each song, the leaders decide among themselves what to perform next. The 'owner' of the dance takes up one of the Muni positions, and begins beating his drum. The first movement of each dance is performed without singing, male dancers holding the karigha shell in their teeth. Dancers should recognise the song from the beat, and adjust their gait and drumming accordingly. Most dancers can match the steps and figures to each song, but are likely to know only a few verses (most dance songs are incomprehensible even to their owners, being in foreign or archaic languages). Only the 'owner' is expected to know the correct sequence of verses and all of the words. He begins each verse, which is repeated by the other leaders around him and successively transmitted along the lines as the dancers repeat what they hear from those in front.

Each verse is repeated a number of times before the leader begins another. On the first repetition, it is only the Muni and Oróso who move from their places dancing towards and around each other, while the others dance on the spot, adjusting their step to the new dance. On the second repetition, the two sides of the formation begin moving towards each other as the lines of dancers intertwine, then unravel to return to the starting position. A competent leader allows each verse to be repeated a sufficient number of times to permit the completion of the figure, beginning a new verse only when the dancers have regained their starting position.

**The feast processes**

According to my informants, vasái feasts were similar to contemporary feasts: soon after the dances began, most of the hosts dispersed to their tasks, leaving the dancers' families to form the main body of the audience. Elders of the visiting Kotófu clan found their place in the Kotófu oro where they were entertained by their counterparts. For the duration of the feast, the hosts were busy preparing and cooking food for the dancers' party. Each household was responsible for cooking its own pots of taro, sago soup, and smoked fish or pork. However, households coordinated their efforts and timed the presentation so that all the women would file in together, carrying pots of food to the guests' platforms.

Although guest Kotófu affected disinterest in all food given by their Vasái, it was their responsibility to examine the pots for obvious signs of contamination and then to direct the redistribution of food among their supporters. Each Sabúa clan, according to its size, was allocated proportionate shares of food and a portion of the fish and pork. This procedure diffused the possibility that sorcerers could contaminate a particular pot of food destined for a specific victim. Like Wamirans, Korafe suspect that 'under the guise of sumptuously feasting together' their partners really intend to kill (Kahn 1986:74). As well as making a statement about their ritual status, Kotófu also avoided potentially poisoned food by refusing to eat. Despite all precautions, the party of dancers was constantly aware of its vulnerability in enemy territory, and of the potential for both fighting and sorcery.
The very participation in a competitive display created ample opportunities for giving and taking offence.

Dancing was supposedly uninterrupted for the whole of the first day and night. This does not mean that the dancers had no opportunity to rest. Only for the first few hours, when the majority of the hosts was gathered around them, did all the dancers dance together. Once the hosts began dispersing to cook food for them, they took turns to rest and refresh themselves. At all times, though, sufficient dancers should be in the group to keep the dance alive. Late at night, when the hosts' work was finished for the day and they returned to gather around the dance ground, all the dancers returned to swell their formation. Overall, the dancing continued for as many days as the hosts could provide cooked food for the dancers’ group.

As well as the pots of food given and received by the participants as social groups, individual gifts of cigarettes, betelnut, and cool drinks were made to the dancers. These offerings were considered to be a measure of the individual dancers' success, and a medium by which courting couples could arrange secret meetings. To avoid detection, admirers would make use of go-betweens to carry their gifts and pass messages. This, however, also offered opportunities to personal enemies of the dancers to send offerings doctored with sorcerers' poison. The atmosphere at feasts, in which dancers are handed offerings by anyone as they pass is notorious among Korafe for the opportunities it offers to sorcerers. Wise dancers did have the opportunity to be selective about what they ingested. Since they were supposed to observe restrictions on eating while wearing kotófu ornaments, they could accept offerings and give them to a member of their family in the audience until they had the opportunity to rest and remove the kotófu. This also gave them the opportunity to get rid of offerings of dubious provenance.

The separation between the two groups of participants was very marked throughout the feast. The hosts never joined in the dancing, and no meal was shared. Even among the elders of the two Kotófu clans, sitting together in the Kotófu oro there was no commensality or communion, the emphasis being on abstinence. The Kotófu of the hosting side were forbidden to eat in the presence of their clan decorations in the Kotófu oro, and their Vasdí were not meant to accept any food at all.

On both sides of the exchange participants were aware of being under constant scrutiny from the other side, as their strength and powers were being gauged from the food they gave, or their dancing. Beneath the appearance of honouring their friends and partners, each side was looking for opportunities to shame the other by their superior efforts, and by taking advantage of any minor mishap to criticise and deride them. Similarly, Young (1971:chapter 10) argues that the purpose of abutu prestations in Kalauna is to shame the recipients.

The tension between the two groups sometimes resulted in slanging matches, with the hosts sneering at the dancers or their decorations and the guests at the
quality of the food. Dance leaders would improvise offensive verses. Hosts would sometimes contaminate the pots of food with dog and pig excrement to insult the recipients. If the dancers protested that they were being given bad food the hosts queried their right to complain, given that they had not brought any. Similarly, any mishap by the dancers could result in ridicule and insults, as their human fallibility was exposed beneath their identification with ancestral spirits.

Mutual taunting easily escalated to quarrelling. Sabúa, according to their stereotypical image, were always ready to respond violently to provocation, and many feasts are said to have been interrupted by dancers storming out of the village or by actual fighting. The Kotófu elders then relied on the magical power of their words to calm the more bellicose of their followers while they negotiated with their Vasáí. If their negotiations were successful, the feast could continue.

Eventually, once the dancers had been performing for some days and nights, and the food which the hosts had put aside for feeding their party began to dwindle, the hosting Vasáí would decide to bring the event to an end with a final, prodigious gift of live pigs, taro and sago loaves. Although according to elders Church Day feasts involve smaller scale exchanges, the arrival of the pigs is still awaited as the high point of the feast. At both 'Church Day' feasts I attended, the hosts had gone about their business dressed in what is now considered everyday Western clothing until the moment when they brought the pigs. The style of this presentation recalled the dancers' aggressive entrance into the village a few days earlier.

On both occasions the dance party was taken by surprise at a time in the afternoon when the hot sun had taken its toll and only the more hardy dancers were performing, while the others had removed the cumbersome decorations and were resting in the shade. Above the sound of their drumming and singing, a conch shell trumpet could be heard in the distance, indicating that the hosts were preparing to bring the pigs for the final prestation. People counted the trumpet blasts, commenting on the numbers of pigs they could expect. As the taváya blasts became louder and more insistent, the audience's attention was progressively diverted from the dance group. The larger pigs had been kept out of sight in a village allied to the hosts, across a stretch of water, allowing their bearers to make a dramatic entrance with them. Each pig was carried on the platform of a ten-man canoe. The canoes, pigs, and men were all decorated with Kotófu ornaments. The men paddled from a standing position, beating a dance rhythm with their paddles against the side of the canoe and performing dance figures with their canoes as they approached the shore. The audience turned away from the dancers and ran to meet the pigs and their bearers at the beach. The pig bearers jumped off their canoes and jostled with each other and onlookers to grab the ends of the poles on which the pigs were trussed, then, leaping and singing, they rushed to the dance ground where they succeeded in interrupting the dancers. One of the hosting Kotófu elders made a speech in which he explained the purpose of the gift. Then the pigs were taken away and tied under the food platforms next to the dance ground. The dance was resumed while the hosts began piling food on the platforms.
This was the point at which the bondo ghando were given to the guests as a culmination of the feast. Accurate records would have been kept by both sides of the gift exchanged at the previous feast; this had to be matched and surpassed by the hosts. The dancers continued to perform throughout the last night. At dawn the gifts were distributed by the receiving Kotófu among all the clans of their following. They returned to their villages where each clan elder proceeded to redistribute the gifts among lineages or households.

Once they had reached the safety of their own village the dancers finally enjoyed the fruit of their labour. After removing their kotófu ornaments and bathing to remove the 'heat', they cooked their share of the food, which entered in circulation as normal cooked food, shared among villagers and affines as in the course of everyday life. If, for the majority of the dancers, the end of the feast brought a relaxation of the tension associated with being in an unfamiliar village among potential enemies, this was not so for the Kotófu. The task of redistributing the pork and taro was a very delicate one, fraught with danger. The sensitivities of their allies and followers were readily offended by unjust or undiplomatic distribution. One elder told me that it was not uncommon in the past for all the leading elders who took part in a dance party to become sick and even to die after a feast as a result of anger resulting from the way they had shared gifts among followers.

In theory Kotófu clans kept none of their Vasáí's food or pigs for themselves, although it is said that the Sabúía often set aside some of the food received, which they returned to the Kotófu once they reached their own village. These returned shares, however, were only given to the Kotófu outside the vasáí context, once they had stepped down from the Kotófu oro and left their partners' village. They were not given to them as their clan's share, but by individual members of Sabúía households to Kotófu households to whom they were related as kin or affines.

**DISCUSSION**

Vasáí feasts were among the most important ritual events in Korafe social life, occasions involving large numbers of individuals belonging to different groups. Formally they concerned two Kotófu clans with their respective followers who, as the participants in the wupal and wiangep festivals of Wahgi, demonstrate alternatively their prowess as dancers, or as donors of large quantities of food. (O'Hanlon 1989:79). It was therefore mainly political relations between territorial groups which were also expressed and negotiated in vasáí feasting. Within this schema, however, various levels of interpersonal and social relations...
were negotiated and expressed through the political uses of exchanges and dancing to secure public recognition and legitimation of powers and status.

**Individual relations**

Feasting provided the opportunity to further personal interests and relationships, as well as to express individual identity. Dancers wore love magic on their bodies and hosts sent them small gifts of betel or coconut, also magically prepared to capture the recipient’s affection. Old friends and affines on opposite sides of the exchange reserved special treatment for each other. Within each group of dancers, lifelong relations were forged between dance partners, while status differences were carefully expressed in both the style of adornment and the place taken in the dance formation. Individuality, however, was not encouraged. While individual variation on the common themes occurred, obvious deviation from conformity in style of dress and dancing was punishable by sorcery; it was reckless to stand out, even in terms of ability, particularly for those who were not already established as elders.

Taken within the context of the cooperating group, elements in the dancing communicated aspects of the group’s social composition. Gender relations were expressed in the women’s ornaments and their position in the dance formation. Unmarried girls, the daughters and sisters of the other dancers, danced behind the pair of leaders which close the men’s ranks. Recently initiated, they were viewed with pride and decorated to emphasise their youthful beauty. They often wore quite elaborate decorations, including feathers, tusks, and shell valuables. Ordinarily, married women were too busy looking after children and providing support for their husbands to dance. However, there was always a small number of young, childless wives who were able to participate. They didn’t follow the men, but danced beside the formation. Their attire was less eye-catching than that of unmarried girls. Instead of drums, women carried a small seed rattle in one hand and a staff decorated with leaf fibres in the other: a reference perhaps to the time women followed their men in warfare and carried their spears. This again emphasised the parallels between dancing and warfare.

Another dimension of individual status relations expressed within the group of dancers was that of seniority. Dance leaders were usually clan elders, and mature men with a developed style of dancing and impressive stature tended to be concentrated towards the centre of the formation. These men also had the lion’s share of valuable ornaments, as well as more experience in assembling it to greater effect. Younger boys held the last places in the dance formation and were discouraged from decorating too conspicuously.

These messages in the dance were reflected by the division of labour on the side of the hosts. Young girls and boys were responsible for maintaining the supply of grated coconut, firewood and water, while the women were in charge of cooking pot after pot of taro. The men made a ceremonial sago and coconut soup and were also responsible for the distribution of pigs.
Relations between clans

At another level, people's participation in vasāi was in terms of clan membership. This was clearly expressed in the suppression of individual identity achieved by wearing kotōfu decorations, and shading the face and eyes with leaves hanging from the headband. The most distinctive features of dancers' decorations were those which signified the wearer's social identity as member of a corporate group. As representatives of their clans individuals wore the insignia of their ancestral heritage, actively inviting their ancestral spirits to join them in dancing. The ancestral immanence in kotōfu ornaments endowed them with symbolic status, not just as members of a group, but as subscribing to the moral values underlying inter-group exchanges (cf. O'Hanlon 1989:17).

Nevertheless, the clans constituting each of the parties to the feast were not identified as distinct units. All the food was presented as gifts from one Kotōfu clan to its Vasāi partner. Similarly, although a knowledgeable person could decipher the individual combinations of kotōfu ornaments worn by each dancer to identify his or her clan, that was beside the point. From the display point of view, the emphasis was on impressing the audience with the variety and richness of decorations within the group collectively. The only distinction immediately obvious to an observer was that between Kotōfu and Sabūa dancers. The hierarchical relations between the two types of clan were clearly expressed in the context of vasāi.

It is in the context of competitive exchange feasts that the roles of Kotōfu and Sabūa clans are defined most clearly in Korafe ideology. Only Kotōfu clans could organise vasāi feasts. Kotōfu were valued for their ability to attract support from the Sabūa and make alliances with outside groups. The Sabūa contributed to their efforts with their magic, work, food, and dances. In turn they expected to be 'looked after' by the Kotōfu under whose aegis they participated in feasting. Reflecting the roles of younger and elder brother respectively, the Sabūa offered their cooperation to the Kotōfu who, in turn, ensured that all their followers received a fair share of the gift from the Vasāi. Sabūa clans participated under their patronage, and the whole group was identified to the external world as followers of a given Kotōfu. On the one hand, this served to make the Kotōfu's name and reputation as powerful leaders, on the other, the Sabūa relied on their Kotōfu's patronage for protection and safety during movements outside their territory.

Another aspect of the Kotōfu/Sabūa relationship manifested in the context of vasāi feasts was the different behavioural orientation associated in Korafe ideology with their members. Kotōfu made alliances with enemies, transforming them into feasting partners; they used their influence to ensure the support of clans external to the contest but, more importantly, they kept in check their followers' antagonism towards their rivals. Sabūa, as younger brothers, were always ready to fight at the least provocation. The Kotōfu's intervention was necessary to prevent them from overstepping the mark of ritual rivalry expressed through competitive
gift giving. As elder brothers, Kotófu could control their emotions and restrain their followers until they negotiated a solution with their counterparts.

'Vasái': rivals or partners?

The level of relations most explicitly addressed in vasái feasts were political relations between territorial groups, each represented by their respective Kotófu clan. More precisely, relations between those territorial groups whose Kotófu could not establish a clear hierarchical relationship on the basis of a mythical origin in an elder-younger-brother pair, and were therefore in competition. The nature of relations between Vasái was ambivalent. Korafe variously refer to their Vasái partners as gitófu (enemy), sovéní (opposite) or komána (friend, partner). This range of referents reflects the spectrum of attitudes mutually held by Vasái partners and which influenced their conduct towards each other both within and without the feasting context.

By describing them as gitófu they refer to the origin of some vasái partnerships in episodes of violence. An undercurrent of hostility was apparent throughout the feasts: in the aggressive manner of the dancers on arrival, the barely controlled hostility of spectators, and the constant fear of sorcery throughout the feast. The very alternation of roles of the two sides, and their marked separateness in the course of feasting, institutionalised the antagonism between them. Although vasái feasts are no longer held, and Church Day feasts involve clans which were not Vasái, members of clans which were traditionally Vasái are still reluctant to visit, and especially to eat or sleep in each other's village outside the ritual context of feasting.

By referring to Vasái partners as komána, the partners' achieved equality is alluded to. In order to be in that relationship both clans required access to comparable resources and followings. However the partnership started, by alternating in their roles as hosts and guests, Vasái partners established a relationship which could only last as long as both sides kept up with the gifts and the dancing. Through feasts and dances Vasái honoured each other and celebrated the state of peace achieved between them.

"Nanda sovení" (my opposite) emphasises the complementarity of feast partners. As one Kotófu elder put it, he could not be such without his Vasái partner. Feasts were occasions for Kotófu elders to establish a reputation as feast givers and alliance makers, and a name as leaders. The taro, pigs, and dances exchanged by Vasái partners went beyond the participants themselves. The food was re-distributed among the Sabúa, who shared it again with their friends and allies. As shares of pork and taro were transferred to different villages, they carried with them the binó (news) of the feast and the name of the feast givers. People discussed the motives for the feast, the names of the Kotófu elders who presided over the distribution, the size of the pigs. On the other side people commented on the dances performed, the beauty of the young girls, the drumming and feathers of
the men, and the new steps, beats and verses introduced by dance leaders. On both sides of the exchange the group's performance in their different capacities reflected their collective power, and that of the Kotófu who brought them together. The reputation of the Kotófu's power and influence was spread by these means. Indeed their very status as Kotófu was predicated on their political ability to participate in vasái. Vasái partners thus provided an essential mutual service to each other, as they allowed each other to secure support and political alliances while reinforcing their own political status and reputation.

Figure 3: 'vasái' exchanges

And the spirits?

Vasái feasting, like the feasts throughout the Papuan region, does not occur in isolation. They are linked in time by a chain of exchanges in which the partners alternate in their roles as hosts and guests. By taking the long-term view of feasting, it appears that there is a further aspect to the complementarity of Vasái partners. In this perspective, dancing acquires greater relevance. Korafe repeatedly stressed that the guests could not come and take the food 'for nothing': first they had to perform their dances. Dances are also a display of the guest's prowess in the face of the hosts' claims to superiority as givers. They can be seen as a reminder of the power of their Kotófu to draw so many strong and able-bodied men together. But this is not all: in the decorations with the associated taboos, the choice of songs to be performed, even the sound of drumming, the emphasis is on the identification of dancers with their ancestors, summoned by the Kotófu's magic to join them. This is one of the most obvious features distinguishing the guests from the hosts, who do not wear kotófu decorations.

It may be recalled that in the previous chapter I suggested that, unlike the Orokaiva, Korafe did not offer their own children to their ancestors in exchange for their magical powers. Instead they offered pigs: more precisely those pigs and taros obtained from their Vasái partners. Hence the importance attached to the fact that Vasái partners did not descend from common ancestors. By alternately inviting Vasái to dance in their village, hosts were inviting each other's ancestors to claim the pigs of the prestation. In so doing the living fulfilled their side of the exchange
relationship with their clan ancestors by providing them with pigs in exchange for the magical assistance which they relied on for success in all spheres of life.

This explains the apparent prohibition on those who are wearing kotófu ornaments or are sitting in the Kotófu oro (the dancers themselves and the Kotófu elders) from eating any of the food from the vasáí. Ancestral spirits do not visibly consume the offerings given them; they take the essence, leaving the substance untouched. By eating the food itself, the humans beneath the kotófu would be revealed. Similarly, clumsy dancing would expose their human fallibility and make them targets of ridicule.

Once the guests had removed themselves from the ritual context of feasting, and bathed to remove the ancestral influence from their bodies, then they could slaughter the pigs and share the food among themselves without offending their ancestors. Prior to the feast itself, the Kotófu elders on the side of the hosts made use of their magical powers to ensure their Sabúa's cooperation. Sabúa elders invoked their ancestors' help to ensure the best conditions for the production of abundant food for the prestation. They built the Kotófu oro decorated with their clan emblems, on which they entertained their counterparts. The effect of the guests' dancing was to attract their own ancestral spirits to the dance ground and platform. Once the pig bearers, representing in turn the hosts' ancestors, make their appearance bringing the pigs for the dancers, the feast is over.19

What Vasáí partners did for each other, then, was to provide an essential service. Vasáí repayed each other's ancestral spirits for the magical assistance which they provided the living. Magic was necessary for success in subsistence and for the production of surplus which, in turn, was necessary for the regulation of political relations between unrelated groups of clans. Vasáí exchanges, therefore, articulated the political relationships between territorial groups with exchange relations between the living and their ancestors. What, according to Iteanu, Orokaiva achieve by offering their own children to the ancestors, Korafe did by forming vasáí partnerships with their enemies.20

At another level within the vasáí context, exchanges between the living and their ancestors articulate with the relation of interdependence between Kotófu and Sabúa clans in each territorial group. As I will detail in the next chapter, different clans have rights to different types of magical powers. Kotófu clans rely on their Sabúa for magical services of kinds to which they are not entitled. On their part the Sabúa rely on the Kotófu's powers as negotiators in two ways: first to maintain internal cohesion, ensuring that all clans work together for the collective benefit of the territorial group; and second to make alliances with their rivals, making possible vasáí feasts, and thus the balancing of the exchanges with their ancestors.
ENDNOTES-CHAPTER 3

1 The implications of this development are explored in chapter 5.

2 Baure and Kasaika, in different contexts, are referred to as the elder-younger brother pair who emerged from the hole, and from which the relation between Bubu (and Bedada) as Kotofu and Kandoro as Sabua has developed (see chapter 1).

3 In the course of that feast the Kandoro warriors, who had guarded the kotofu belonging to the Bubu leader who had died in warfare, returned the valuables to his sons. The Kerebi dancers improvised a song celebrating the deeds of Bubu warriors, thus offending the members of the senior Bedada clan who were not included in the song.

4 One of the innovations in 'Church Day' feasts to be discussed in chapter 4 is that the groups which invite each other to their respective feasts are not the same as the Vasdi. Nevertheless, people's attitudes to members of their traditionally rival clans is still a mixture of respect and antagonism.

5 Some Vasdi partnerships are thought to have developed from feasts given by original inhabitants of the territory to stronger newcomers, others from feasts given to thank a clan for a service or gift. During the colonial period clans who had played soccer matches against each other would end the tournament with a feast, some of which, if reciprocated, developed into vasdi.

6 Kawo in Maisina is equivalent to the Korafe Kotofu, in both its meanings as diacritical object or feature which distinguishes one clan from another and as high ranking clan. Sabu is the same as Sabua.

7 In this type of narrative, Korafe make use of the name of a clan, (such as 'Bubu'), as if it were an individual who represented the clan as a ‘corporation sole’. In this case the narrator is referring to the elders of the clans he named.

8 See chapter 4 for different clan’s rights to magical knowledge.

9 Oro are no longer built and only a handful of elders remember having seen them. The word oro now simply refers to any sitting platform. It is thought that women and uninitiated youths were not allowed within the enclosure, but it is also said that if a girl sat on another clan's oro she had to marry into the clan.

10 Barker (1984:276-7) noted that the Maisin rarely express their disagreement openly at meetings. They simply stay away from them if they know that their opinion is opposed to the generally held view. Thus, attendance of meetings is an indication of the degree of consensus among group members.

11 As it happens both evangelists who were active in Kabuni (or the St. Luke parish) belonged to junior lineages of the Bubu clan. One lived in Kabuni, the other in Baga. It was through them that the invitation to dance at St. Christopher's Day in Uwe was made, and they had consulted with their 'older brothers' the Bubu clan elders, before responding to the invitation.

12 Dancing and drumming are associated with ancestral spirits. The sounds of drumming and singing are thought to be associated with the caves where spirits assemble, and many of the magical means of attracting spirits to communicate with the living involve dancing. Similar associations are made by Orokaiva (cf. Schwimmer 1973:63). See also chapter 4 on the magical knowledge and techniques of Kotofu elders.

13 The Kandoro clan, which claims a particular status because of its ancestors' actions in rescuing the Bubu clan's kotofu from their enemies, can wear black and white rooster feathers mixed together.

14 These taboos are not so strictly followed now. Dancers do accept drinks of coconut, cigarettes and betelnut in the intervals between one dance and the next, but before eating they still remove
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... their headdress to avoid offending the ancestors.

15 The situation for 'Church Day' feasts is slightly different as they are supposed to be held on the day indicated on the Christian calendar as appropriate.

16 Karigha shells are cut out of nautilus shells. They have a mouth piece. At the beginning of each new dance, the men hold the plate (turned with the inside part of the shell facing out) in their mouth as they coordinate their drum beat. The same shell was held in the mouth, but turned the other way, during tribal warfare.

17 Taváya (conch shells) are reserved to Kotófu clans, they were used to summon Sabúa for fighting or feasting and in connection to the trussing or killing of pigs for feasts.

18 Cf. Kahn (1986:82), describes the bringing of pigs to Wamiran feasts as an aggressive act by decorated men.

19 Cf. Schwimmer, (1973:61, 121-3) suggests that feast givers, despite the fact that they have given away all their food and pigs, gain from the event in terms of magic and spiritual potency.

20 Considering the close association of feasting and warfare in Korafe ideology, it is plausible that prior to pacification, enemy victims could have also been offered to ancestors in exchange for magical powers, as an alternative to peacetime vasáí pigs (cf. Kahn 1986).
INTRODUCTION

There is a close connection between the major forms of Korafe magic and specific clans. The powers of magic are owned by clans as kotófu; the knowledge and practices involved are aspects of the clans' evóvo; the kodna (ancestral relics) are essential for its efficacy. The rights and responsibilities attached to magic define each clan's role within a territorial group and that of its members. The relation between magic and clan customs is such that Korafe invariably list magical powers among the features which distinguish between clans. It was in these terms that Korafe first mentioned magic to me (see Introduction). At the time of my initial enquiries, however, most of my interlocutors were concerned with establishing, in the eyes of a Westerner, their identification with the 'new' Western cosmology. They portrayed all magic as obsolete - evil, or at best slightly ridiculous - practices of their ancestors' times. However, it gradually became apparent that magic played an important part in everybody's lives. Those initial statements represented only one of the many aspects of the complex set of attitudes held by contemporary Korafe towards 'traditional' cosmology and that which is considered 'new' and 'Western'.

Magic is not a unified corpus of knowledge with a corresponding exegesis shared by all, or even fully knowable by one individual. Korafe esoteric knowledge consists of numerous separate traditions owned exclusively by clans or lineages. Even within the owning group individuals attain different levels of knowledge and understanding. Ritual practitioners are generally the elders of each clan; however magic is not a preoccupation of a few isolated old men. Senior men alone should know the secrets of the major forms of magic of which they are the caretakers. They alone, it is thought, can be trusted with the responsibility of controlling such powers. Nonetheless, other clan members, depending on their interests, may attain
varying degrees of knowledge. Even those who do not make use of it experience its
effects, and have a general understanding of its working. This picture is further
complicated by people's varying attitudes to such powers, their possession and use.
In order to organise what I was able to learn about Korafe magic I will make use of
the conceptual framework which served me as an introduction to the subject. In
this chapter I will describe the beliefs, attitudes and practices associated with the
magical traditions 'owned' as kotofu by the clans of Kabuni during 1987-1988.²

Speaking of magic

The definition of magic in the context of this thesis comprises those acts performed
with the aim of influencing the course of events and people's well-being by tapping
into non-material powers. Included in this definition are powers which are thought to
affect different aspects of life and which involve a wide range of different
techniques, objects, substances, procedures, and knowledge. The problem for
anthropologists, according to Lewis,

is not of distinguishing magical actions or effects from the ordinary
workings of the laws of nature, but of being able to distinguish magical
thinking or magical beliefs from other kinds of thought (1986:418).

Since each clan's magical powers are seen as constituting independent traditions,
Korafe do not talk of 'magic' in general terms. Similarly the clan elders
responsible for its custody and use are not identified by the title of 'magician'.
That is only one among their numerous roles and responsibilities as elders. Each
clan's magical tradition may be referred to by the name of an object, substance, or
effect known to be connected with it. The practitioner himself may be designated
by adding the word émbo, 'man' to such word. Garéva and garéva-émbo, for
example, refer to weather magic and its practitioner respectively, by referring to
the name of a substance used in magic believed to produce rain. However, the
same magical tradition, and the same practitioner, may be referred to in a number
of alternative ways, emphasising different aspects of powers. Afôa-émbo refers to
the same man in his capacity as maker of sunshine, from the word afôa which is
the name of a song associated with the magic rite performed to dispel clouds.

Sorcery, compared and contrasted with witchcraft, has been the focus of
much attention in the ethnographic literature on Melanesia, where it is often
considered separately from other kinds of magic (cf. Patterson 1974:132). Implied
in this conceptual separation of magic from sorcery are assumptions about the
different nature and 'morality' of those practices which are deemed to influence
people's success in, say, gardening or fishing and those thought to influence their
health or cause death. These distinctions, in-grained in the language we use, are not
shared by most Korafe, who see all magic as involving dangerous powers which
can be used for good or evil effect, depending on the practitioner's intentions and
the nature of relations between him and those affected by its exercise.³ The powers
of sorcery, those thought to cause illness or death, are inextricably linked to those
of healing: both powers belong to the same practitioner, and the techniques
involved are complementary. Young refers to the 'front' and 'back' sides of magic on Goodenough Island (1971:182-3). Similarly, Stephen argues that a dualistic view of Mekeo magic as good or evil is too simplistic, and conceals the complex nature of magical thought (1987b:44-5).

Although Korafe do not confine beneficient and maleficient powers to separate realms, they do distinguish between them. This distinction gives rise to the use of terms which, although literally referring to specifics related to different magical powers, are also used in a more general sense to refer to 'good' and 'bad' magic respectively. Kae primarily means 'poison'; it refers specifically to the substances used by sorcerers to cause illness or kill their victims. Kae also means illness; to become ill is kae-tambari (to meet poison); to use sorcery on someone is kae-fighari (to handle poison); and sorcerers, in their destructive capacity, are referred to as kae-embo (poison men). In a more general sense, the meaning of kae also covers all the substances used to achieve destructive ends (such as causing garden crops to die or dancers to stumble), and kae-embo can be used to refer to any practitioner known to use magic for such purposes. 4

The opposite of kae is fiyogha, which may be glossed as 'medicine' or 'remedy'. Literally it refers to the substances made and used by healers (sorcerers) to heal or prevent sickness. The verb 'to heal' is formed by adding to fiyogha the verb for one of the many types of actions involving medicinal substances. For example, fiyogha jasari 'blowing medicine', or fiyogha jumbari 'to massage with a medicinal substance', and so on. The meaning of fiyogha can be extended to include other magical substances related to beneficial effects, and to the beneficial aspect of the various magical powers. 5 Fiyogha-embo refers to anyone practising healing powers or other positive magic.

To these two terms can be added a third which, though used more rarely, is useful for its neutral moral tone: tuturo. The literal meaning of this word is 'beginning' or 'start', not in the temporal sense of 'origin', but in the sense of something which is in the process of being made into something else: a cross between 'raw materials' and 'work-in-process'. It is commonly used to refer to a stringbag or fishing net which is being made. In the context of magic this word refers to the material objects necessary to perform magic, whether for constructive or destructive purposes. Its meaning includes the practitioner's lime and limepot, his ancestral relics, as well as the ingredients and apparatus for making kae or fiyogha. More generally, tuturo can refer to magic, and its derivative tuturo-embo, to elders in their capacity as practitioners of magic.

**Spirits and ancestors**

Korafe conceive of humans as having a spiritual element which can sometimes leave the physical body and be seen by others as an image. This usually occurs during sleep or immediately before death. In this form the spiritual part of humans is referred to as dangio ('reflection', 'shadow', 'image'). Spirits of the dead may be referred to as asisi or sukaro. Although they may be used interchangeably,
these two words have different connotations. It is unclear to me whether they refer to two different kinds of spirits, or two aspects of the same entity. These words have been adopted by missionaries for the biblical concepts of Satan (Sukâra) and Holy Spirit (Asisi kakâra) respectively. In contemporary usage, the first of these terms carries negative connotations of evil spirits, while the other is more positive.

Spirits can appear in the village in various guises and can be perceived to be present in everyday life by knowledgeable people. Calls of certain birds are interpreted as messages from ancestors regarding absent clan members; fireflies as evil spirits; and crickets as benevolent ancestors. Spirits are thought to be attached to the places where they lived, so the more remote ancestors are associated with the places from which the clans originated, while spirits of the more recently dead are thought to act as guardians of the village, land, or house where they lived. Each house has a number of spirits associated with it and traditionally a portion of every meal would be left out for them. They are familiar to its habitual occupants but disturb the sleep of outsiders. A living person’s spirit may also sometimes return to a familiar place after leaving it, usually in dream. After I had moved to Goodenough village from the Guest House, some friends passing on a canoe below the cliffs of Komoa said that they had seen me. When I told them that I had not been there, they decided that my spirit had remained to guard over the Guest House.

Individual experiences of the spiritual world vary with age, personal history, and individual predisposition. The most commonly experienced phenomenon of this sort is dreaming, in which the sleeper’s spirit is thought to leave the body and undergo experiences which are half-remembered on awakening. To most people spirit apparitions of any other kind are eerie and frightening. Elders generally, and those associated with magic powers in particular, are thought to be more constantly aware of the spirits’ presence, and to seek them voluntarily. Even dreams can say different things to different people according to their knowledge.

Some people are naturally more susceptible to the influence of spirits and have frequent and sometimes involuntary communications with them. This faculty seems to be associated with a strong bond of affection for a dead person. The living can learn to control this faculty and use it to enter into contact with spirits at will. It is more common for elders to have such links with people who have died, and it is considered more ‘natural’ for them to have such faculties. However, a measure of personal commitment is necessary to acquire the ability to interpret the signs from the spirits or enter into communication with them; age in itself is not sufficient. The ability to entice the ancestral spirits to their assistance is the main source of magical power which clan elders claim to control.

**Possession and transmission of magical powers**

In Korafe ideology magic is transmitted along the same line as kotofu. A father teaches his magical techniques and mystical knowledge to his sons, one of whom
will acquire more knowledge than others and will succeed his father at his death. Ideally this should be the eldest son. As the brothers become clan elders, the eldest gradually assumes more responsibilities for clan magic. If he dies before his own sons have reached adulthood, one of his younger brothers will take his place, otherwise his eldest son does so. Thus, from the ancestors, magical knowledge and powers are thought to have been transmitted from eldest son to eldest son to the living elders who use it and transmit it to the next generation. This is the ideal pattern of transmission. However, it is not the only option, and accounts of alternative means of acquiring magical powers are narrated in each clan's myths.

Malinowski (1954a:74) observed that such myths in Melanesia are never concerned with the creation of magic powers, but with their acquisition by ancestors. Korafe myths tell either how the ancestors were given magic by mythical beings (usually following mystical experiences) or how they obtained it from previous owners. This underlies the importance attached to the ownership of magic. Magic does not occur independently of humans, and therefore somebody is always responsible for each magical phenomenon. 8

A particular magic tradition, like other kotófu, is part of every clan member's patrimony and heritage, and every member will identify, and be identified by others, with those powers. It is assumed by outsiders that they have some knowledge of the powers and familiarity with the techniques. But within the owning group, the knowledge, objects, and powers of magic are not equally accessible to everyone. On the one hand, this is related to individuals' predisposition for mystical experiences or their interest in learning the techniques and acquiring the powers. On the other hand, it is related to their social position in the clan. Holding and practicing magical powers is a prerogative of elders, and those among them belonging to senior lineages are in a favourable position to be publicly recognised as holders of magical powers. 9 As well as being directly in line according to Korafe ideology of inheritance, their control of powerful knowledge is congruent with their status, the respect accorded them, and the assumption that as 'eldest brothers' they are wise and level-headed: necessary qualities for the responsibilities involved.

The powers and responsibilities of knowledge

Each clan's magical tradition involves a complex of various elements, the control of which is a requisite for controlling the powers themselves. The custodianship of clan relics confers upon elders the status of magical experts. With this status come responsibilities, food restrictions, and respect. The elders' stringbags, used for carrying powerful magical substances, are avoided by those who are not ritually prepared. Only their wives, who for convenience's sake follow the same alimentary regime, are allowed to share their eating implements. When visiting, they take their own implements to avoid being contaminated through sharing with people who do not follow the same restrictions. All these behavioural rules
contribute to the respect and distance with which elders in general, and magic specialists in particular, are treated by their juniors.

Similarly, the practitioner alone in his clan chews with lime from the ancestral limepot; others who did so would die as they do not follow the appropriate ritual regime.\textsuperscript{10} Kôro by definition, he should display all those characteristics associated with the 'eldest brother' in Korafe social discourse. Wise and level-headed, he should 'look after' this aspect of his clan's patrimony for the benefit of the group as a whole. This involves guarding the ancestral relics and the secret aspects of knowledge to prevent a dispersal of the powers; it also involves making use of magic only in a manner which will benefit the community, rather than for personal advantage.\textsuperscript{11}

The responsibilities associated with ownership of exclusive magical powers transcend clan boundaries. The other clans in the territorial group rely on the members of that clan for control over those magical powers which they own. This division of magical labour is one of the main reasons for the association of clans into territorial groups; and one of the characteristics which differentiates Kotófu from Siba clans is their prerogative to different realms of magical power (see chapter three).\textsuperscript{12}

As Lewis has pointed out, there is no single and correct belief about magic in a society, even the 'disposition to believe' cannot be stated unambiguously, and views on the matter vary with 'stand-point, occasion, the person asked and so on' (1986:432). Korafe involvement within a wider economic, social, and cultural reality has contributed to this variety of opinions. The absence of many young men from the village at the time when they should be acquiring 'traditional' knowledge is one side of the problem. On the other side, Western value judgements about 'primitive' beliefs and Christian morality have influenced the contemporary belief system. Thus ideas about the merits of magical power coexist with conflicting value judgements about mystical dealings with spirits of the dead. As a result, many contemporary Korafe are inclined to discount the importance of magic in their lives, though this attitude, too, is related to their status position in the group.

Since individuals achieve different levels of knowledge and are differentially committed to magic, the depth of my own understanding in the different areas varies according to the knowledge of my informants, and their willingness to talk about their magic. My knowledge of Korafe mystical powers was initially based on lay people's perceptions and ideas about their clan's magic and gradually expanded to include what information various clan elders and practising magicians were prepared to give me.
CLAN POWERS IN KABUNI

The primal ancestor of each clan is said to have brought with him those objects which defined his realm of knowledge and powers, and which, transmitted to his descendants, allows them to practice magic. As in Avatip

It is the patrilineal inheritance of all those ceremonial attributes that defines the continuity of the group's identity from one generation to the next, and there are hereditary inequalities in ceremonial status between these groups, depending on the importance of the ritual powers they hold. (Harrison 1989:3)

Unlike Avatip, however, the overall realm of magical possibilities in Korafe cosmology is not conceived as an 'interrelated totality' (ibid.:15). It is possible for the powers associated with different groups to overlap, and for competition for supremacy to arise; it is also possible for individuals to define new areas of knowledge which they claim to control. As a result, the model of clan specialisation is modified by some instances of overlapping and some of super-specialisation, where lineages of the same clan claim control over different powers. In the following table are listed the Kabuni clans and the magical powers associated with them at the time of my fieldwork (1987-8).

Table 1: Kabuni Clans and their Powers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLAN</th>
<th>MAGIC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bubu (Kotofu)</td>
<td>persuasive magic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arere (Sabua)</td>
<td>sorcery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ameta (Sabua)</td>
<td>weather magic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beghuma (Sabua)</td>
<td>thunder magic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Javosa (Sabua)</td>
<td>garden magic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sorcery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Bubu: magical powers of the 'Kotofu'

The successful leadership of the Kotofu depends on their elders' ability to speak with authority to their followers, and diplomatically with their counterparts of rival or allied Kotofu clans. This faculty, associated with all Kotofu clans, depends on the magic of vironu: the faculty of affecting listeners' emotions and to elicit the desired response from them. The koana (ancestral relics) which define a clan's
status as Kotófu are an elaborately decorated limepot and limestick, containing magically prepared lime. As well as a symbol of their status, these objects, imbued with the powers of ancestral spirits, endow their users with the powers of virónu. To describe this phenomenon Korafe elders use the rhetorical image of a brewing fight. While the Sabúa assemble excitedly, ready to take sides, the Kotófu elder sits quietly. He puts some betelnut and mustard leaf in his mouth, and rattles his limestick loudly on the mouth of the limepot. Suddenly the din is subdued and the Sabúa wait quietly while the Kotófu prepares and chews his mixture. When he speaks the animosity dissipates, 'like the waves on the sea when the wind drops'.

This power to affect listeners' emotional responses may be used by Kotófu to stop internal quarrels, make peace with enemies, and stir their followers to work, dance, and even warfare. Thus, the Bubu clan's koáná include, as well as the limepot and stick, a special conch shell, used to summon followers to war, and a dance drum, associated with magic to stimulate the dancers' ghámo (emotions) and attract them to feasts.

At the first practice dance organised by Bubu clan elders in preparation for the dance in Uwe, Elkin Kegana, considered the most knowledgeable of Bubu elders, performed the following magic: after chewing a special leaf with his betelnut, he took some more of the same leaves and set fire to them. He used the smouldering leaves to warm the inside of his drum while speaking words to the effect that its sound should act like sugar, moving people's spirits to join the dance, and making dancers happy. Then he walked the length of the dance ground spraying the chewed mixture from his mouth onto the ground while repeating similar words. With his classificatory brother Formen, the leader of the Bubu clan, Elkin stood on the dance ground and began beating a dance rhythm on their drums. Elkin's magic was said to make the sound of their dancing irresistible to listeners, who were then compelled to join them. Spirits of the ancestors are also thought to be attracted to the dance ground by this magic.

As Kotófu, Bubu members are precluded from using powers which are directly related to sorcery, weather, and garden magic. The association of such practices with kàe substances would damage the clan elders' reputation among their followers. If they controlled such powers, it is argued, they could easily do without the Sabúa clans, and would be tempted to use their powers against their 'younger brothers'. Only the Gaboru clan among Kotófu clans is thought to have access to such powers. As their rivals from the Bubu clan like to point out, Gaboru's 'elder brothers' (the Toru clan) were all killed by sorcery, while their Sabúa defected to different territorial groups to live under the auspices of Kotófu clans which do not own kàe.

The ideological suppression of Kotófu involvement with negative aspects of political and magical powers (i.e., their involvement in warfare and with kàe), recalls the Mekeo separation of the roles of military and civilian chiefs and the further subdivision of these two realms in terms of their good and bad aspects, attributed to chiefs and sorcerers - elder and younger brothers - respectively
(Hau'ofa 1981:215-18). Similarly, in Maisin the kawo are portrayed as 'peace makers' as opposed to the Sabu who are 'warriors' (Barker 1984:171). It is acknowledged, however, that Kotófu elders in possession of virónu powers are able to exact the services of Sabúa elders. Sorcerers act for the Kotófu as forces of social control, and weather and garden magicians are required to ensure the favourable conditions for feasting or to hinder similar preparations by rival groups. Further, it is often maintained that the Sabúa clan elders, as 'younger brothers', should always consult with the Kotófu before making use of their powers.

Of all the Sabúa clans in Kabuni territorial group, Kandoro, though small, claims a privileged relation on the basis of their myth which says that their primal ancestor Kegane immediately followed Baure (Bubu's ancestor) when he emerged from the ground. Although only one lineage of the clan is still associated with Bubu (other lineages having settled independently elsewhere) its members claim special privileges regarding Bubu's koána. They claim that their ancestors rescued the relics from enemy hands during tribal warfare. This entitles them to certain marks of distinction such as wearing both black and white feathers, and the right to veto the Bubu's use of their powerful relics. The Kotófu's ancestral limepot and limestick should only be used on ritual or ceremonial occasions and before each event, claim Kandoro clansmen, they have to give their consent to the Bubu elders.14

The Kandoro case is a rather special example of the emphasis which is placed, in Korafe social ideology, on the interdependence between Kotófu and Sabúa clans in each territorial group. Clans have rights to different powers, but in order for the group to function at its best, these powers should always be used in such a way as to benefit the whole group.

**Arere: sorcery and weather magic**

Arere myths say that their ancestors belonged to the feared Doriri tribe. They had joined the Korafe on the last stretch of their migration to Cape Nelson, as they were fleeing from common enemies on Bubu's canoe. They were renowned for their sorcery and weather magic. Their powers, as well as other clan kotófu, were thought to have originated with Amasura, a one-legged ancestor who had descended from the sky at Ifo Nene, on Mount Victory. There was no Arere elder reputed to be practising as a sorcerer at the time of my fieldwork; the last sorcerer was dead and had taken his knowledge with him.

It is general knowledge concerning Arere sorcery that its káe and fýógá were based on the use of different kinds of ginger plants.15 The last Arere sorcerer to have practised is thought to have planted a number of different kinds of ginger plants around Karikari, his village. These plants are considered so dangerous that children are told not to walk off the paths around the village, and adults who do so take care not to tread on any plants. Contact with these plants is thought to cause festering sores or an ailment known as anikafe, from the English word handcuffs,
which is a form of paralysis. Since the death of the last practising sorcerer of this clan, nobody is thought to know the appropriate antidotes for these kde.

The last custodian of weather magic (garéva) had also died recently, and the only man of elder status living locally was Godfrey Manduro. His classificatory brothers were working in urban centres, and he too had only recently returned to the village after working as an aid-post orderly elsewhere in the province. He had reluctantly taken responsibility for his clan's magical implements, and did not claim specialised knowledge. The techniques for causing weather changes are many, and some of them are widely known, in principle, by Kabuni people. Godfrey was the only son in his family, but his numerous sisters had married into neighbouring villages and kept close contacts with their clan of birth. It is through them that a lot of the common knowledge concerning garéva is thought to have spread throughout different clans.16

In order to cause rainfall it is sufficient to take the leaves of a particular kind of ginger and soak them in water while saying a simbóra to the ancestors.17 To stop rain caused in this way it is sufficient to retrieve the ginger from the water. To these basic techniques, Godfrey adds the ritual beating of a particular tree trunk with a stick, while uttering a simbóra. A thunder clap in the sky, especially if coming from the direction of Keroro or Foduma, two places associated with Arere ancestors, would confirm that the spirits had heard him. Similarly, rain clouds coming from either of those directions indicate to knowledgeable people that the Arere garéva-embo are causing the rain.18

To cause sunshine or drought some medicinal leaves are mixed with another kind of ginger and heated over the fire while the magician summons his ancestors by beating on the tree trunk. The Arere clan's repertoire of magic includes the powers to calm the sea or make it rough. Two different techniques may be used to calm the sea. The simplest, sometimes used by the old women of the clan, involves chewing two kinds of dried leaves with betelnut and spraying the mixture onto the sea while asking the ancestors to stop the waves at Yaura tokd' ('Wind hole', a place somewhere far offshore). The same mixture can be sprayed on a stone or a paddle which comes into contact with the water. A more efficacious technique, used only by Godfrey, is to scoop up some swamp water, grate a dried bark in it, and pour it in the sea, then reverse the sequence by taking some frothy water from a wave and pouring it into the swamp. To cause rough sea, special dried leaves are chewed with betelnut and sprayed onto the sea, while thrashing the surface of the water with a vine.

The effectiveness of these various techniques depends on a number of factors, an important one being the seasonal weather patterns (as Godfrey explained to me it is always easier to cause rain to fall in the wet season than in the dry season). Stephen (1987b:58-62) identified a 'hierarchy of power' of the different kinds of knowledge involved in Mekeo magic, including medicinal substances, spells, relics, ritual regime, and myths, in order. Similarly, Korafe magicians gear their performance to the opposition which they are likely to encounter. The more
common and less powerful magic often involves the use of medicinal substances alone, which can be supplemented by simbóra. Even the holders of the more complex forms of magic will not use all the means at their disposal if a simple version is sufficient for their aims. Only when faced by strong opposition, from the forces of nature or the mystical powers of others, do magicians make use of their most powerful and dangerous resources requiring more stringent ritual preparations.

In order to make use of the more powerful techniques, involving the manipulation of ancestral relics, it is necessary to follow a particularly severe ritual regime associated with the use of magical lime. Habitual use of the magical lime was thought to render the garéva-émbó of the past particularly powerful and dangerous to lay people. Apart from the usual forms of sexual and food taboos, the ritual regime of weather magicians included a total avoidance of water. Their very body was so charged with magical powers that it was enough for Godfrey's ancestors to touch water to cause a downpour. As a result they were said to spend long stretches of time without being able to fish or even wash, in order for the dry season to occur. This, even more than the food taboos, was considered to be the main reason why Godfrey, a keen fisherman, preferred to forgo his ancestors' customs and give up some of their powers. Another side effect of the garéva-émbó's ritual regime is a portent known as kaniana: whenever and wherever they travel they are followed by clouds and a slight drizzle announces their arrival.19

Godfrey's position as garéva-émbó was ambiguous; he was not reputed to be particularly knowledgeable, he could not sing the appropriate songs, nor had he ever followed the ritual regime which would enable him to use the lime from the ancestral limepot. Nevertheless, as the most senior clan member and keeper of the koána, and in the absence of a more knowledgeable elder, he was generally considered responsible for garéva.

Godfrey's sister's son Noah, who was brought up by the Arere clan, was thought to have been the favourite grandchild of Godfrey's father. In Godfrey's absence, the old magician spent a lot of time with his grandson and it is thought that he passed on to Noah most of his magical knowledge, introduced him to chewing with lime from the ancestral pot, and gave him the clan's ancestral relics to keep until Godfrey's return. Although he returned the koána to his uncle, Noah, now middle-aged and a full member of the Kandoro clan, was thought by some to know more than Godfrey himself. Relations between the two men were sometimes difficult because Godfrey suspected his nephew of meddling with garéva. Noah, without denying having had access to garéva knowledge and powers, denied ever using them except when requested by Godfrey. In his defence he pointed out that, having returned the koána, he could not perform any of the more powerful magic for which the clan elder was responsible. This view was generally accepted as it was thought that, whatever Noah's knowledge, it was Godfrey who, as clan elder and caretaker of its kotófu, was ultimately responsible for the way it was used.

Arere weather magic was known to be associated with two ritual songs: Garéva for producing rain and Afóa for sunshine. These songs, unknown to both
Godfrey and Noah, are still known as dance songs by elders of neighbouring groups. In structure and content these songs conform to a conventional definition of spells. They are formulaic, repetitious and make use of archaic words and reference to mythical beings, as well as metaphorical references to the desired outcome. Such songs, however, are not considered essential by contemporary Korafe magicians. An improvised verbal appeal by the magician to his ancestors (*simbóra*) is considered adequate for summoning their help, provided their correct names and, more importantly, the ancestral relics are used. Although the use of spells may give one magician the edge against the opposing efforts of a rival, failure to achieve desired effects through magic is usually explained as caused by general neglect or ignorance of ancestral customs, more specifically by the absence of ancestral relics or the relaxation of ritual regimes.

In this respect Korafe magic does not conform to the spell-centred model of Melanesian magic derived from Malinowski’s work on the Trobriands. (1954a:73; 1978:403, 408; and 1935:vol. 2). On the basis of this work, Evans-Pritchard (1929) contrasted Melanesian magic to African systems, such as Zande magic, in which medicines, as opposed to spells, are considered to be at the core of magical knowledge and power. He found the primacy of spells to correlate with strict control over magic by specific descent groups. The African/Melanesian dichotomy which he posited, however, is brought into question by Stephen’s observation that Mekeo magicians, like their Zande counterparts, consider the power of magic to lie in their medicines rather than in spells (Stephen 1987b:76; Evans-Pritchard 1929:626).

Korafe magic does not easily fit with either of the above models of magic. Like spells, the medicines can be changed and experimented with, and many are widely known by lay people. As in the Trobriands, Korafe magic power is owned by descent groups and controlled by the elders. The control over clan magic, however, is not preserved by guarding the secrecy of ancestral spells, but rather by guarding material objects which belonged to the ancestors. As will be illustrated in the two sections to follow, what constitutes the most fundamental aspect of Korafe magic is the ownership and correct manipulation of the relevant ancestral relics. It is this use of ancestral relics which, in Korafe belief, performs one of the functions associated with the belief in magical efficiency which Malinowski ascribed to the spell: ‘the mythological allusions, the references to ancestors and culture heroes from whom this magic has been received’ (Malinowski 1954:74). It is from their *kođana* that the practitioners derive their powers. Ideally, it is their transmission from eldest brother to eldest brother which ensures the descent group’s monopoly over specific magical powers.

**Ameta: thunder magic**

Ameta is one of the few remaining Kerebi clans in Cape Nelson, the only one on Kabuni. As *enda totófo*, or ‘land’s people’, the surviving Kerebi are thought to have powers over local natural forces. Ameta, in particular, had the power to use
thunder and lightning against its enemies, and to deflect it from themselves. This power gave them extreme precision in hitting specific targets with lightning, as well as potential for widespread destruction.

Because of its terrible consequences, its powers are not thought to have been used, except in very minor ways, by the last two generations of Ameta elders. The men who are currently clan elders are young in comparison to their counterparts in other clans. They maintain that their clan’s ancestral relics were destroyed by the previous generation of elders who had known the magic techniques but did not use them. The last Ameta thought to have made use of his clan’s powers was Bigwata, a grandfather of the current clan elders. One of Bigwata’s grandsons went to Bauwame in search of a girl. Her brothers surprised him, chased him away and sunk his canoe. With the help of an elder sister living in Bauwame, he returned to his village clutching a broken piece of canoe, which he intended to present to the magistrate as evidence of his beating. When Bigwata heard what happened he advised his grandson to forget the incident and not to involve the magistrate. That same night a terrible thunderstorm hit Bauwame. No people were harmed, but all the coconut trees and canoes were destroyed and all the village pigs killed.

The techniques now in use by Ameta elders are all of minor significance. They are mainly directed towards their own protection. The simplest technique, and the first to be attempted at the approach of a storm, is to shout at the ancestors to go away and throw their lightning at the summit of the mountains or the bottom of the sea. As a further measure of protection most Ameta lash onto the roofs of their houses some branches of sáoro tree. According to clan elders, their ancestors used some medicinal plants, especially an aromatic vine, in conjunction with songs and ritual actions. If they chewed the vine with betel nut or if they used it to beat a drumming rhythm on a tree trunk, the ancestral spirits would react more promptly to their requests. Chewed with betelanut and sprayed on a magician’s hand this plant would enable him to catch a bolt of lightning and stop it from hitting its target. In order to send thunderstorms to hit their enemies, Ameta ancestors used to beat on the ground with a length of vine, say a spell indicating their exact target, and put some medicinal plants in the eaves above the fire.

Despite their predecessors’ renunciation of major magical practices and the destruction of their koána, the Ameta clan is still associated with the forces of thunder. The clan was described to me, by members of other clans as well as by themselves, as the ‘fathers of thunder’. The secrecy and reserve surrounding magical kot6fu is such that no outsider can ever be entirely sure that somebody in the clan may not be secretly harbouring some relic. The possession of magical powers carries a certain prestige, and clan elders do not usually make efforts to deny these rumours.

Clan members sometimes surmise that a particularly violent or persistent storm may have been caused by their inadvertent influence on their ancestors. After failing to divert a raging thunderstorm from their village, for example, some clan members began questioning themselves as to what they might have done to
offend their ancestors. One man thought that the ancestors were angry with them for neglecting to repair the roof of the church in their village. Others remembered quarrelling with an old widow of the clan, and suspected her of using techniques learned from her late husband.

Since they no longer own their ancestral relics and do not chew with lime from the ancestral pot, Ameta elders do not follow any ritual regime and their mystical powers play only a small part in their everyday life. All that was known by the current clan elders about the origin of thunder magic was that it originated from an ancestor called Yakabo long before the Korafe clans' arrival at Tufi. Ironically for them, another Korafe clan, now settled on Kabuni peninsula, has acquired magical powers over the forces of thunder. This is Beghuma, once a follower of Gaso, which has joined Bubu only since their settlement on Kabuni.

**Beghuma: thunder magic**

Although Beghuma knowledge and powers are thought to derive from a Kerebi clan, they are now the only thunder magicians in the area to have possession of their ancestral relics. As a result their magic is considered to be of greater power and effectiveness. Only one lineage within the small clan owns the magic, an indication of its recent acquisition by this clan.

Their myth tells of an ancestor, Yoki, who lived at the time when tribal warfare was endemic. Yoki left his first wife in his village near Kuririka and climbed over the mountains to Koafurina where some Kerebi people were living. There he took Nataunone as a second wife and returned home. One day Yoki went to the bush with Nataunone. While he cut black palm to make spears, she beat bark to make tapa cloth. As the day changed into evening, she heard a friar bird singing in the bush, which made her feel homesick. She stopped beating the bark and called her younger brother's name: 'O Amuion ko'. Yoki was angry and frustrated at her wistful tone and threw down the spear he was carving. He took another one and rushed towards her. Nataunone was so frightened that she wiped her tears. When Yoki threatened her she said that she missed her younger brother because she had no children.

They returned home but Yoki refused to eat. After Nataunone had gone to sleep he roasted some taros on the fire and lay down. He awoke before dawn, when the first cock crowed. At the second crow he got up and quietly assembled his things; by the third he was wearing his fighting ornaments and walked silently out of the house. He began running towards the mountains. After a while, feeling that he was being followed, Yoki hid behind some bushes to wait. He was about to attack when he saw that it was his wife, so he leaped out of the bush to frighten her and told her to go back. Yoki started on his way, and again he felt that he was being followed. When his wife caught up with him he told her that he was going to fight and that she must go back. He began running again but Nataunone caught up with him and persuaded him to let her go with him.
They climbed over the mountains and arrived at her fathers' village. When the people there saw a warrior, they sounded the alarm, and he began to act aggressively as if to attack them. One of the villagers saw Nataunone and recognised his brother-in-law. The villagers planted their spears in the ground for Yoki to lean against, and brought him food and betelnut. While he was eating, Nataunone went to her father, Batofe, and told him that they had come to take her younger brother Amuion with them. They were asked to stay for the night, but Yoki decided to leave straight away. When they arrived back in their village Yoki said to Amouion: 'You are my brother-in-law but I will turn things around and call you my eldest son instead'. Since then, although Amuion's descendants should be ranked as junior to the descendants of Yoki's first wife, they claim a senior position. Amuion brought with him his fathers' magical knowledge and powers, and it is his descendants who now control the magic of thunder.

Soma Savari, the current elder of this lineage, seemed to spend most of his time living with his family in a garden house on a remote inlet. He was an old man, incapable of most gardening work. As a result of his age and infirmity he rarely made the trip to Goodenough village for service on Sunday, consequently missing most of the meetings which occur in the village after the service. Unlike most other elders described in this chapter, I had not been aware of him as a major figure in Kabuni public life. His social isolation was congruent with his role as thunder magician. Soma was one of the magicians who most emphasised the mystical aspect of his life. He portrayed himself as being constantly in a state of ritual preparedness, he followed his clan's food taboos strictly and made regular use of his ancestral lime. As a result, he said, he was constantly aware of the presence and actions of ancestral spirits. He was also able to sing the ancestral song associated with thunder magic, causing his ancestors to come and join him in a dance, without endangering his life.

The destructive nature of his powers, considered an asset during times of endemic warfare but no longer appropriate, was balanced by its protective aspects. When a thunderstorm is threatening, the Beghuma magician cuts some leaves of a medicinal plant and throws them on the roofs of the houses he wishes to protect. Then, appealing to his ancestors, he tells them to go away. He may also break a piece of his pandanus mat, set fire to it, and force it through a gap between the slats on the veranda floor. This action, according to Soma's explanation, causes the embers to break up into small sparks, causing the same to happen to the lightening which was building up.

Unlike other magic specialists, Soma's main rationalisation for continuing to hold his powers was not that they can be used to benefit the community. Soma maintained that if he tried to renounce his ancestral relics, their spirits would become infuriated and unleash their full powers to destroy not only himself and his family, but 'all the land in the country'.24 It was his responsibility to take care of his ancestral spirits to prevent them from doing so. The same explanation was used by his predecessors to resist requests by missionaries and patrol officers to destroy their ancestral relics (See chapter 5). Since he was old and weak, Soma had already
transmitted his powers to his eldest son in order to maintain for his descendants the control of thunder magic. The possession of thunder magic required a great degree of self control to balance the ancestors' susceptibility to offence. For this reason, Soma explained, he preferred to live in isolation, to avoid any conflict with neighbours and kin, which would anger his spirits.

When using their powers the Beghuma magicians appeal to the three ancestors who brought them: Batofe, Nataunone, and Amuion. Batofe is also ritually referred to as Guba, which is also a magical name for the thunder-producing clouds. The songs associated with thunder magic derive their potency from having been sung by Amuion. By singing them, the magician uses his more recent ancestor to channel towards himself the powers of more remote ones, themselves the forces of thunder. This song is similar in structure to the garbage song. In the first verse the magician asks the clouds to disperse; in the second he asks the ancestral spirits to clear the sky and make the country good; in the third he tells the spirits to go up to the mountains or to the middle of the ocean to release their thunder; and in the fourth he appeals for a quiet and calm sky. The language used in the song is a mixture of current and archaic words, and metaphorical allusions to place names and natural events.

Batofe was said to be the 'father' of the box of ancestral relics held by Soma. This box contains personal objects belonging to the ancestors, such as knives, stone axes, different bundles of red and black face dyes, and various types of oyster shells, as well as human remains such as teeth and hair. Soma's words: Evetugenembo bekël jokada iragereira! ('Real people [or people's essence] are in there') express the identity of ancestral relics with the spirit of ancestors. Thus ancestral spirits are somehow embodied in their relics: yet, at the same time, they are recognised in the natural events which they control. Thunder is not simply controlled or caused by Batofe's spirit, it is a manifestation of his spiritual being: his relics embody Batofe, who is Guba (the clouds of thunder).

Soma believed his kodina to be charged with the spiritual powers of his ancestors, and he kept them in a safe place in his house. They were treated with great respect, even avoided by the rest of the household. He explained that ritual preparation was necessary before handling the relics or appealing to the ancestors. These included sexual and alimentary taboos, and the consumption of plant substances thought to increase the heat of the magician's body. Unnecessary or unprepared contact with the kodina would have unpleasant consequences as it unleashed dangerous powers.

After telling me the myth Soma wanted to show me that he still owned the box with the relics. He took me inside the room where it was kept and called out the names of the three ancestors. Talking to them in a matter of fact way, he introduced me to them and explained that since he was teaching me about their powers he was showing me their box. He reassured them that he did not want to use their powers and they should not be offended or worried since I was not going to make thunder magic myself or try to take it away. The room used to be where Soma's eldest son slept before he built his own house; it was now empty. Above
the eaves of the room were a number of bundles, pandanus mats and clay pots. To indicate which box he was referring to Soma tapped it lightly on the bottom, then we returned to the verandah. Sirus told me that every time they build a new house and move the box into it, all lineage members must dress in dancing kotófu. To avoid thunder bolts which distressed ancestors might direct at him, the magician must take the box and carry it to its new home dancing an intricate zig-zag dance to the accompaniment of drumming and singing by members of his lineage. As the conversation progressed, Soma became more and more vague and seemed confused. Finally he told me that by tapping on the box he had aroused the spirits who had come out and were interfering with his concentration. He asked me to return on another day.

The spirits in the koána are highly susceptible to the magician's state of mind. If he enters the room after an argument or in a bad mood, they sense it and may cause a thunderstorm without being asked. Since Soma had formally passed over his control of the thunder magic to his son, the young man had on occasion started a thunderstorm by inadvertently communicating his anger to the ancestral spirits in the house. Each time, Soma had to intervene to avert their destructive powers. Therefore it is important for the caretaker of such dangerous powers to be good-natured and exercise self-control. Soma considered this his responsibility. He had passed on his powers to his son while he was still living, to give him time to learn the necessary self-control.

It is in the relics, then, that the powers of magicians reside. Anyone can learn the medicinal substances, hear the ancestral songs being recited, or learn procedural aspects of his or her clan's magic, thereby acquiring minor magical powers. But to be able to make full use of the clan's ancestral powers, contact with dangerous relics is required. This is the difference between the two clans traditionally associated with thunder magic. Although the Ameta clan may be able to claim precedence in terms of the ideology of patrilineal inheritance, the fact that their relics have been lost prejudices any real claim to mastering the powers embodied within the koána. Current members of the clan can remember some of the medicinal substances involved and some procedural aspects of their ancestors' magic which allow them to dabble with minor effects. However they cannot claim the degree of control held by their Beghuma counterparts.

Javosa: garden magic

Javosa is one of the most powerful Sabúa clans in Kabuni, both numerically and in terms of magical powers. This clan has divided into a number of lineages and is represented in four villages. The main dividing line is between those Javosa who trace descent from a woman of the Rerebina clan of the Maisin, and those who do not. Each of these sides has further divided into senior and junior lineages. The senior lineage on both sides has inherited garden magic. The junior lineages are renowned for their sorcery (see next section). Joseph Bomboru, of Lelico village,
was the elder of the lineage with Maisin connections, responsible for garden
magic. His counterpart, living in Baga, was Sirus Kokonje.28

The role of Javosa garden magicians was to 'look after' the gardens of the
territorial group as a whole. They could make fivógha to promote the fertility of
gardens, or kae to destroy crops. Their powers assured them of status and an
important role in the Kabuni territorial group. Their cooperation, essential for the
success of any large scale feast, was sought by Bubu elders, who made a point of
consulting them regularly over policy matters. However, the reputations of Joseph
and Sirus as caretakers of powerful garden magic went beyond Kabuni. Both men
boasted of having restored the health of gardens as far Wanigela, a few days' canoe
tavel away.

According to the clan's myth their ancestor Bao dreamt of meeting a
cassowary which had three small bundles tied to its tail. Bao expressed a desire to
own those bundles and was told by the cassowary that he could have them. The
cassowary also instructed him on their use for making good and bad garden magic,
as well as on the taboos he would have to observe. Among these was the
prohibition to eat cassowary, wallaby or turtle meat. On awakening Bao found
three bundles next to him. He experimented with the kae and the fivógha and found
the cassowary's instructions to be correct. Before they could harvest the tari they
had planted, however, Bao’s group was attacked by enemies and had to flee their
village. Bao stored the three magical bundles in his stringbag and gave
it
to his
daughter Deora for safekeeping. By the time the Korafe arrived in Cape Nelson,
where they finally settled, Bao was dead. Deora married a man from the Kuro clan
and settled near the present village of Karikari. One of her brothers, Gikamburo,
settled in Kabuni and the other, Gevoto, in Lelioa.

At this point the versions of the myth narrated by the elders of the two
lineages diverge. In one version the woman told her brothers that she would only
give them their father’s stringbag if they killed an enemy. They went to Spear
Point, killed a man, and returned. Deora shared the three parcels, giving one to her
own son, one to Gevoto and one to Karoto. In the other version, Gevoto’s son,
knowing that his father's sister was in possession of the relics for garden magic,
made a habit of bringing her the best fish of his daily catch. When she asked him
what he wanted he asked for one of the three ancestral bundles. She gave him one
containing a yova (half of a bi-valve shell); Gikamburo’s son received the bundle
containing cassowary bones; and her own son was given the third bundle.

Both versions of the myth account for the distribution of garden magic among
different lineages of the clan, and for the acquisition of part of the clan’s powers
by members of the Kuro clan, through the mediation of a woman. Each group is
thought to have control over different aspects of garden magic. There was only one
adult man representing the Kuro clan, he was living in Lelioa village among his
Javosa cognates. In view of his position as a young man among powerful elders he
made no claim to knowledge or any attempts to practise his ancestors' powers.
Both garden magicians operating during 1987-88 were old and respected, although Joseph's magic was thought to be more powerful because he was in possession of the ancestral relics of his lineage. Sirus's father had been persuaded by a missionary to burn his bundle. This prejudiced his ability to act independently of his 'brother' when he wanted to perform the more powerful magic. It was expected that the two garden magicians consulted one another, and other clan elders, before making use of their powers.

Unlike their ancestors, contemporary magicians are no longer expected to communicate daily with ancestral spirits. Tales were told of Joseph's father talking to spirits as if they were present at all times. Although Joseph was thought to be able to contact his ancestral spirits when he needed to, it was considered 'primitive' to commune openly with spirits. He followed a less taxing regime of taboos than his predecessors and led the same kind of existence as other clan elders. He was respected and consulted on clan and territorial matters, but he was not regarded as particularly dangerous.

Both Joseph and Sirus claimed to use their powers only for the promotion of general productivity within the territory and to counteract the kde of jealous outsiders. In normal years, their contribution to the general health of the gardens on Kabuni was taken for granted and their work was done quietly, unnoticed by others. Under normal circumstances both elders downplayed their magical powers. Rather, they emphasised their reputation as Christians. Joseph, in particular, was the senior Church Councillor in Kabuni. Although he was known to possess destructive powers, his position in the Church was seen as a confirmation of his claimed association with the beneficial aspects of garden magic. If, however, gardens stopped growing and taros died, or if a feast was planned, the two elders' role as magicians became more prominent in people's perception.

Among the ancestral relics inherited by Joseph was the yowa shell. This koana was vitally important for the effectiveness of his lineage's magic and Joseph kept it safely wrapped in a bundle of leaves in a respected place in his house. It allowed him to contact his ancestral spirits and tap their powers. He had to prepare himself ritually before making use of it, or he would be endangered by the contact with spirits. If he wanted gardens to stop producing, he would position the shell on its back while summoning his ancestors by name and saying a simbora. The spirits would then cause the gardens to die and the people to go hungry. Joseph's kde consisted of parts of mythical animals, tied in a bundle and hidden in a bunch of dry coconut leaves which he burnt while walking near the gardens he wished to affect. The wind spread the kde in the smoke from the bundle.

This kde was greatly feared and was supposed to be used only against rival groups or enemies, and then only after consultation with the Kotófu. The consequences of using it against one own's group would be so devastating that it was almost unthinkable. Even at the height of the drought in Tufi during 1988, when Joseph's death was generally assumed to be connected to the lack of food in their gardens, nobody said that they thought he had caused it, only that he had been
unwilling or unable to prevent it. Nevertheless, the possibility was there and
Joseph, like any person in such a position of responsibility, could not escape
suspicion (See chapter 6).

The positive aspect of Joseph’s magic powers was to promote the
productivity of gardens. It involved the performance of public rituals during the
*bdaimara* season of hunger beginning in June. In the past these rituals were held
annually to ensure that each year brought with it abundant crops. Now it is only
performed when the clan elders agree that it is necessary. I have not witnessed one
of these events, but from Korafe accounts it seems that in the recent past they have
been performed on those occasions, such as after a year of famine or when a feast
was planned, when all the clans in the territorial groups decided to make a
communal garden.

The garden magicians would instruct the members of the territorial group to
clear their gardens and gather in Lelioa village. People brought their best food,
particularly taro, and began cooking it in the village. Meanwhile the magicians,
accompanied by other clan elders, inspected the gardens. They had licence to do
whatever they wanted in other people’s gardens: they cut down sugar-cane and
tasted it; pulled up the best taro and sweet potatoes, tossing aside those they didn’t
want; picked fragrant *jōka* to rub on their skins or wear in their armlets and ear
lobes.

When they returned to the village the magicians would make a bundle of
*f iyōgha* for each of the clans. On a leaf of a spicy vine, they sprinkled crushed
leaves of four kinds, and thirty kinds of grated barks. Each clan’s parcel would be
prepared individually, then they would all be unwrapped and their contents poured
into a broken pot. To this mixture would be added the grated flesh of a dry coconut
found still hanging on the palm, then hot coals. The wind would disperse the
smoke from the pot, carrying the *fiyōgha* to all the gardens.

Some of the same mixture blown onto uncooked food was believed to
increase it (when describing this to me the elder likened it to the multiplication of
loaves and fishes by Jesus.) A pinch of the mixture would also be added to the
cooking pots to make the food more filling, so that people would be satisfied by a
single mouthful and leave the rest. The participants shared the cooked food and
returned to their villages. In the privacy of his own house Joseph would bring out
the *yowa* shell, position the shell the right way up (with its back pointing to the
ground), and, calling his ancestors by name, ask them to make the gardens fertile
and satisfy people’s appetites.

At the end of the day the peelings and leftovers of the feast would be left on
the path leading into the village from the mountain side. When Joseph summoned
his ancestral spirits to the village they, entering from that side, were believed to
walk on the peelings and feel happy that their descendants had feasted on taro. The
broken pot containing the *fiyōgha* was circulated among all the villages in the
territory to ensure that its smoke would spread its beneficial effects to all. While the pot was in their village, people were advised to stay at home.32

Sirus and his lineage controlled a different aspect of garden magic, and the two practitioners worked together to ensure good results. Both aspects were considered important and since they both derived from the same original ancestor, Sirus's lack of ancestral relics would be partly compensated by working in unison with Joseph. In describing his powers Sirus emphasised that they did not affect the gardens or the plants themselves, but people's will and capacity for work.33 His lineage's fiyógha is of two types. While actually working in the gardens, or clearing the bush, the magician can chew some medicinal plants and blow them on the blade of his axe, then sing an ancestral song called Iaroa. All those who hear this song are affected by the magic, their backs become 'pliant' and they work quickly and effortlessly. (Cf. yaleyale magic in Kalauna, Young 1971:149-50, and Young 1983a:35,39).

The other type of fiyógha belonging to this lineage was practiced in cooperation with Joseph's lineage during báimara (the rainy season and a time of famine). During the inspection of the gardens described above, Sirus would chew some medicinal plants and spray them on the ground while saying a simbóra to summon his ancestors. A clap of thunder would tell him that the ancestors had heard him. The ingredients which Sirus contributed to the mixture prepared in the broken pot in the village were also thought to affect people's will to work, rather than the gardens.

Sirus' káe involved burning certain medicinal ingredients while walking around the villages. It affected people by making them lazy and neglectful of their gardens. Men refused to climb to the fertile higher reaches of the mountain and cut the big trees to make their gardens in fertile soil. Instead they made small gardens by clearing patches of kunai grass near the village, where the land is dry and rocky, but where fences against wild pigs were not necessary. Women neglected to weed the gardens, they uprooted sweet potatoes and taros without re-planting them. As a result their gardens became depleted and choked with weeds.

Javosa: sorcery

The junior lineages of the Javosa clan are responsible for sorcery. One of these lineages, based in Mano, was headed by a relatively young man who, so far, had not acquired a reputation for practising his powers. Elijah Simati, the elder of a lineage based in Lelioa, was feared as sorcerer and revered as healer throughout the Korafe villages and beyond.34 Although sorcerers are referred to as káe-émbo, stressing the negative aspect of their powers, within their own territorial group they operate as healers, using their káe only against outsiders. Elijah's role within Kabuni was mainly that of healer. His clientele included Veniapie and Maisina patients who had failed to recover after treatment by medical doctors or by their own local sorcerers.
Due to the frequency of illness and death, compared to the infrequency of droughts, sorcerers are set apart from the rest of the community on a more permanent basis than practitioners of other magic specialties. Despite various attempts made to end sorcery, the belief in its existence is confirmed each time illness or death occur. The fear of contamination from sorcerers' substances is always present as they are thought to be practicing all the time, at least in their capacity as healers, and are therefore likely to be carrying dangerous substances on them. Elijah's stringbag, thought to be closely associated with such substances, was avoided even by his brothers and wife.

Unlike the magical traditions of other lineages, all of which are attributed to mythical ancestors, Elijah traced the origin of his clan's sorcery to the establishment of Tufi station and the pacification of the tribes in the district. Since their ancestors were no longer able to settle disputes by fighting and warfare, he explained, they began using sorcery to kill their enemies. Instead of attributing his ancestor's discovery of sorcery substances and techniques to a mystical experience, Elijah described their acquisition of knowledge and powers as a process of experimentation by trial and error.

This explanation may be a result of Elijah's experiences while working for the malaria control forces during World War Two and then as an aid post orderly. During his adult life he worked with a number of doctors and nurses and was exposed to Western medical notions. Nevertheless, it is interesting that he was able to accommodate his beliefs in ancestral powers within this framework. As clan elder he was in a position to divulge his own view of the way in which his ancestors acquired their powers, a view which will be transmitted to the elder in the next generation and thus become part of the clan's 'traditional' knowledge. Similarly Korafe sorcerers have been able to incorporate into their practice new substances that were alien to traditional techniques. Thus mothballs and battery acid are commonly thought to be used by some sorcerers to make kće, while things such as cheese pops, lemonade, or sweets have all been used as fiyğha by Elijah; these too, presumably, will become part of the next generation's 'traditional' knowledge.

Elijah himself inherited his knowledge from his elder brother Nico who taught him the basic secrets. He subsequently built up his repertoire by experimenting with new substances and consulting with other sorcerers. Like other magic techniques, sorcery involves the use of ancestral relics (in this case some form of bodily remains) to summon spirits and enlist their help. Contact with such powerful relics, and the arousal of angered spirits involved in the preparation, would result in the sorcerer's own death were he not prepared by observing strict food and sexual taboos. By eating ginger and chillies and avoiding cold liquids, the sorcerer makes his own body 'hot', to enable it to withstand such contacts. Even in this state the practitioner must take special care not to contaminate himself or his family with kće. To prepare it he ensconces himself in a secret spot, deep in the forest, with an old, broken clay pot which he destroys once he has finished. To
his relics, the sorcerer adds other ingredients, sometimes chosen for their resemblance to a particular symptom he wishes to cause in his victims.

The *kae* ingredients are burnt to ashes in the old clay pot while the sorcerer invokes the spirits of the dead, particularly those whose remains are being used. He builds his fire with a special type of wood, placing some hot coals in the middle. As in divining, he recites a list of names and waits for the spirit to kindle the fire upon hearing the name of the person who killed him. This reminder of their own death is meant to stir the ancestors' spirits to fury, making the resulting sorcery extremely potent. Sometimes the sorcerer may imitate the symptoms he wishes to cause in his victims, or simply describe to the spirits the effects which he intends to produce with each ingredient he adds to the mixture. For each ingredient in his *kae* the sorcerer chooses another which is similar but differs in one respect from it. These ingredients, which he sets aside after 'showing them' to the spirits, are the ingredients necessary to make the specific *fiyógha* to neutralise his *kae*.

Elijah did not dwell in detail on how the ancestral spirits in the *kae* act on the victim, and whether they act directly on his body or on the soul. However, it appears that spirits of the dead, sometimes accompanied by other animal spirits, enter the victim's body and create havoc. When the correct *fiyógha* is administered, the spirits, who have been shown it by the sorcerer during the preparation of the *kae*, relent.

Once the *kae* is ready and safely stored in containers the sorcerer must wash himself with water containing special leaves. He gradually relaxes his regime of taboos and, when he feels sufficiently safe, resumes normal social intercourse. The mixture itself remains constantly in a powerful and dangerous state. Any time he wants to make somebody sick, the sorcerer only has to ensure that his victim is contaminated by a small amount of *kae*. Elijah explained that the availability of bottles and other water-tight containers had made the work of sorcerers much easier, since the *kae* can be mixed with water and a few drops sprinkled easily and surreptitiously, even on clothes hanging out to dry, without touching the *kae* itself. As a result, it has become possible for laypeople to buy small containers of *kae* with which to poison their victims themselves. This practice, provided the client avoids contaminating himself with the liquid, is relatively safe and can be carried out without specific preparation. The sorcerer avoids the risk of being detected at work, and the client achieves his end at a quarter of the cost.

After poisoning his victim, the sorcerer can control the course of the illness. By heating the container with the remaining *kae* (placing it in the rafters above the fire or burying it under the hearth) the symptoms are aggravated. By removing the container from the heat the sorcerer allows the body to cool down. Sorcerers are thought to alternate the position of the container to increase the victim's discomfort. By simply keeping the container away from the fire a sorcerer can also produce a constant state of physical malaise in the victim, who stops eating and weakens gradually. By using the appropriate *fiyógha* the symptoms may be alleviated, but as long as the sorcerer or his client keep the container the victim is
in their power and will continue to weaken until he or she dies. Only when the remaining kāe is thrown in cold water, they leave the victim's body, allowing the medicinal properties of the fiyōgha (or Western medication) to take effect.

Some of the medicinal substances are meant to be ingested by the patient, others are rubbed on the affected parts. The most common form of fiyōgha is some kind of plant, often with a particular aroma or taste, which is chewed with betelnut and lime and then sprayed from the mouth onto the body of the patient and into his ears. The resulting bright red coating is left to dry and darken on the patient's skin. It is thought to bring relief from pains and to cool fever. Ginger, which is generally thought to be an efficient protection from spirits, is also chewed and sprayed on the patient. The first application of the fiyōgha is done by the sorcerer or his apprentice. As the coating begins to crack and rub off, the applications may be renewed several times a day by a member of the patient's family. For serious diseases it is desirable for the person who is applying the fiyōgha to abstain from sexual intercourse as this might interfere with the effectiveness of the remedy.

In most cases the sorcerer's aim is to punish his victim or give him a warning. After ensuring that the victim is sick he will throw away the kāe in the container. In such cases, the application of the appropriate fiyōgha, which a healer can identify from the symptoms, is sufficient to restore him or her to health. If the sorcerer wants the victim dead, or some form of compensation, then he will keep the kāe container. As one symptom is alleviated by the healer's fiyōgha, then another ingredient in the kāe becomes active, causing a renewed bout of illness. For recovery to occur the sorcerer must be persuaded to throw away the rest of the kāe in his container. This is why, in order to be successful in his role as a healer, the same man needs to have acquired a reputation as a powerful sorcerer. He threatens counter-sorcery to those responsible for causing his patient's illness to force them to relent.37

There is a close connection between Korafe ideas on health and morality.38 People often say that if they are good they will live long and healthy lives, while those who are 'bad' become targets of jealous people's sorcery. However, the moral evaluation of each act of sorcery depends not only on its context, but also on the position of the person doing the evaluation in relation to the victim. Victims of sorcery and their closer relatives either profess ignorance concerning the motives or attribute them to the greed and jealousy of the sorcerer or his client. Those who recover from a serious bout of illness take their experience as a warning, the implication being that if they continue to act in the way which caused the sorcery, they will be killed. Friends and more distant relatives are more likely to attribute the poisoning to some failing on the part of the victim for which he or she is being punished: greed, lack of respect for elders, adultery, defaulting in some social obligation, and so on. People who might be suspected of poisoning the victim publicly attribute the illness to his or her own mistake: mishandling of sorcery substances, breaking a taboo, and so on. Thus, the greater the social distance from the victim, the more an act of sorcery is likely to be considered punishment and the fate of the victim accepted as necessary for the good of the community.
All the sorcerers belonging to clans traditionally responsible for sorcery can recognise the symptoms of each other's kđe. This allows them to identify the appropriate fiyôgha or, failing that, to contact the sorcerer involved and negotiate on behalf of their patient. Healers never reveal who is responsible for causing their patient's illness, nor the exact requests made by them. For this reason sorcerers, despite their role as healers within their own group, are regarded with ambivalence. They are sometimes suspected of causing illness among their own people as a way to extort money from them.

In recent years an influx of new techniques and substances learned from non-traditional sources has threatened the monopoly of traditional sorcery clan elders. These new sorcerers cannot be held accountable as they are not identifiable from the symptoms which they produce. This new form of sorcery is blamed for what is considered a widespread and irresponsible use of sorcery (cf. Barker 1990b:141). As a result, the elders of all traditional Korafe sorcery clans have organised themselves into a kđe komiti 'sorcery committee'. Each sorcerer is held responsible for preventing illegitimate use of sorcery in the territory within which he operates. All members share among themselves knowledge on their respective fiyôgha, and are able to cure each others' victims effectively. By pooling their resources they can threaten retaliation against any illegitimate sorcerer.

Committee members are believed to meet secretly to decide whether a specific wrongdoer should be punished by a lethal kđe or simply made ill as a warning, and then allowed to recover after making a payment through the sorcerer called to cure him. Otherwise, a public committee meeting may be convened by a healer who is having difficulties in curing a patient by the ordinary means at his disposal. This involves the patient's family in great expense to provide transport and refreshment for the committee members. At the meeting the patient's family and local sorcerer describe the history of the illness, the symptoms and the course of action followed so far, and attempt a reconstruction of events leading to the illness. The aim, however, is not to identify the sorcerer responsible, but to demonstrate the solidarity of the powerful men of the committee for the victim, and to resolve the problems which caused the attack (cf. Barker 1989:85). The merits of the case are discussed and the committee members are expected to combine their powers and threaten the sorcerer to relent or face the prospect of their joint retaliation.

Elijah's monopoly of sorcery powers within Kabuni conferred on him a judicial role. He acted as an arbiter of internal disputes and grievances. People who came to him for kđe would have to convince him of the worthiness of their cause. Although he was expected to work in concordance with other clan elders and consult the Kotôfu elders before making use of kđe, ultimately he could decide whether someone should die or simply be punished and warned with a bout of illness. If he considered the clients' request unjust, he could try to dissuade them, exact payment without carrying out the commission, or even punish them by contaminating them with kđe. According to Barker, a similar view of sorcery as a 'semi-legitimate sanction' expressed by the Maisin, is a rationalisation which
conceals a 'darker understanding of sorcery as a secret mode of conflict between those who on the surface must depend on each other for security' (1989:87).

Korafe, both sorcerers and non-practitioners, are aware of the implications of wielding such powers. Although laypeople fear sorcerers, resent their powers, and sometimes suspect them of using them to their own advantage, they also value the fact that they are elders in a hereditary position of responsibility. Since most members of a territorial group are linked by kinship ties, the working assumption is that the local sorcerer is not directly involved in sorcery against a group member, and he is usually the first person to whom a sick person appeals for a cure. Easily identifiable, at least by their colleagues, they can be held accountable and can therefore be assumed to be working with other clan elders for the good of the community.

The two-sided nature of their powers is also problematic for the practitioners themselves. Elijah, for example, attributed his own frequent illness and what he saw as premature ageing to long years of dealing with *kae* substances. His knowledge of the appropriate antidotes had saved his life, but repeated contamination with small doses of *kae* had cumulatively weakened and aged his body. He also thought that his healing powers had suffered for the same reason, and that his *fiyógha* was more effective when applied by an uncontaminated person than when he applied it himself. Elijah had two apprentices working for him and learning his trade. In an attempt to avoid the same thing happening to them, he told me that he intended to teach one 'son' only the *kae* side and another only the *fiyógha* side. Although he was aware that this would weaken their bargaining position with respect to other sorcerers, he thought it would ensure that the two cousins would be bound together by their complementary powers and roles and continue to live and cooperate as brothers after his death. Underlying these considerations of a 'practical' nature, however, I believe Elijah's decision to be an attempt to separate out the 'good' and 'evil' aspects of his clan's powers. This was a response to the pressure, felt by most contemporary Korafe and by magical practitioners in particular, to re-evaluate the morality of their practices.

**DISCUSSION**

By putting together the elements of different clans' magical traditions it is possible to abstract some general features of Korafe magical beliefs and practices. Two which are significant for this thesis are the attribution of magical powers to the intervention of specific ancestral spirits, and the fundamental role of ancestral relics in determining the efficacy of a magical act. *Koána* are the most effective way of summoning ancestral powers, and their possession is a symbolic affirmation of the holder's claims to be in control of his clan's knowledge and powers. Their transmission is ideologically linked to the inheritance of patrimony by the eldest
brother in a sibling group. This gives rise to a hierarchically-ordered division of magical labour, or clan specialisation, that articulates with the system of material and social reproduction. Within this system there is room for some processual instability which results in overlapping claims and super-specialisation.

This instability is accounted for, in part, by reference to sibling rivalry, resulting in competition for magical rights. Another current explanation for the instability of the system is the ambiguity in which magic is held, and young people's apparent loss of interest in magical knowledge. If they value magic for the control it gives them over aspects of their health, wealth, and well-being, contemporary Korafe also consider it emblematic of their 'primitiveness', and as an evil and un-Christian influence on their lives. This ambivalence, attributed by Korafe to their changed life and world-views, affects the processes of transmission of magic from one elder to the next, and is thought to be the cause for much of the loss of powers by some clans. In the next chapter I shall look more closely at the contradictory views and ambivalent attitudes of Korafe villagers in relation to magic and Christianity, tracing them to Korafe experiences of and reactions to different kinds of Western influences in the years since their first encounter.

2 Clans belonging to other territorial groups have powers over different aspects of nature, or different techniques for dealing with the same kinds of phenomena.

3 A similar observation had already been made about Orokaiva magic in 1928 (Williams 1928:170).

4 In fact any magical substance, in the hands of an irresponsible or unknowledgeable person, is dangerous and may result in death. Thus even beneficial magical preparations (fiyógha) may be referred to as kde if the speaker wishes to emphasise the dangers involved.

5 The Orokaiva use the word sivo, for any medicine with a power for good (Williams 1930:296).

6 According to Williams the word asisi was originally used in the Taro cult for spirit in its 'image' manifestations, and was disseminated in a wide geographical area by the spread of cult activities, although its meaning did not remain constant (1930:261-2).

7 There are a number of fairly well known and simple rules of thumb for interpreting dreams. Dreaming of making love to a woman foretells a lucky catch in hunting or fishing, dreaming of eating a pig foretells a death, and so on.

8 Those types of magic which are owned by individuals are usually of minor significance or short-lived. Sometimes they represent minor versions of an otherwise defunct tradition, or recently acquired techniques which have not yet assumed the aura of 'ancestral' or 'traditional'.

9 The relationship between claims to magical powers and the 'political economy of knowledge' is discussed in greater detail in the two final chapters of the thesis.

10 In the Taro cult the 'master's' lime pot and spatula were passed around to transmit to newcomers the faculty of becoming possessed by the taro spirit (Williams 1928:31).

11 Korafe believe it to be a fundamental social duty to make use of specialised knowledge acquired to benefit one's group members. In chapter 1, I discussed how these expectations affected the relations between village residents and their urban brothers.

12 This contrasts with Kalauna, where one clan bases its claim to leadership on the fact that it has retained control over most major forms of magic. (Young 1983a:50-3).

13 Cf. Young (1983a:48) for a similar conception of clan differentiation in terms of their ownership of myths and magic.

14 The Kandoro lineage which is associated with the Kabuni territorial group is numerically small. Although senior in the ranking of lineages within the clan, its representatives were brought up by their widowed mother in her brother's village, apart from the rest of their clan. Whatever magic their father might have possessed is not known by them. Conversation with their classificatory father Lucian Io, elder of a Kandoro lineage based in a distant territory, confirms their view that the Kandoro ancestors were fearsome warriors, and leads me to believe that they might have been in possession of war magic. It is due to their lack of a currently recognised magical power, I believe, that the Kandoro clan members of Goodenough village stress their quasi-Kot6jit status.

15 Some clan myths link the sorcery and healing powers of the Arere ancestors to a gigantic snake from the mountains. This suggests a link with the Baigona cult which was reported in the Tufi area at the beginning of the century. This possibility will be discussed in the next chapter.

16 This, on the one hand, is an indication of Arere clansmen's weakening hold on their traditional prerogative over weather magic and, on the other, a mechanism to insure the group against the total loss of magical control over the weather.

17 A simbóra is a verbal appeal to ancestral spirits for help. It is used in conjunction with magical
practices and substances but is not formulaic. Williams described Orokaiva magicians as making use of spontaneous utterances, or simply voicing the wished-for effect (1928:181).

18 Arere is not the only Korafe clan to have powers over the weather. It is generally thought that the ancestors associated with the two clans’ magical powers came from geographically distinct places. It is thus possible to identify the magician responsible for a change in the weather from the direction from which it has originated.

19 In Dobu the word Kaniana also refers to rain caused by certain magical events (cf. Fortune 1932:108,131).

20 Different expressions are used to describe the act of singing these songs, depending on the context of the performance. As dance it is referred to as ydrû dîvîdrî (as is always the case for dance songs). The act of singing the same song as part of a magical act is referred to as yêrî gayârî.

21 Simbôra conform better to Evans-Pritchard’s description of the informal, changeable, and public spells of Zande magic than to the highly formalised and secret spells of Trobriand magic which he took as exemplary of Melanesian magic (1929:624).

22 The trunk of the same tree is used to manufacture dance drums.

23 The suffix -ko is added to names of people or places to express longing or endearment for the subject.

24 In describing the effect that destroying the ancestral relics would have, Soma and his sons likened it to an atomic bomb.

25 It is likely that each lineage’s collection of ancestral relics is enriched by the addition of new objects or remains every time an elder dies; see chapter 2.

26 As well as requests that they destroy their relics, according to Soma, his clansmen have also had to contend with requests by a member of the army that their powers be taught to the P.N.G. army as a secret weapon.

27 Similarly, followers of the Taro cult believed that to argue with a Taro man was sufficient to provoke the spirits into causing a downpour of rain (Williams 1928:63).

28 Joseph died towards the end of my fieldwork. His death and the effects it had on other clan elders and his sons are central to chapter 6. The consequences for the balance of powers within the territorial group and for the shape which magic belief and practices will take had only began to be felt by the time I left. Therefore I feel that I cannot adequately speak of garden magic in an abstract, timeless way.

29 The English word ‘primitive’ has been adopted by Korafe speakers as an insult.

30 Manumanua magic in Kalauna involves the turning of stones; the act of turning, according to Young, is a symbolic means of converting stasis into mobility or the reverse (1983:186).

31 Jôka is a decorative and aromatic herb used by dancers as an adornment; because of its strong perfume it is also used in love magic.

32 Although not as elaborated as in Kalauna, the themes of hunger suppression and staying at home are reminiscent of Manumanua magic (cf. Young 1971:174-7 and 1983: 58-9).

33 Sirus’ insistence that his magic could not destroy crops may have been related to the time of my interview with him. It was shortly after the drought and Joseph’s death, a time when it would have been very unwise for him to admit the possibility of his involvement.

34 With reference to the discussion in chapter 1 about antagonism and jealousy between brothers in competition for control of resources resulting in the segmentation of lineages, it is interesting to note that while two quite distinct lineages (one with powers of garden magic, one with powers of sorcery) lived together in the village of Lelioa, those lineages sharing knowledge of the same kind had long ago separated to settle in different villages.

35 A similar situation was described by Barker in a paper on Maisin attitudes to sorcery and Western medicine (1989).
The food taboos which he observed were common to all magic specialists of the Javosa clan.

According to Williams, Orokaiva sorcerers cannot heal illness caused by the sorcery of others, but they can try to persuade the responsible sorcerer to relent (1930:306).

Such beliefs are common among other Melanesian peoples; see for example Barker 1989:72.

To induce those sorcerers who live in more distant parts of the territory to attend, the patient's family may hire a dinghy and buy a tankful of fuel to fetch them from their village and take them back after the meeting.

Sorcerers are not the only source of healing for contemporary Korafe. Like the Maisin, Korafe resort to a number of alternative sources of help. They willingly exploit the Western medical resources available to them for certain aspects of curing, and attempt alternative indigenous solutions (cf. Barker 1989:69,73,77,86-7). An important indigenous alternative to healing by sorcerers is a form of spirit healing, sévaseva. Since the powers of spirit healing are not linked to clans but are considered the gift of individuals, I will discuss sévaseva in the next chapter.

One of the men was Elijah's sister's son who, following his father's death, had lived most of his life in his uncles' village. The other apprentice was one of Elijah's own sons, his eldest son was not available as he was established in a town.
CHAPTER 5

KNOWLEDGE AND EMPOWERMENT

INTRODUCTION

Since their incorporation into a wider and Western-dominated world, Korafe beliefs have changed, diversified and multiplied. It is difficult, however, to explicate these processes when the unit of description is a collectivity such as 'the Korafe'. A group's beliefs cannot be considered to be uniform and consistent. Not only do individual opinions differ, but each person's commitment to a particular belief or idea may vary in time depending on factors such as doubt, fear and interests; and as his or her experience and social position change. Lewis argues that the assumption that a disposition to believe is 'either all or none', and that people are absolute and consistent in the beliefs they hold, introduce in anthropological theories a dilemma which does not exist (1986:431).

Korafe are well aware that their own knowledge, beliefs, and practices have been radically transformed by the acquisition and construction of 'new' knowledge since colonisation. This transformation does not imply that they have 'swapped' one cosmology for another, or that they have been passive 'recipients' of change. The processes of transformation are more complex, and depend on personal and collective experiences of Western knowledge. Contemporary Korafe express a great diversity of beliefs which, unlike other parts of Melanesia, cannot be accounted for by a dichotomous opposition of 'Christians' and 'traditionalists' in the community. Virtually all Korafe identify themselves very strongly with the Anglican church. Associated with their commitment to Christianity is a negative view of magic as evil. Nonetheless, as I described in chapter four, these powers continue to play an important role in everybody's lives; some of the magical specialists who I described also play prominent roles in the local church leadership.
People can hold 'traditional' beliefs despite their commitment to Christianity and other forms of 'Western' knowledge without succumbing to a permanent state of cognitive dissonance, because the contradictions at issue are not to be found in the cognitive realm. Belief in an omnipotent God of creation is not per se incompatible with the existence of ancestral spirits and their powers. Korafe now sometimes say that although their clan myths trace the origin of their magical powers to their ancestors, God (creator of the world and everything else) must have been responsible for creating magical powers and distributing them among the ancestors.

The issue of contention concerns the morality of magic. It is the interaction with spirits necessary to tap into the ancestors' powers which is morally reprehensible to the Christian ideology promoted by missionaries. Yet these powers are thought by Korafe to be necessary to ensure their clan's and territorial group's well-being, and for these powers they rely on relations with their ancestral spirits. Thus Elijah, the Javosa sorcerer, told me of his feeling of alienation when, in conversation with a missionary, he was told that he had to choose between 'Power or Paradise'.

Most Korafe say that they, unlike their ancestors, are 'good Christians' and no longer agree with or practice magic. Its continued influence on their lives is explained by the presence of others in the community who, motivated by greed or jealousy, continue to make use of it. This forces them to resort to the ritual services of friendly magicians to avert the magical influences of their enemies. In this view, Korafe can individually give up the practice of magic while continuing to believe in its powers. This glib solution, however, is not available to those like Elijah who are held responsible for preserving, controlling, and using the ancestral knowledge and powers of their groups. It is this moral duty to use powers to which they have exclusive access for the benefit of their own community which conflicts with the Christian view of the immorality of magic.

Having acquired 'new' knowledge, people then reflect on 'traditional' knowledge in terms of values which are derivative of Western colonial attitudes. Contemporary Korafe see the differences between themselves and their ancestors to be largely a consequence of the knowledge acquired through contact with Westerners. Robert Ikirima, a village councillor, often expressed these views in his speeches to the community:

Before the Government and the Missions came, our ancestors didn't know [money, prayers, guns, Western medicine, writing, the bible, business, et cetera]; now we know.

This transformation, however, is perceived as incomplete. If contemporary Korafe define themselves as more knowledgeable than their ancestors, they also consider themselves unfavourably in comparison to Westerners:

We are civilized but we are still primitive. We know [money, bible stories, et cetera] but we don't know.
Thus, speaking the language of the 'new' knowledge, Robert alluded to a common sentiment that traditional knowledge belongs to pre-colonial cosmology.

It is not only sinful to summon ancestral spirits, it is 'primitive' to believe in them. Their failure to rid themselves of such forms of knowledge is taken by the likes of Robert to be both an indication and a cause of their shortcomings in contexts which they associate with Western knowledge (like politics and business). Alternatively, lack of success in such enterprises are explained by saying that these things 'belong' to Westerners, not to Korafe. This, for them, explains the fact that despite their participation in the cash economy, in the Provincial and National governments, and the high levels of education attained by many Korafe, Tufi itself has remained an economic backwater; village life revolves around 'traditional' endeavours, and villagers rely almost entirely on remittances for cash.

A similar rationalisation is often used by Korafe for what they perceive to be their shortcomings in other spheres associated with Western influences. Korafe today consider themselves Christians. They participate in the activities of the Anglican Church and its subsidiary organisations like the Mothers' Union and the Youth fellowship. They acquire prestige by gaining positions in the hierarchy of these organisations. Through attendance at the Sunday service, Bible reading, and religious instruction, Korafe acquire Christian knowledge. However, they do not feel empowered by this knowledge in the same way as they are by their ancestral knowledge. Some of the most attractive aspects of Western life, which they believe to result from Western knowledge, seem unattainable. This situation is rationalised by saying that while kotófu knowledge belongs to them, Christian knowledge belongs to Westerners, to Queen Elizabeth as the head of the Anglican Church, and the Pope as the head of the Catholic church from which the Anglican church derived. Like knowledge belonging to different groups, Christian knowledge is not fully empowering for the Korafe.

In this chapter I argue that the seemingly ambiguous attitudes to the relationship of magic and Christianity result from Korafe ideas concerning the nature of knowledge and its empowering properties. On the one hand, the newly acquired knowledge is perceived to be desirable but brings with it a negative evaluation of traditional beliefs and practices. On the other hand, this new knowledge is perceived as belonging to Westerners (hence its failure to empower fully those Korafe who acquire it) while the traditional knowledge which they are expected to renounce is still essential to aspects of survival and to success in realms of contemporary village life which are continuous with the past. I will begin this chapter with a discussion of Korafe ideas about the sources of knowledge, its relationship with power, and their social control.
OWNERSHIP, POSSESSION, AND USE OF KNOWLEDGE

Schwimmer (1967) commented on the relationship of knowledge and power among the Orokaiva. For him knowledge is inextricably linked to leadership. Each leader is strictly confined, in his leadership role, to his specific field of knowledge - hence the absence of permanent leaders in Orokaiva society.

The key criterion for Orokaiva leadership is not so much the possession of greater resources as the possession of knowledge whether magical or empirical (the distinction is not made). The person who leads any activity must be a kiari embo - a man of knowledge (1967:54).

Lindstrom (1984) elaborated this line of argument. In some Melanesian societies, he noted, knowledge itself, rather than material wealth, is the resource on which political power is based. In such societies 'knowledge control both determines and reflects power' (ibid.:305). Political contests focus on the control, production, transmission and legitimation of knowledge (ibid.:293).

The 'political economy of knowledge' (Keesing 1982, 1987, forthcoming:1, 23) takes different forms in different societies in which knowledge plays a major role in structuring political and social relations. Whereas in Tanna, where knowledge production is open, aspiring leaders compete to promote the consumption of their particular 'brand' of knowledge (Lindstrom 1984:300, 302), the Manambu, whose cosmology is 'timeless and unalterable' argue about the relationship of knowledge with specific social groups (Harrison 1989:7).

Almost the whole of Avatip politics revolves around conflicts over the ownership of totemic ancestors, their names and the ritual powers associated with them (ibid.:8).

By publicly demonstrating in a 'knowledge contest' that they know more versions of the disputed ancestral names than their rivals, elders secure for their own descent groups the recognition that they are in possession of the genuine ancestral names, and hence the magic.

Similarly in Korafe conceptions, knowledge is intimately bound up with issues concerning its ownership, possession, use and control. Socially valuable knowledge is not public, it is a source of power which is not equally available to everybody. Such knowledge is believed to be owned by lineages and clans, and controlled by their elders. Clan specialisation, described in chapter four, is an important aspect of the 'political economy of knowledge'. For contemporary Korafe, however, knowledge is not a closed set, nor is its relation with a specific group eternal and unchanging. They boast of knowledge acquired from ancestral spirits or from related groups; and they lament ancestral knowledge which has been forgotten or foregone.

One dimension of knowledge control is the process by which empowering knowledge is acquired by individuals and becomes socially valuable knowledge.
Elders’ accounts of their clan’s acquisition of magic begin with some experience involving communication with spiritual beings who made a gift to an ancestor. This is followed by a period in which the ancestor who received the gift experimented with it, obtaining amazing results in a particular field of activity. His knowledge, coupled with a responsible use of its powers, contributed to the ancestor's reputation until he acquired 'elder' status. He taught his sons and, after his death, his eldest son through his father’s relics, continued to tap into his powers which then became his descendants' kotofu.

The sorts of spiritual experiences reported in clan mythology are not confined to ancestral days. As Stephen put it, Melanesians have a continuing dialogue with the ancestors, not a fixed, static body of tradition. It is thus not what the ancestors said that binds men, but what they say (1979:14).

Dreams of, or possession by, the spirit of a deceased kinsperson are means of acquiring new knowledge, usually related to something for which the deceased was renowned in his or her lifetime. Such experiences are frequently thought to be the source of the healing powers of individuals who do not belong to the traditional sorcery clans.

As Herdt and Stephen pointed out,

social expressions of dreams, trance, and possession states, along with other subtle varieties of imaginative experience, play an important, perhaps decisive, role in Melanesian religion. These provide not only validation of new constructs and knowledge but the actual source of cultural innovation (Herdt and Stephen 1989:10).

However, not all such experiences add to the stock of magical knowledge. Korafe do not consider communication with spirits to be the prerogative of specialists. Anyone, including women and children, may have a dream or experience possession. The resulting knowledge, however, is often repressed or denied, as the recipients are afraid of provoking the anger of elders. In a society where knowledge is a political resource, the sudden introduction of new knowledge can be destabilising; if knowledge is widely available, some control is exercised over its legitimation (cf. Lindstrom 1984:304-5).

The acknowledgement that an individual’s dream or possession experience has resulted in the acquisition of powerful and empowering knowledge is a political process. As Keesing (forthcoming) reminds us, to characterise religious and secular power as belonging to separate realms hampers our understanding of the Melanesian view in which the two realms are inextricable. Success in one realm is equivalent to success in the other, and the two are interdependent. Keesing uses the notion of structural filters to explain how in Kwaio society, where access to knowledge is remarkably open, only a few actually attain it. The same is true of Korafe. What, in retrospect, people refer to as a period in which their new knowledge was tested, on closer analysis appears to be the time in which the owner
acquired social prestige, which was then taken as a proof of the efficacy of his magic powers.

Keesing also points to what he defines as 'The paradox of knowing what one does not know'. He suggests a distinction should be made between knowing as a cognitive process versus social and political knowing (Keesing forthcoming:21).

To "know" in the social sense is not only to "know" in the cognitive sense, but to have the right to know — and that is a matter of politics and negotiation as well as cultural principles (ibid.:22).

Since knowledge and power are ideologically linked to clan elder status, it is more likely that men in such position will publicise any such experience, and that their claims to own magical powers will be accepted as legitimate. By contrast, it is dangerous for a person of junior status to claim such knowledge. Any such claim would represent a threat to the existing distribution of powers between and within clans, and could result in a sorcery attack. Thus structural filters ensure that, although knowledge might come to anyone, ordinarily only those who are already in a position of power and prestige are able to make use of newly acquired knowledge, as they control 'the means to deploy it effectively to gain power and influence' (ibid.:19). 5

These structural filters operate at two levels. Firstly, much magical knowledge is considered clan or lineage patrimony. This results in the distribution of powers among groups that deeply affects relations between them. In this context, the notion of ownership implies the right to make use of the powers inherent in the knowledge. To make illegitimate use of another clan's kotófu is to invite sorcery upon oneself, as the owners defend their exclusive rights. The sanctions against using kotófu belonging to others serve to protect the property of individual clans or lineages, and thus maintain the distribution of powers between them, as it is upon the distribution of powers between descent groups that political relations between them are constructed and maintained.

The second level at which 'structural filters' operate to control knowledge is within the owning group itself. Everyone within each clan is associated with its kotófu, including esoteric knowledge. Only one elder, however, is in control of each clan's kotófu knowledge. He alone is in possession of the kodna and is thus recognised to be empowered by the group's knowledge. As Keesing points out, this mechanism acts as an insurance against the loss of esoteric knowledge in cases of the elder's unexpected death or lack of descendants. It is also responsible for discord within the owning group, when there are several contenders for the control of common knowledge. 6 Conflicts may arise over the rights of one or another person to control and use the powers associated with the clan's knowledge or, conversely, over who should be held responsible when such powers are thought to have been misused. As kodna are essential for tapping into the ancestral powers linked to the knowledge, their possession serves to legitimise individuals' claims to having inherited it. The processes of defining what constitutes empowering knowledge, and of establishing the veracity of knowledge claims, or the legitimacy
of the inheritance of the clan's koána, are all political processes which are shaped by the power relations between and within interested groups.

Schwimmer (1967) suggests a connection between the relationship between power and knowledge and the problems which modern Orokaiva leaders have in implementing government policies. The sources of information of traditional leaders were implicitly trusted, being the leader's own father and ancestors. The (European) government, on the contrary, could not be trusted to convey all the necessary information. Therefore, although the village councillor was trusted to repeat his information faithfully, this was not sufficient for it to be acted upon.7

When Korafe say that although they 'know' Christianity, money, and government, they do not 'own' this knowledge, they are expressing a related concern. It is as if they were saying that they have learned about Western culture, beliefs, and practices, but that they are not empowered by this knowledge. It remains essentially foreign. These statements also reflect Korafe perception of lack of status and political power in the wider social and political context they have become a part of since colonisation, which includes 'Westerners' as bringers of new knowledge and wielders of extraordinary powers. Such unequal relationship was implicit in the colonial nature of the contact situation and fostered by the evolutionist assumptions of the most deliberately active agents of change.8

THE KNOWLEDGE OF COLONISERS

The encompassment of Korafe society into a wider world as a result of colonisation has brought with it an awareness of different forms of 'knowledge'. At one level, colonial and post-colonial experiences have brought knowledge of things outside previous Korafe experience. On another level, this same knowledge has shaped Korafe perceptions of their own cultural heritage and its value. The construction of contemporary cultural identities in Melanesia is a dialectical process in which villagers' own perceptions of themselves is fashioned by a continuous confrontation with outsiders' definitions and constructions. Korafe have been keen to acquire Western knowledge, and have accepted the negative view of 'traditional' beliefs and practices which was implied in Western colonial ideology. This view notwithstanding, Korafe continue to hold beliefs continuous with those of their ancestors, and define themselves in terms of an opposition to Westerners. In the sections that follow I will trace some of the ways in which this process has contributed to shaping contemporary ideas and practices.

First impressions

The coast of Cape Nelson was sporadically visited by the 'Merrie England' after
Sir William MacGregor's first expedition along the north-eastern coast of British New Guinea in 1890. Albert Maclaren, who accompanied MacGregor on one expedition, described the tentative nature of his first meetings with natives. As the ship approached natives in canoes gardens or houses, they would abandon them and run to hide in the bush. To reassure them of their good intentions the visitors would leave gifts. Maclaren selected a site for a mission station on a harbour, which was named after him. He described the first direct contact with Korafe natives when he walked ashore at the selected spot. They exchanged gifts of goods and food (Synge 1908:101-2).

These encounters are remembered in Korafe stories. Elders laugh as they tell of their ancestors hiding in the bush when they saw the Mirigina (Merrie England) approaching. Descendants of the Gobe clan, though, say that one of their ancestors caught the rope thrown from the boat of the first European to come ashore (Maclaren?), and tied it to a tree on their land or, metaphorically, tied the boat to his own leg. Although he was unnamed in Maclaren's diary it is likely that the Gobe ancestor was the old man who gave Maclaren his necklace. Maclaren's decision to build a mission station at Cape Nelson and 'work' Collingwood bay from there with a whaleboat must have been reversed subsequently, for the first mission was built at Waningela, while a government post was set up at Tufi.

Since then, Korafe experiences of the Western world have been varied and multifaceted, as historical events shaped relations between colonisers and colonised. Korafe encountered different types of Europeans both on their own territory and in the plantations and towns where they lived and worked. Their purposes, and Korafe responses to them, were many and complex. For the sake of clarity I have divided the following account into three parts, roughly following a chronology of Western encroachment in the area. Each phase corresponds to the introduction of one kind of influence: colonial government, missionary, and development. Each of these resulted in changes in a particular field of ideology and practice, respectively: politics, religion, and economics. I am aware, however, that this three-way distinction is somewhat artificial: changes in each domain have consequences in all the others.

Government station at Tufi: incorporation by colonial authority

In 1900 Lieutenant Governor Le Hunte decided to establish a Government Station for the North-Eastern Division at Cape Nelson. He selected a site with the aid of Mr. Abbott, a missionary from the nearest mission, in Waningela (Le Hunte 1901: appendix D). A New Hebridean missionary based in Waningela, referred to in the reports as Nogar, intimidated the unwilling Korafe into building a provisional house for the Government officer (Wetherell 1977:107). Monckton was appointed Resident Magistrate and arrived on the first of June to take up his position with some Native Police. By then the natives of the Division had acquired a reputation for being wild and belligerent (Monckton 1920:1).
The Korafe's first reaction to Monckton's establishment in their midst was an attempt to eliminate his men by using their traditional knowledge. Following a procedure which is often referred to in the elders' accounts of tribal warfare, they attempted to incapacitate the constabulary for fighting, intending to attack their settlement. They sold Monckton's men betel nut with 'poisoned' lime. Despite the fact that most policemen were badly affected, Monckton's stockade, and the firing of gunshot, prevented a Korafe attack. In Le Hunte's words:

it is satisfactory to know that already they have begun to realise that there is a stronger power in that little handful of men under the solitary white officer in the native house with the blue ensign.

After the failure of the first attempt, kae was used to poison the station well. This time the poisoners succeeded in making most of Monckton's men very sick, and nearly killed two. However, a Korafe man named Seradi was found spying on the camp and captured. Under threat of hanging he confessed that an ex-prisoner of the Station gool had poisoned the well. He and the others were waiting for Monckton and his men to die so they could raid the station for their possessions. Monckton promised his prisoner two steel axes and a position as Village Constable for capturing and bringing in the man responsible for poisoning the water. Thus Seradi became one of the first Korafe village constables (Monckton 1920:26-8).

Not all Korafe opted for a strategy of resistance; others saw the advantages of collaboration. By becoming part of the government system as village constables or participating in patrols, they could hope to benefit indirectly from the Westerners' powers. One of the first Korafe to take up this opportunity was Giwi, who features prominently in Monckton's narrative (1920). He was the elder of the Bedada clan, described by Monckton as the chief of the tribe. He was the only chief to be present at the formal raising of the 'blue ensign'of the Government and the Queen's rule (Le Hunte 1901: appendix D). He and his men accompanied Monckton on various patrols in the district. He was given credit by the Governor for his role during a patrol to establish communication with the Okeina and for ensuring that the first encounter was peaceful. The Governor gave Giwi a red flag, which is still kept by the Bedada clan elders as an indication that their ancestor was the first Korafe to be involved with the colonial government (gavana).

The presence of the Constabulary in Korafe territory afforded them protection from their traditional enemies, particularly the Miniafia and the Okeina. These tribes came to be defined in the early government reports as particularly belligerent. Their raids on neighbouring tribes were blamed for the high incidence of warfare in the District. They were also thought to be responsible for various minor but worrying attacks on isolated Western traders and prospectors. Korafe men accompanied the punitive expeditions in Okeina, Miniafia and Doriri territories, thus making their association with the powerful gavana known to neighbouring tribes.

Once the Korafe had stopped trying to get rid of the Government, and had become part of its mechanisms of local control, they also found that they were able
to benefit indirectly from its force. Their involvement with this powerful entity enabled them to manipulate the situation to improve their standing among neighbouring groups. According to one Korafe story, a member of the Javosa clan (a young boy at the time) was responsible for Monckton's forcible pacification of the Okeina. The boy was visiting kin in an Okeina village and heard the men discussing plans to raid the Government post, steal the policemen's guns, and use them to kill all Korafe. That night he ran away from his relatives' village and reported what he had heard to a Korafe village constable who repeated the information to Monckton. As a result a patrol to the Okeina territory was organised. The police killed some Okeina, arrested one of their leaders, and thus put an end to their raiding.

Korafe, and gradually more and more men from neighbouring tribes, thus became persuaded of the advantages of associating with the government and entering its work force in some capacity. Within three months of Monckton's arrival, Korafe had become allies of his constabulary which relied heavily on them for food supplies (Monckton 1920:45). Even those Korafe whose first experience of the colonial government was imprisonment and hard labour learned of the advantages which collaboration with the powerful government would bring. Many of these men, at the end of their sentence, were sent back to their own villages as village constable or 'government chief'. In defence of this peculiar method for recruiting men for the government, Monckton described his strategy for extending the government's influence:

such men almost invariably proved the best servants of the Government, for they brought their already existing authority among their people to aid them in enforcing their newly conferred strange authority from Government. The result was, that a strange tribe of raw savages could frequently be brought into a state of law and order, without their perceiving the real change that was being effected (Monckton 1920:171).

Thus villagers, unable to dislodge the newcomers by means of ancestral powers, found it convenient to become involved in the new government mechanisms, but in doing so they became 'servants of the government' and introduced wide-ranging changes to their own societies. Korafe quickly learned that there were many aspects of their traditional life which were not compatible with their new situation. New rules were introduced regarding all aspects of villagers' life, requiring people to organise their time differently. Customary practices regarding refuse disposal and burial were forbidden, and each household had to build a latrine. Village constables were expected to enforce the new regulations concerning work days and the upkeep of paths, houses and plantations, and were expected to report to the Magistrate those who infringed the new rules. Throughout this period villagers also benefited from aspects of the *gavana*'s powers and gained access to some Western goods. They were able to make use of the government's power for settling disputes and discouraging enemy attacks. Those who were directly involved with the government station or who, like Giwi's son, went away on the 'Merrie England' to be trained, learned of even greater powers available to
Europeans.

However, the objectives of government officials during their first few years in Tufi, as transpires from the contents of their official reports, were not educational. Their first aim was to stop warfare and make the district safe for enterprising Europeans. In a second phase, they also facilitated the recruitment of workers from the district for plantations in other parts of the country, and imposed the planting of coconuts by each village to generate the cash income necessary for the payment of introduced taxation. Despite their statements to the effect that they were not intending to change native beliefs and customs, the implementation of such policies would inevitably disrupt Korafe practices and beliefs.

After the suppression of warfare, the customary practice which called for most direct action by the Resident Magistrate was sorcery. While professing disbelief in the mystical powers of sorcerers, European officers could not dismiss out of hand the possibility that they might use poison to kill their victims, or simply use their reputation to extort payment from people. The occasional punishment of reputed sorcerers by the government, convinced villagers that even the gavana believed in their powers. Monckton described the ambiguous position of the government in this respect (1920:32-44). He personally believed that there were two type of magicians: harmless magicians who only practised benevolent magic, and those who exploited their fellows' superstition and their knowledge of poisons to terrify and blackmail them. He would usually ignore those sorcerers he considered to belong to the first category, but the first time a village constable reported the existence of a village of 'evil' sorcerers, he ordered his men to arrest them and burn their village. In some instances, sorcerers were given the maximum sentence of six months' hard labour.

The prestige of sorcerers among the Kaili Kaili [Korafe] slumped from that day, and though sorcerers in other parts of the District continued to give trouble, those among the Kaili Kaili people spent most of their time either hiding in the bush, in gaol, or in explaining to a village constable and his posse that they were living virtuous and meritorious lives. (ibid.; 32).

It is ironic that contemporary Korafe sorcerers attribute to the policy of enforced pacification by government forces the proliferation of sorcery practice and techniques among their ancestors. The belief in an increase in sorcery activity corresponding to pacification is congruent with the spread of venereal disease, with the increase in morbidity it involved, which is also documented in the patrol reports of the time.

Monckton's policy of non-intervention in the case of magicians who he considered to be benevolent brought him into conflict with a missionary in Waningela who complained about a 'rainmaker' who practiced sorcery and blackmailed the villagers. In an official report Monckton stated his opinion that 'The mission objected to these practices possibly I think from a little professional jealousy' (1903).
This statement reflects Monckton's dislike of missionaries rather than general differences between Government and Mission priorities. Nevertheless, the incident it refers to is revealing of the deeper commitment to cosmological reforms by missionaries, and their inclusion of all types of magic in the definition of 'evil' sorcery.

**Sefoa Mission: inclusion in the 'Christian brotherhood'**

The missionaries' objective was specifically to bring Christian knowledge to natives. However, it was not until the 1930's that missionaries from Wanigela and Naniu missions extended their influence by patrols into Korafe territory. One missionary stationed at Naniu Island mission between 1927 and 1937, Nellie Hutton, was renowned for organising dance feasts involving dancers from different tribes (Wetherell 1977:92). It is likely that some Korafe came into contact with mission ideas through participation in the dance feasts. In the early 1930's four boys from Kabuni and Sefoa territories were instructed and christened at Naniu mission (Farr 1973:45).

In the years preceding the establishment of the new school, a wave of cults had swept the Orokaiva territories to the north (Taro cult) and the Collingwood Bay areas (*Oroda, Asisi*, and *Baigona* cults). Wetherell (1977:183-99) contrasts these cults with the cargo cults of Milne Bay, as they did not seem to be concerned with the appropriation of Western goods so much as with the re-assertion of elders' authority over the young and that of ancestors over the living. He characterises them as 'reactionary movements', or attempts by the elders to regain some traditional authority eroded by colonial rule. These cults did not adopt Christian symbolism and rejected Christian rationale and ritual. Barker (1987:80) also argues, following Waiko, that although the *Baigona* cult was not explicitly anti-European, it can be interpreted as a traditionally constructed political response to external challenges. Not surprisingly, missionaries were opposed to the spread of these cults. They focussed their criticism on the shaking fits and 'mad' behaviour indulged in by the cult followers. The government concurred with missionaries in their condemnation of the cults as socially disruptive. To what extent the cults were innovations and to what extent they were revivalist phenomena cannot be determined. Nor can the extent of their influence among Korafe. However, some features of the cults are similar to aspects of ancestral knowledge and practices as described by contemporary members of some clans.

Grace Hilda, one of the oldest Korafe alive, often referred to the Arere ancestors' close relations with a large snake which used to live near her village of Karikari and pass through it on its way to the sea. Despite its monstrous size, Arere ancestors were not afraid of it. They referred to it as *abuā* (grandfather) and spoke to it, so that it would not harm them. Arere clan members today continue to associate snakes with their ancestors, and will not harm them. If a snake is sighted in the village, they do not chase it away. They simply talk to it, telling it to return
to its own home in the bush; this is considered to be one of the Arere clan's *evóvo* (custom).

The references to this mythical snake points to the possibility that Arere ancestors may have been involved with the *Baigona* cult which originated when a snake, living on Mount *Keroro*, taught a man a number of rules of conduct and some powerful medicines. There are further similarities between the Arere powers and those attributed to *Baigona* men: both were concerned with healing as well as with the control of weather.\(^6\) However, when I inquired about the meaning of the word *Baigona*, none of the elders recognised it, they said it was not a Korafe word. Only after I described to Elkin Kegana what was reported in the literature about the *Baigona* cult, did he allude to healing rituals called *Seváseva*. He said that originally *Seváseva* healers used to appeal to spirits called *Baigona* who provoked trembling fits.\(^7\) Since Williams (1928:8) reported that the cult had been repressed by the government, it is not surprising that present-day Korafe would know little about it and be unwilling to divulge even what little they did know.

By the time the mission was established in Korafe territory, then, villagers had already experienced Western encroachment upon their lifestyle, and were aware of Westerner’s possession of previously unimaginable powers. Among these were the powerful medicines dispensed at mission infirmaries. Korafe welcomed the medical services provided by the new mission at Sefoa. In 1936 the hospital treated six in-patients and 16,407 outpatients (Australian Board of Missions 1937a:122). Missionaries were primarily concerned with religious indoctrination and education, and quickly established a school. Experience had taught Anglican missionaries that old people were hardest to convert, so they concentrated their efforts on the young, following the methods developed by Samuel Tomlinson at Wedau Mission:

> To him teaching in the school and introducing the gospel were the same process, the schoolboys hearing with delight the bible stories and being led on unconsciously into Christian doctrine (Wetherell 1977:164).

Korafe 'heathens' were willing learners, and the few who had received Christian instruction at Waningela and Naniu had already convinced others of its benefits. A.H. Lambton, the first priest at Sefoa wrote:

> When I commenced instructions for baptism crowds arrived. After repeated warnings of the difficulties they would meet and sacrifices they would be called upon to make, one by one they began to drop out until now there are about fifty left in the class (1934:90).

They were equally enthusiastic about attending the school; 121 pupils enrolled in its first year of operation (1934). Of those some were considered too old for ordinary school work and were formed into a hearer's class for religious instruction (Australian Board of Missions 1935:33).

With the Bible stories, which reinforced Korafe assumptions that fabulous powers were linked to Christian knowledge,\(^8\) Korafe scholars also learned a fundamental difference between their own and Western views on knowledge and
power. Unlike clan elders, missionaries did not claim exclusive rights to their knowledge. On the contrary, they professed their main purpose to be the dissemination of Christian knowledge among Papuans. They claimed that God was the creator of the world and mankind - everybody's 'father'. His son came to earth for the redemption of all humankind. Korafe were thus included in the Christian scheme of things; they too were descendants of God. Through baptism, converts became part of his family. For Korafe, this inclusion opened prospects of access to the powers which they considered Westerners' property.

The mission's attitude to traditional society encouraged this incorporation of native beliefs into the Christian scheme. Langmore (1982:116-7) argues that Anglican missionaries were more restrained than other missionaries in condemning traditional customs, wishing to integrate Christianity with village life rather than restricting it to a Western context. Bishop Strong expressed the view that Christianity does not come to condemn his native customs or to make him adopt the white men's ways. It encourages him to continue, as far as modern civilisation will allow him, to be still a Papuan, but to be with it also a Christian, believing in and following One Who is just as much the Saviour of the Papuan as of the European, and Who, because He is the universal Saviour, is Himself a Papuan just as much as He is an Australian or an Englishman (1939:82, emphasis in the original).

Thus, Anglican missionaries adopted a tolerant attitude to those customs which were not seen to flout Christian morality, as did cannibalism and sorcery (Langmore 1982:117). Dancing, for example, was permitted and even promoted by the mission. However, the decision as to what was or was not compatible with Christian morality, was unilateral, and by 1929 the category of condemned customs had come to include mortuary rituals (ibid). Polygamy was also forbidden for converts. As a result two widows who had been co-wives told me that they had been refused baptism until after their husband had died.

The expectation that with mission knowledge would come extraordinary powers was also encouraged by the prospect of paradise for those who followed the commandments. Paradise was, initially, a confusing concept for some Korafe. One of the two widows referred to above told me laughingly that she used to think that paradise was a country from which the European missionaries came. After her husband died, she had decided that she did not want to be christened if it meant that she would go to paradise where she was sure her un-baptised husband would not be. Elderly Korafe also tell of their marvelling the first time they travelled to Port Moresby, or entered a modern Supermarket: that was how they imagined heaven to be.19 Despite the conceptual difficulties with paradise, life after death was desirable, and the proposed link between morality and its attainment was a familiar and appealing part of Christianity (cf. Wetherell 1977:181). This aspect of Christian teaching found resonance with the Korafe idea that a 'good' person (i.e. one who makes no enemies and refrains from provoking jealousy in others) need not die, since no one would want to make sorcery against him or her.
The decision by Bubu clan elders to place one of their kotófu (a decorative motif which was traditionally used in the clan's oro platform) in the church serving clans on Kabuni is an instance of the accommodation process. According to the clan's elders God gave these kotófu to their ancestors. Since oro ceremonial platforms are no longer built it is right that the kotófu should be placed in 'God's house' instead. Missionaries, however, objected to other practices associated with ancestral beliefs, particularly those which they saw as involving the living in communication with the spirits of the dead, i.e. magic. This distinction is an invalid one for Korafe since the presence of clan ancestral spirits is implicit in all kotófu. As a result the compatibility of kotófu with the church is an ambiguous issue. While it was considered acceptable to place the decorative motifs of the oro platform in the church, other kotófu are considered out of place in a church. For example, although missions encourage and even sponsor dance feasts during which dancers wear kotófu decorations, when the same dancers enter the church to sing hymns, they remove from their attire those decorative elements regarded as kotófu. In God's house, honour is paid to Him. There is no place for the ancestral spirits embodied in the dancers' kotófu.

On the conceptual level, traditional beliefs in clan ancestors as the originators of customs and characteristics which differentiate one clan from another, were not contradictory to Christian beliefs. They were easily encompassed by the 'new' framework based on the belief in God's creation of the world: God created all men and distributed the different characteristics among them. He gave Korafe ancestors those things which they passed on to their descendants. The condition for gaining access to Paradise, though, was to renounce those practices condemned by the missionaries as sinful, and it is at this level that Korafe and Western ideologies diverged.

Unlike that of the colonial administrators, the missionaries' attitude to magic itself was uncompromising: they made no distinction between 'harmless' magic and 'evil' sorcery. All such practices were regarded negatively as 'expressions of false beliefs' and a major obstacle to Christianisation. At the same time, they realised that belief in sorcery would be very hard to eradicate, so they concentrated on deterring converts from practising it. 'All we can claim is that all those who accept Christianity will give up customs that in their meaning are inconsistent with the Christian teaching' (Newton 1935:6).

This was problematic for converts, as giving up magical practices unilaterally would leave them disadvantaged and defenceless in the face of others who did not renounce their magic. To this dilemma the missionaries could only respond by 'training our people to have such faith in the love and power of their Heavenly Father that they will meet such things with courage and faith, in sure and certain confidence' (Newton 1934:22).

Belief in magical powers was assumed by missionaries to be superstitious and false. It was assumed that if Papuan Christians were made at least to refrain from practising sorcery, long-term association with Christian values and Western
knowledge would show those beliefs to be false.

We cannot shut our eyes to the fact that belief in sorcery is the greatest hindrance to belief in Christianity among the older Christians. We must expect that such old beliefs will die hard; it still seems to have a hold on those we consider highly civilised. We must do all that is possible to instil into the minds of our people the teaching of the truth and awaken a real sense of trust in the loving purpose of God for men. It is the truth that will make them free (Newton 1935:6).

That knowledge of 'the truth' was not so manifestly inconsistent with traditional beliefs can be seen by the fact that the powers of magic were alive and well in the 1980's, fifty years later. As Barker (1990b:146) suggests, the missionaries' assumption that sorcery was nothing more than a mistaken belief which could be disproved or replaced through education, and their failure to recognise sorcery reality for Melanesians, hindered their efforts to combat it. The objections of contemporary Korafe Christians to magic are not its falsity, but its morality. As Weber observed of the displacement of magic by Christianity in a Western context:

it has not been possible even down to today to overcome it entirely, but it was reduced to the character of something unholy, something diabolic (1981:363).

It is wrong for Christians to be involved with the practice of magic, but this does not imply that they no longer believe in its efficacy. Schieffelin showed in the Kaluli case that conversion results merely in the by-passing of the relationship between the living and their spirit world, not its invalidation (1977:177).

Even the question of morality of magic is not unequivocal. Barker (1990b:147) suggests that the missionaries' sin-centred conception of evil led them to see sorcery as an indication of a more fundamental moral corruption. Young (1971:115) contrasts Western views of morality, dependent upon notions of 'sin' and 'crime', to Melanesian conceptions based on 'delicts', or offences against another person's rights in terms of custom. Thus, in Kalauna it is not what is done which is most at stake, he argues, but to whom.

These contradictions beset Korafe attempts to reconcile their views on the value of magic with their efforts to comply with Christian morality. In their view, magic can be used for good as well as bad purposes, and it is each act which should be judged according to its context: even sorcery has its legitimate applications. While agreeing that magical powers can be misapplied, and should therefore be considered evil, Korafe value their beneficial aspects. There are instances in which magic is regarded as necessary. In these instances it is a moral duty for the person in possession of such powers to use them. It is one thing to acquire new knowledge, but it is quite another to renounce knowledge which is deeply embedded in a society's cultural constitution, cosmology, and conception of itself. The knowledge and powers of magic could not simply be given up. The
alternatives offered by Christianity do not always seem to achieve the ends which they believe can be achieved by magic.\(^1\)

Some Korafe, while considering themselves Christians, reject the missionaries' unequivocal moral condemnation of magic. While they agree that it is incompatible with Christianity to make use of the destructive side of their powers, they dissent from the view that as Christians they should renounce all their powers. Thus some practitioners argue that they must exercise their clan's powers for the ultimate good of the community. They justify their belief, knowledge, and practice of magic by trying to make them acceptable in terms of Christian morality. Elijah's strategy of teaching the sorcery and healing aspects of his trade to two different descendants, for example, can be seen as an attempt to conform to his understanding of Christian morality by separating the good side of his powers from the evil.\(^2\)

Another example of the ways in which people with powers deriving from spirits attempt to reconcile such experiences with their commitment to Christianity is that of contemporary spirit healers who claim to have received their knowledge and powers from God, outside the schema of clan kotufu. They attempt to frame their powers in a Christian context, implying that this ensures that they only have access to powers to do magic for good purposes. The techniques used by these healers are derived from sevaseva healing ceremonies which were said to be common three generations ago. Barker (1989:72) describes similar healing practices among contemporary Maisin as 'offshoots of the Baigona and Taro cults'.

In their heyday sevaseva ceremonies were public affairs. They were led by a small number of knowledgeable men gifted with the faculty of seeing and hearing spirits who could identify and drive out the evil spirits thought to cause illness. The patient was laid on a mat in the centre of the village while everyone else sat in a circle around him. The sevaseva men made offerings of betelnut and tobacco to their ancestors then began singing the sevaseva song, beating the rhythm with their limesticks on the limepots. The audience picked up each verse from the elders and sang it after them. The sound of dancing and singing, and the opening verses promising betelnut and tobacco, attracted the spirits. The sevaseva men become aware that the spirits had joined them as they paced around the patient. They made stroking movements with their limesticks over the patient's body, directing their spirits to identify and extract the evil spirits. Periodically they would face outwards and spit loudly and dramatically, expelling streams of red betelnut juice with the evil spirit which they had drawn into their mouths from the patient.

As the dance progressed the specialists became possessed by the spirits they had summoned and could then see the spirits invading the patient's body. They were able to recognise them and thus trace the people responsible for sending them. However, evil spirits were very cunning. They would enter a victim's body and invite other spirits, like snakes and crocodiles, to join them in their feast. When the ceremony started, the evil human spirit would leave the victim's body and hide to avoid detection. After the sevaseva had finished extracting the snakes
and crocodiles, the human spirit could enter the body again, causing the patient to become sick again. If the seváseva men had managed to extract all the spirits from the patient's body, then the medicines administered by the fiyógha embo (curing sorcerer) would effectively restore the patient's health; otherwise they would be useless.

During the time I was doing fieldwork (1987-8) seváseva in its traditional form was never performed to heal a patient, and such public and communal interaction with the spirits of the dead was no longer considered a normal practice. It was regarded a thing of the past, a custom of their pre-Christian grandparents. Nevertheless the seváseva song was known to be used by other people as a dance song. There were at least two elders in Kabuni who knew the song and details of the procedure. They told me that seváseva men used to wear white tapa cloth without markings, like Western doctors who wear white clothes. They also explained that when seváseva men wanted to make somebody sick they could appeal to their ancestral spirits after having chewed a particular bark with betelnut; before a healing session they would chew a different type of bark.

Although seváseva ceremonies are no longer held as public healing rituals, there are a number of individuals, not necessarily old men, who are renowned for their faculties of asiisi vegāri (spirit communication). This allows them to conduct small-scale healing sessions during which they interrogate the spirits on the causes of a patient's illness and on the appropriate course of action. This faculty may result from a particularly strong attachment between the healer and a dead kinsperson, but is not considered part of a clan's patrimony, and it does not correspond to a particular status in the clan. Of the three people with the faculty of asiisi vegari in Kabuni, one was a prominent elder in the Kotófu clan, one was an old widow living with her son and his family, and another was a middle-aged household head, younger brother in a junior lineage of a Sabúa clan. None of their clans was associated with sorcery or healing powers.

I asked one of these men, Inoch Raureta of the Ameta clan, to talk about his experiences. I will include a detailed account of his narrative as it illustrates the relationship between two themes treated in this chapter. The first concerns the attempts made by some Korafe to frame their powers within a moral context which they consider acceptable to Christianity - or practicing magic without compromising their chances of entering Paradise. The second theme involves issues of social status and seniority in the processes of securing social recognition of new powers derived from knowledge outside the clan evovo structure - or incorporating Christian knowledge in the traditional cosmology.

Inoch's experiences began after the death of his classificatory brother Nicholas, when he was about twelve years old. Nicholas worked as a teacher in Port Moresby. When he died he was buried there, but his possessions were sent back to his family. One of Nicholas' brothers built a small house to store the boxes. Inoch insisted until he was allowed to sleep in that house. At night he dreamt about Nicholas; he woke up with a start and felt that the dead man's spirit possessed him, asugúsira. He felt a change in his mind and began talking
unintelligibly, in his brother's voice. He lost control of his own actions and began running, in the middle of the night, to the church in the village of Karikari. Inside the church he began singing hymns while his frightened family hovered outside, then he ran to the cemetery where he finally collapsed at dawn.

From that time he would often wake up from a recurrent dream to be possessed by his brother's spirit. He would run to the church where he could hear the footsteps of many people walking up to the altar. At dawn he could see their footprints, some barefooted, others sandalled, on the sandy floor of the church. Inoch was forbidden to sleep in Nicholas' house again, but this did not prevent him from being possessed again. He went to Popondetta, but he kept getting into trouble at school because of his nocturnal excursions, so the headmaster sent him back to his village. Shortly after his return, Bishop George Ambo, who had just been appointed, visited the church in Karikari. Inoch's parents told him about their son's possession and asked him if he could put an end to it. After kneeling in front of the altar to pray with him, the Bishop blessed Inoch, and the spirit possessions ceased for a number of years.

Inoch's next experience of possession occurred when he was an adult, his own son a high school pupil. Inoch was visiting his classificatory uncle Joseph who had suddenly become paralysed from the waist down. Suddenly he felt his brother's spirit taking over, and heard himself ask Joseph whether he had consulted a spirit healer about his affliction. The sick man replied that a sevadseva man had summoned his spirits and left them with Joseph for three days to see if they could heal him. Nicholas' spirit said that he could not help if there were other spirits involved, and left Inoch. Two days later Joseph sent Inoch a message asking him to summon Nicholas' spirit again, since the other specialist had been unable to help him.

Inoch had never voluntarily summoned his brother's spirit before, so he was not certain that he would be able to so. He told the messenger that he would try, and if he succeeded he would go to his uncle's house. He knew that some people could summon spirits by making offerings to them, so he rolled a cigarette and prepared some betelnut with lime and mustard. He put the offerings in front of him and spoke: 'Nicholas, here are your tobacco and your betelnut, if you are here I would like you to possess me so we can go together to see what is wrong with our uncle Joseph.' As soon as he finished talking he felt his brother's spirit taking control of him; he observed himself go into the church and pray for God's help. Then he went to Lelioa and Nicholas' spirit asked his uncle to tell him about his problem. He concluded that evil spirits were causing the paralysis, and said that he would drive them out. Guided by his brother's spirit, Inoch put his hand on Joseph's head and prayed to God, thanking him for his help. Then he felt his brother's spirit leaving. By the next morning his uncle had completely recovered. Since that time he has been asked a number of times to appeal to his brother's spirit to help people whose illness could not be cured by other specialists or by Western medicine. He has acquired a reputation for being particularly effective in dealing with difficult childbirths.
Experiences such as Inoch's are not unusual, or limited to Korafe. Numerous instances of people who claim to have acquired new powers through visions or dreams of a religious nature have been reported widely in the Melanesian literature. In such dreams or visions, traditional and Christian themes are mixed into a new amalgam of symbolic thought. Stephen suggests that it is precisely in such altered states of consciousness as dreaming and spirit possession that the processes of 'autonomous imagination' can forge new religious ideas from a synthesis of new and old imagery, expressing preoccupations both internal and external to the self, in an attempt to deal with conflicting cosmologies. The resulting innovations in 'sacred thought' are then endorsed because of the cultural associations between such experiences and the spirit world (1989a:41, passim; 1989b:221-5). The association with Christianity which is expressed in the imagery of the visions confers these experiences with an aura of acceptability by Christian villagers. It also implies that the knowledge which derives from them is linked to Christian or Western powers.

Throughout his account Inoch emphasised the 'Christian' nature of his experiences: starting from the exemplary model of 'good Christian' which he construed Nicholas' life to be. All episodes of possession brought Inoch to the church or the cemetery, symbols of the Christian and Western influence in Tufi. The words he uttered and actions he performed when taken over by Nicholas' spirit - praying and asking for God's blessing for his patients - also reflect a strong Christian influence on Inoch's spiritual experiences.

Thus Inoch reconciled Christian knowledge with traditional ideas about the means of acquiring powerful knowledge. Like other contemporary Korafe with access to spiritual powers, he attempted to situate them within a Christian framework. Not only was he possessed by the spirit of a 'Good Christian', but he believed that this effectively ensured the rejection of all those aspects of magical powers condemned by missionaries. In fact, Inoch suggested that it was either Jesus or God who, through his brother's spirit, was giving him the power to heal and defy sorcery. Thus, although his brother's spirit had come to his assistance every time he summoned him, Inoch believed that Nicholas would not allow his powers to be used to harm victims, just as he had forbidden Inoch to accept payment for his services, which should be performed in the spirit of Christian charity.

The creative side of Inoch's visions, then, allowed him to make certain departures from aspects of traditional magic which are considered unacceptable by Korafe committed to Christianity. At the same time, these experiences allowed the incorporation of Christian themes within the realm of knowledge acquired according to traditional paradigms or, in other words, the appropriation of external knowledge through the mediation of the spirit of a man who, during his lifetime, had acquired a reputation for his success in the realm of Western knowledge.

This, however, is not the whole story. Like other younger men in possession of mystical knowledge or power, Inoch did not publicise his faculties. He was
reluctant even to claim to be in possession of any knowledge of illness, kāde and medicines. Inoch was adamant that what he said during healing sessions did not reflect his own knowledge. He described the possessions as feeling the top of his head open, and hearing his words coming from above instead of from inside him. He is conscious of what is being said, and can see the people around him, but his brother's spirit is controlling his mind and actions, so that he speaks in his brother's voice and can talk about things which he is not aware of. It is his brother's spirit who can see the spirits in the patient's body and knows how to heal them. As he listens to patients' accounts of their illness, he can tell which parts of the story are relevant, and by smelling the various remedies which have been used he is also able to indicate which are appropriate; but he knows nothing about poison and medicines and cannot see the spirits himself.

This modesty on Inoch's part brings me to consider the second aspect of Korafe ideas regarding knowledge acquisition: its social legitimation. Inoch only practices when he is asked to by one of his classificatory uncles, the man responsible for taking care of sorcery and healing powers in Kabuni. To avoid publicity the ceremony is kept at a very low key, unlike the original sevdseva ceremonies. This circumspection, as well as his refusal to accept payment, protects Inoch from being suspected of misusing his powers, and from the resentment of elders, since he is not suspected of competing for the political stakes associated with knowledge.

While Inoch's juvenile possession experiences were considered dangerous, and his family were concerned to put a stop to them - which the Bishop's blessing achieved for a time - as an adult he learned to control his faculties, and put them to a socially approved use. The efficacy of his powers was demonstrated, thus passing the 'pragmatic' test of the acceptance of new knowledge and powers. However, Inoch's social status is rather marginal in the hierarchy of knowledge control. He is a younger brother of junior lineage of a SabUa clan. His low status underlies his reluctance to go public about his powers, as he is afraid of exciting the jealousy of clan elders.

Precisely because of the acknowledged 'newness' of this kind of knowledge and powers, and their extraneity to the existing clan kot6fu, they could represent a threat to holders of traditional magical powers. According to Barker (1990b:142), men with similar experiences have made periodical appearances in Collingwood Bay since at least 1916, representing focal points for Maisin-initiated attempts to rid themselves of sorcerers through the powers derived from the new Christian knowledge. The problem which has, time and again, brought an end to such efforts is that whoever acquires the power to defy powerful sorcerers and chase away evil spirits is also potentially able to use the same powers destructively. As Barker points out, villagers are aware that even Christians can be tempted to use those powers to their own advantage (ibid.:143-4). This quandary was partly avoided by limiting access to magical powers to those members of the society who, in Korafe social ideology, are considered to be wise, level-headed, and responsible and who, moreover, are made accountable by the very fact of their monopoly over such
powers: clan elders.

Inoch's predicament is similar to the problems generally faced by those contemporary Korafe who, desiring to acquire Western knowledge and powers, continue to share the conventional view that knowledge empowers its legitimate possessors. To appropriate for themselves outside knowledge, and be empowered by it, recourse must be made to the mediation of spirits. For this knowledge to be considered legitimate property, those who acquire it must be careful not to threaten those in control of the 'political economy of knowledge' by seeming to step out of the arena of authority appropriate to their own position in the social structure. In other words, they must avoid using their knowledge too conspicuously, in a manner which threatens to upset the distribution of powers between and within clans. Although Korafe ideology ascribes this distribution directly to the properties associated with each clan's primal ancestor, it is contested and under constant re-negotiation, as elders become ancestors and 'young boys' succeed them as elders. Each leader's personality, inclinations, knowledge, and choices shape his own social role and political status, and may influence the clan's kotófu and evóvo for generations to come.

It is possible that Inoch will reach the age and social position to enable him to claim greater recognition for his powers, particularly if he is considered to be successful in other spheres. He could come to play a greater role in Kabuni politics. This, in turn, could lay the foundations for his descendants' claims to evóvo powers which incorporate certain elements derived from Christian knowledge. Alternatively, it is equally foreseeable that Inoch, or his descendants, may come to reject the powers at his disposal as un-Christian or irrelevant to them in the contemporary situation. As demanded by his commitment to a 'Christian way of life' Inoch, guided by the moral teachings of missionaries, may continue to practise low-key healing when asked to, but may refuse to transmit his powers to his sons, aware of their potential for evil-doing.

Post-War migration and 'development': involvement in the market economy

The missionaries of the new station at Sefoa had barely time to lay the groundwork for the transformation of Korafe into 'Christian Papuans' before the momentous events of the Second World War brought a whole new set of experiences and knowledge to bear, introducing a range of novel perspectives on Westerners' knowledge and the benefits which could be derived from it. The nature of relations between Papuans and Europeans was also transformed by the wartime experiences, as Papuans became involved in a wider range of activities outside their tribal areas, and colonial agents' perceptions of their role in Papua New Guinea were transformed.

Missionary activity was virtually suspended in 1942 when, after the bombing of Tufi Station and the Japanese landing at Buna, mission staff left the area. Young
Korafe men were conscripted by the Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit (ANGAU) and people left their villages and gardens to hide in caves and live off the bush as the Japanese approached. For the first time Korafe experienced Western military and technological powers on a vast scale and at their destructive best.

Most of the elders living at the time of my fieldwork were of the generation of boys whose mission education was interrupted by recruitment as plantation labourers, porters, police, and malaria control personnel for the duration of the war. After their initial involvement, mainly as carriers during the Kokoda and Buna campaigns, native ANGAU conscripts were engaged in a wider range of back-up operations, and were trained as machine operators, carpenters, and other skilled labour, for which they received better payment than they had been used to as indentured plantation workers (cf. Barker 1984:125).

Mission-educated Korafe were equipped with a working knowledge of English and other skills which were advantageous in these unfamiliar circumstances, and they had greater opportunities to acquire training, money and goods within the ANGAU structure. Those Korafe who were involved in malaria control and hospital work also recall with pleasure their working relations with the Australian and American army doctors. Indirect effects of wartime cooperation between Papuans and Western soldiers included exposure to a greater range of Western ideas. This, according to Farr, contributed, among other things, to an improvement of women's status in Korafe society (1973:46). Overall, their experiences during the war, opened up new vistas of opportunities for Korafe and other Papuans.

The wartime experience of earning cash, and the wide range of benefits to which it gives access, was a powerful incentive for young Korafe to continue seeking opportunities for training, education and employment after the war was over. This trend was also encouraged by efforts of the post-war administration to prepare Papua New Guinea for self-government and independence. In the 1950's, with the opening of two more Mission schools in the district and the government school at Tufi, elementary education became more widely available to Korafe children. Those who wished to continue beyond primary level (and who met the entrance requirements) could leave their village to attend high school in Popondetta or Dogura.

The acquisition of cash became a priority, as it enabled people to purchase tradestore goods, and pay children's school fees and the direct taxation introduced in the late 1950's. But money, like other Western things, came from outside Korafe territory: it was necessary to leave in order to obtain it, and villagers began relying on remittances from migrant kin. All these factors contributed to a large-scale urban drift which resulted in a shortage of manpower with repercussions on ritual, political and economic spheres of village life. Although migration had been a feature of Korafe men's life-cycle since the first days of contact, the post-war migrants tended to go further afield and to stay longer than their predecessors. Many established themselves, on a more or less permanent basis, in the growing
urban centres where they were able to join the higher ranks of the workforce and become part of a national elite as businessmen, public servants, nurses, doctors, teachers, and so on. For the sake of sending their children to high school many parents postponed their initiation feasts indefinitely.

Wartime conscripts who had returned to their villages and settled there as married men were encouraged by the mission and colonial administration to become actively involved in the administrative side of introduced institutions. On their part, they were eager to maintain their ability to buy Western goods, and to see some of the trappings of Western life reach their villages. Returned men were well-disposed to spend energy on the various local development schemes promoted by Australian administrators. Local government councils were set up during the 1960's and, while young men were being trained at Martyr's High School to become teachers or clergymen, the more mature men in the village became church councillors. An organisation of married women, the Mother's Union, was also set up by the Anglican Church. These organisations, according to Barker, filled an administrative vacuum left after the War by the replacement of European clergy with Papuans (1984:138).

From the women's point of view, this whole period was marked by a number of changes in the social perception of their role, encouraged also by the mission's emphasis on their central role in the family and discouragement of customs regarded as degrading to women. Furthermore, as Newton points out in the Orokaiva case, it was only the fact that women took over a greater share of subsistence gardening during the war, and continued to do so in its aftermath, that allowed men time to dedicate to new political and economic enterprises (1985:216).

Success and achievement in the introduced spheres of education, wage labour and business came to be considered more important than success in the traditional spheres of gardening and feasting. As contemporary parents often remind their unmarried children, Korafe men today, as well as showing prowess in 'traditional' pursuits such as gardening and fishing, must also be able to find money for such things as sugar, soap, and kerosene, as well as for school fees and tax. As a result of a local government council ruling that all domestic pigs should be kept within fenced areas, villages on Kabuni collectively gave up the practice of rearing pigs. This enabled them to make unfenced gardens closer to the village, thus saving the time otherwise necessary to build fences and to travel to and from the gardens. Time saved in that manner, it was felt, could be spent in money-making enterprises.

Unable to muster the support of young men for the production of sufficient garden food and pigs for the vasāi exchanges, the elders of rival Kotōfu clans finally decided to suspend the competitive exchange feasts altogether. According to contemporary accounts the decision was taken by the Kotōfu elders on the grounds of the changed circumstances of their lives since their involvement with the Western world. Their words were widely quoted:
This is not the time of pigs; that was our fathers' time. The time for pigs is finished. A new time has come, white man's and money's time has come.

Despite Korafe desire for local development, their efforts to set up viable commercial enterprises in their territory have largely failed. Cash cropping has never taken off because the land on Cape Nelson is steep, rocky, and insufficiently fertile; the coconut plantations established by the fathers of contemporary elders are no longer used for copra production due to the lack of buyers. Because of its isolation and the lack of regular shipping services, Tufi has remained a backwater area in the national economy, relying on migrants to inject some cash for local circulation and the payment of tax, school fees, and church dues. While the export of labour force has allowed Korafe to supplement their essentially subsistence economy with purchased foods and goods, the reliance on remittances presents a problem in more recent years of national recession, as the number of Korafe who find employment after schooling decreases. These problems were beginning to be felt by Korafe during the time of my fieldwork, as many young men returned to the villages after visiting relations in town without having found employment.

It is, again, on gifts from urban kin or savings of recently returned migrants, that local entrepreneurs largely rely for capital investment in their business ventures, although they also apply for government development grants. Villagers have tried different projects, from cooperative trade-stores, village piggeries and cattle projects, to the individual sale of surplus garden produce at Tufi market or fish at the Fisheries plant on Tufi wharf but, as Barker points out for Maisina, these activities 'mainly serve to circulate and dissipate money' (1984:230).

Almost the only form of local business to attract cash from outside, albeit on an irregular basis, are the five guesthouses built on the beaches of Cape Nelson by groups of villagers. They make minimal use of imported goods and are run by corporate groups formed on the basis of clan or kinship affiliation. In a report on Tourism in Papua New Guinea to the UNESCO, Ranck (1980) cited the Tufi Guesthouses as a positive case of local development, providing a source of cash and ensuring that the benefits, in terms of labour and profits, are distributed locally. However, while providing an occasional source of extra cash for those people involved, the guesthouses are not a regular source of income, nor do they represent 'development' on the scale envisioned by Korafe.

The difficulties of setting up profitable village businesses and maintaining long-term viability are many. Group ventures dissolve following mutual accusations as group members, disillusioned with paltry profits, become unwilling to answer further calls to work. Money is wasted on finance associates' 'business trips' to Popondetta or Alotau, from which they return suspiciously loaded with goods for their family. Business groups are always expected to make large contributions to exchange feasts as a group, as well as maintaining the individual obligations. Thus people involved in the management of local business are faced with a dilemma: they are seen as selfish and stingy if they refuse to release goods
and profits for ritual exchanges or, when they do so, they are accused of 'eating' communal money for the advancement of their own prestige by appearing to be generous givers.

Even individual enterprises rely heavily on the goodwill of fellow villagers who support the businessman's family with garden produce and fish, which they no longer have time to provide for themselves. These contributions are made in the expectation of sharing in the profits of the business. Consequently, another common tale of Korafe business failure is the dissipation of tradestore stock, or the money from the sale of the first load of cargo, in gifts to fellow villagers and clanspeople.

What to outsiders may merely seem inefficient business practices, result from the contradictory demands of business on the one side, and villagers' expectations of sharing and exchange on the other. These conflicting pressures are experienced dramatically by those caught between them. Considering the rise and fall of their enterprises in retrospect, the majority of would-be businessmen tell tales of initial success, followed by serious illness resulting in the collapse of the business - the illness they attributed to the sorcery of 'jealous' elders. In order to recover they were obliged to use most of their remaining capital and despoil their shelves of goods to finance the feasts associated with consultations with the powerful healer/sorcerers of the region. They interpreted these events as a warning by their elders to share what was perceived as their wealth (in the form of cargo and cash) more widely, instead of accumulating wealth. Following their recovery they temporarily renounced their business ambitions, in fear for their lives, and incapacitated by the financial losses incurred.32

One notable exception is a tradestore set up in Tufi Station by a retired teacher and his wife. His tradestore, and the platform under the mango tree between the store and his house, provide a focal point for all villagers from Kabuni peninsula visiting the station. His wife maintains small-scale exchange relations with village women who give her first choice of garden produce and firewood before taking the surplus to the market. While careful to 'look after' his elders in the village with small but frequent gifts of sugar, tobacco and the like, the storekeeper satisfies his younger kinsmen's demands by providing employment opportunities for them, rather than direct gifts of goods or cash. The tradestore employs two young men from his clan full-time, and a number of unmarried girls rotate in his house, helping his wife with child-rearing and household chores. He also makes use of collective organisations such as the Mother's Union or the Youth Group when he needs labour for building, clearing and planting his garden, unloading cargo from the boat at Tufi wharf and carrying it up the steep incline to the store.

As a member of the Bubu clan he is expected to participate when clan members are engaged in ritual exchanges, but his contributions, valued for their tradestore nature, are not noticeably larger than those of other clan members who bring fish, pigs, and garden produce. While backing the feasts organised by his
clan, he cleverly refrains from appearing to use his material advantages to further his prestige in the traditional exchange system. Instead, as a source of local employment, he has developed quite a wide network of patronage among the younger generation. This is a valued contribution as fewer school leavers have been able to find employment in the towns, and they regard Tufi Station as the next best thing to the experience of urban life.

There are a number of factors which, arguably, may explain the success of this tradestore when so many other attempts have failed. Firstly, the fact that the capital outlay was entirely his own meant that he was better armed to resist claims for a share of the profits than managers of joint ventures. Secondly, perhaps, being a member of the Bubu clan entitles him, as Kotófu, to a leadership position, making him less vulnerable to the resentment of others, particularly as he is careful not to antagonise the elders of his own clan. A fundamental factor, I believe, was the location of his house and tradestore on Tufi Station, across the bay from Kabuni. By forgoing day-to-day interactions with his clansmen he was also able to escape, to some extent, the contributions to reciprocal exchanges expected among village households. Further, by building his house on land leased from the government, and by avoiding the use of clan land for gardening, he evaded demands by clansmen on the grounds that he was using land which they 'looked after' while he was away.

The tradestore’s location, across Tufi harbour from Kabuni, is also relevant at a more symbolic level, which underlies the acceptability of his *modus operandi* to other villagers. By living on the government station, he and his wife are associated with the amorphous community of government workers, healthworkers, teachers, police, and tradestore managers who are drawn from various parts of the country and include the occasional expatriate, and whose social life is somewhat peripheral to that of the villagers. Tufi Station is the local administrative centre for the district, perceived by Korafe as their link to the external political and economic life of the country. From its earliest days as a government post, different rules of behaviour and even modes of dress, apply in Tufi. It represents modernity and Western influence, and relations in the ‘Station’ are expected to be of a different order to those within the village. The business-like relations which the tradestore owner maintains with his kin, affines, and clansmen as workers or clients are more acceptable in this context than they would ever be within his village.

Even this exceptional success story, then, supports the view, commonly expressed by Korafe, that success in Western-style commercial enterprises belongs outside the context of Korafe village life. Local economic development, considered in the post-war years as a prerequisite of political independence, was found to be lagging behind more than ten years after independence. Robert Ikirima, a village councillor, voiced this dilemma as he addressed villagers with a statement of
"We are independent now but we are not developed"

Like the statements concerning civilisation and primitiveness, this formula expresses a sense that the transition from 'pig time' to 'money time' has been only partial. Korafe often expressed the opinion that at the root of their failure to achieve local development is the Western origin of the knowledge associated with money. While they have acquired the knowledge to incorporate money and the goods it can buy in both secular and ritual spheres of village life, and which allows them marginal participation in the wider national economic and political context, their knowledge of money does not empower them vis-a-vis this external context.

This dilemma is most apparent in the predicament of returned migrants who, successful in the urban context, find it difficult to live up to the expectations of their kin in the villages. Through their education and work experiences they acquire the knowledge to operate successfully in the outside world, and to act as bridges between their own society and the national economy and polity. However, once they return to the village, they are unable to tap into the power associated with the knowledge of money to bring 'development' to their own village. This, it is thought, is because the knowledge of money, like Christianity, does not really belong to Korafe; only the real owners of that knowledge, Westerners, are fully empowered by it.

At the heart of this problem, in Barker's words,

there is a basic incompatibility in Maisin social experience between the values indicated in the social ideology and subsistence activities, and the requirements of participation with the greater politico-economic environment (1984:282).

Like anyone who has acquired specialist knowledge, returned migrants are placed in a position of obligation towards members of their group. They are expected to make use of their knowledge, and the powers deriving from it, to benefit their lineage or clan. This obligation is particularly felt by those migrants who depended on the help of their elder brothers or classificatory fathers to pay the school fees which permitted them to become 'successful' in the first place. But the knowledge necessary for the success of capitalist-style enterprises conflicts with the ideology of exchange and sharing on which this very obligation is predicated.

Given the responsibility for running corporate or cooperative village businesses, they are confronted with conflicting pressures to share the goods or profits under their control, and to accumulate them for re-investment. Although conversant with the principles of efficient business management, it is hard to maintain the principles when the same people who are the main clientele are also neighbours and 'brothers', employees, occasional workers, and exchange partners. The twin pressures which are applied to the returned urban workers contribute to the high rate of failure of the enterprises they are expected to manage.
It is these contradictions that Korafe refer to when they say that the knowledge of money, acquired from Westerners, does not belong to them. To be empowered by their knowledge of money, to reap the benefits Korafe see Westerners deriving from it, would involve a complete transition from 'pig time' to 'money time'. As Schwimmer pointed out, 'exchange partnerships, as the basic source of social order, must become subordinate to legitimate central political authority and the modern market economy' (1973:66). However, as in the Wamiran case,

The replacement of taro with money would force them [Wamirans] to define themselves and their relationships in terms of a symbol that Westerners have devised and control(Kahn 1986: 156).

Thus the returned migrants, educated in Western knowledge, have difficulties in establishing themselves as modern leaders in the villages. This is not caused by the suspicion that their sources of knowledge about money are unreliable, as would be suggested by Schwimmer's 1967 article, but by the underlying contradictions between the knowledge they represent and the social system in which they are expected to apply it.

From 'vasái' to Church Day feasts: the interplay of political, economic and religious transformations

In the preceding sections I treated different kinds of Western influence separately, as if changes introduced at different times by different agents affected separate realms (political, economic, social and religious) and could be considered independently of the others. In reality all agents of change affected diverse realms at the same time, and their influences played off each other as Korafe themselves made choices and reshaped the newly acquired knowledge for their own purposes. In this section I would like to illustrate the interplay between different sorts of influences and Korafe responses to them in the context of dance feasts which, as seen in chapter 3, are an important aspect of Korafe social and cultural life. Although the form and meaning of dance feasts has undoubtedly changed in the last ninety years (reflecting Western influences and Korafe responses to their changed relations to the outside world) Korafe are proud of their reputation as dancers. They believe that their traditional dances are a cultural feature which distinguish them from other groups in Papua New Guinea.

An interesting corollary of the decision by clan elders to suspend vasái feasts is that it left the mission as the main agent for organising feasts. Langmore refers to the relatively liberal attitude of Anglican missionaries who, unlike their colleagues in other parts of the country, encouraged dancing and feasting (1982:117). In fact dance feasts were generally encouraged by Europeans in the North Eastern district; both government officials and missionaries saw them as a means of bringing together former enemies. Just five years after the establishment of the government station at Tufi, the station journals contain
accounts of dances sponsored in honour of visiting authorities. One such dance involved 1000 dancers from 20 different groups (Oelrichs 1904).

Rudolf Pöch, an anthropologist who spent ten weeks at the Government Station in Tufi during 1906, wrote about a dance organised by Manning, the Resident Magistrate, on occasion of the King's Birthday. By sponsoring these dance feasts Manning aimed to boost the government's status and influence, and to bring neighbouring tribes together in a context where they may become familiar with each other, thus reducing conflict (1907).

Nellie Hullett pioneered missionary involvement in Korafē dance feasts in the 1930's at Naniu mission (Wetherell 1977:92). Today Mission dances are organised on occasion of Christian festivities such as Christmas, or on Church Days (when a parish celebrates its Saint's day). Like other aspects of Korafē culture, dances became incorporated into the new context of a Christian festivity. Their meaning became subordinated to the purposes of Christian celebrations. An example of this is the taboo on dancing during Lent and Holy Week. This custom was very quickly established, and is seen by Korafē as a logical extension on the prohibition of dancing during a time of mourning. Already in 1937, when there were only fifteen baptized Korafē, the Bishop reported that even the unconverted Korafē suspended dancing at Sefoa mission during Lent and Holy Week.34

While vāsāi feasts emphasised distinctions between groups, and the competition for prestige between exchange partners, both missionaries and government officers perceived feasts as unifying events, a way of bringing different groups together in a new social order. When Kotōfu elders declared the end of vāsāi, and parishes became the main feast-giving units, attempts were made to change the nature of dance feasts; their meaning as unifying rituals was emphasised while the competitive aspect of vāsāi feasting was downplayed.35 If vāsāi represented the traditional order and political organisation of clans, 'Church Day' feasts are an instance of Korafē's commitment to the 'new' order, imposed since pacification and informed by the Christian doctrine of brotherhood, in which peaceful relations extend beyond clan and language boundaries. Similarly, Barker suggests that St. Thomas Day feasts in Uiaku are symbolic ofMaisin's unity in Christianity (1990a:188).

Contemporary Church Day feasts are in many ways constructed in opposition to the vāsāi feasts they replace. In the period leading up to major feasts, people are constantly reassuring and reminding each other that they are not doing vāsāi. Oro (ceremonial platform built only by Kotōfu clans and only on occasion of vāsāi feasts) will not be built; bondo ghando (pyramid-shaped structure of poles on which gift taros were displayed) are not to be expected; and their feasting counterparts are not their Vāsāi. All these represent major departures from traditional feasting practices (see chapter 3). However, some features of vāsāi have ways of finding their way back into the new framework. James and Cindi Farr described their surprise, in the course of a great feast organised for the dedication of the Korafē language Bible, when they realised that the elders of the Bubu clan had introduced some elements of vāsāi exchange by building a small replica of the
oro platform of their clan. This feast was the largest feasting occasion since the war, involving all Korafe clans and attracting numerous guests, including the Bishop, to Baga village. The Bubu clan elders, as hosts, orchestrated the pig distributions so that they, in effect, made a gift to the representatives of the Gaboru clan, their traditional vasāi partners.36

Such situations do not arise in Church Day feasts since the groups which are involved do not include vasāi partners. The two Church Day feasts which took place during my fieldwork involved feasting partners from distinct language groups. At the first feast, in Utukwaf, the Miniafia parishioners invited dancers from a parish composed of Arifama and Yega clans. The second feast I went to was in Uwe village, organised by Maisin and Miniafia parish members, while the dancers were Korafe from Kabuni, or St. Luke's parish. By drawing their feasting partners from so far afield, the parishes are assured of not involving clans previously in vasāi relationships to each other. This is true to the spirit of promoting friendly relations between neighbouring tribal groups, and is intended to defuse the competitive aspect in feasting. Even so competition is not eliminated. After one parish has invited members of another parish to dance at their Church Day feast, they expect the invitation to be reciprocated, and the two sides' contributions on alternating occasions are compared.

Also at the level of social relations, the patterns of exchange relations are the direct transposition of vasāi (clan) partnerships to Church-day (parish) partnerships, with parish elders taking the place of Kotōfu. Ironically, due to the correspondence between parishes and territorial groups the organisation of feasts or dance parties within the parish falls perforce to the elders of Kotōfu clans. They are the only ones acknowledged to have the power to bring different clans together (see chapter 3). As in traditional feasting, the success of a parish in the competitive exchanges continues to reflect the power and prestige of the two Kotōfu clans involved. The only difference with the vasāi system is that different pairs of Kotōfu have entered into competitive partnership. This may reflect an effort to keep traditional rivalries separate from the Christian context. On the other hand, it may be a reflection of the changed scale of the contemporary political realm, indicating that the partnerships current before the 1950's have lost their significance, and are substituted by new partnerships which reflect more accurately the wider-ranging relations between groups in the contemporary context.

Gifts of food and dancing are still exchanged between groups in alternating years, and the amount and quality of the partners' contributions are compared following the vasāi pattern. But a novel element has been introduced to Church Day feasting competition: the exchange of money. The invited party to a feast is no longer expected merely to dance for their taro and pigs; the dancers also bring a 'donation' of cash to the church of the host parish. It has been a theme in the Anglican Mission's policies that the Papua New Guinea diocese, and therefore its member parishes, should strive towards achieving economic self-reliance. Evangelists and pastors often remind churchgoers that their offerings ideally should pay for their salaries as well as for sacramental wine and church maintenance. The
competition at Church Day feasts provides a large sum for the parish which acts as host on that particular year.

This innovation, along the lines of the Poreporena dance feasts described by Groves (1954) and Gregory (1980), represents much more than the simple substitution of money for pigs as the main item of exchange and focus of competition. The meaning of the feast is transformed by the incorporation of money. The ritual exchange cycle is made to include God, through the mediation of the church, in addition to living clan members and their ancestors. It is at this level, I believe, that the real significance of Church Day feasts as contemporary versions of vasdi feasts can be seen. The church, by appropriating the money given in the exchange and thereby adding a 'gifts-to-god' element to the pre-existing exchange, has succeeded in accumulating capital for itself out of the exchange cycle (cf. Gregory 1980:630, 645, 647).37

A puzzling aspect of this innovation is that the party to bring the cash donation is not the party traditionally associated with making the gifts. It will be recalled from chapter 3 that on each single occasion, the clans acting as hosts for the vasdi feast made gifts of garden food and pigs to the clans of the dancers's side. By wearing their kotofo paraphernalia, the dancers represented their own ancestors, to claim pigs in payment for their magic. If money was simply a substitute for the pigs, then it would be expected that the hosting parish would make its donation to the guests. Instead - and this concurs with the fact that some food and pigs are still given by the hosts to the guests - it is the dancers, dressed in their ancestral garb, who bring a gift of money for the church of the hosting parish. This suggests that the gift of money also acquires a symbolic value beyond the cash value of the money itself. It is also an addition to the display element of the feasting, testimony to the dancing party's success in the domains associated with 'new' knowledge and powers.

Figure 1: Exchanges in 'Church Day' feasts

The fact that it is the dancers, impersonating ancestral spirits, who bring the money, and not vice-versa, indicates that the donation is an addition to, not a
substitution for, the traditional gift exchange. Church Day feasting can be seen as the superimposition of the church onto the traditional feasting cycle, with men exchanging gifts of pigs for their respective ancestors who, in turn, bring gifts of money for the church. In this way two of the major cultural innovations brought by Westerners (money and Christianity), are brought together in the context of contemporary Korafe exchange. This is not merely an expression of the underlying conviction, which Korafe share with other Melanesians with similar experiences of colonisation, that Christianity is the knowledge which empowers Westerners. It represents an effort to use the ancestors to enter into an exchange relationship with the ultimate source of Western power and to channel some 'development' towards themselves. This effort is parallel to that of healers who seek, through the intervention of spirits, to legitimise the powers of their new knowledge by linking it to the ultimate source of power introduced by missionaries when they brought the knowledge of God. Thus, on the one hand, the efforts to become successful in the modern economic world resulted in the demise of vasiti feasts and created the conditions for the missions to take over dance feasts, transforming them into less antagonistic affairs. On the other hand, it is due to the re-introduction of a competitive element in the context of Church Day exchanges that parishes can strive for financial independence.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

One way of characterising cosmological changes since the incorporation of Korafe people by colonial authority is a general 'widening' of their social universe (through acquaintance with previously unknown people), their religious universe (through mission instruction), their material universe (through introduced goods and cash), and their political universe (through inclusion in the successive administrations). The powers associated with Western knowledge made the Korafe willing learners, as shown by their cooperation with newcomers and prompt acceptance of the innovations they introduced. Western knowledge was self-evidently valuable. But this knowledge implied a new definition of Korafe, constructed in opposition to the newcomers, giving rise to distinctions like primitive or uncivilised to civilised; heathen to Christian; and colonised (black) to coloniser (white). Later the terms of opposition came to include categories like dependent to independent, and underdeveloped to developed, reflecting ideological changes regarding the roles and relationships between the West and Third World countries.

Facing such an invidious comparison, Korafe views of the relations between knowledge power and status predisposed them to accept the colonial view of their own knowledge as inferior. This sense of inferiority notwithstanding, Korafe find it impossible to renounce those aspects of traditional knowledge which they know to be anathema to the acquired Western knowledge. This issue pertains to the
difference between the two types of knowledge, which makes one more relevant in one context and less so in another. Western knowledge, for all its breadth, lacks the feature which enables Korafe to be empowered by it except by leaving the village context altogether. That feature, according to Korafe epistemology, is what legitimizes the ownership of knowledge.

As a rule knowledge, like kotôfu, is passed from ancestors to the living through successive links between father and son or elder and younger brother. However, not all knowledge, or other kotôfu, are always transmitted along patrilineal lines. Each individual recognizes descent from more ancestors than those belonging to his or her own clan, and in some cases his knowledge derives from these. In these cases, and others in which knowledge transmission does not follow the normal pattern, the ancestral sanction for the acquisition of knowledge is more explicit. This takes the form of dreams or other more or less public manifestations by ancestral spirits of their will to transmit that knowledge to that descendant (see chapters 4 and 6). This suggests a clue to understanding the weak point of Western knowledge in the Korafe context, as illustrated by contemporary attempts to appropriate Western knowledge through spiritual intervention.

There is one dimension of cosmology where Korafe knowledge embraces a realm which is negated by Western ideology: the knowledge and experience of ancestral spirits. In all fields of belief and practice, Korafe had no difficulty in accepting the new knowledge offered by various Western agents, the difficulty always arose when this new knowledge required the demise of traditionally valuable forms of knowledge. In order for the Korafe to be totally converted to Western knowledge, they would be required to re-define themselves in terms of the new reality. This implies restricting their field of experience to those dimensions contemplated by Western knowledge and to stop 'believing' in the powers of ancestral spirits. Furthermore, the continuities in other spheres of Korafe life with their traditional lifestyle mean that the magical powers which were believed to underpin people's survival in the face of illness, and their success in subsistence activities, are still highly relevant. And the knowledge offered by 'the West' has not offered an alternative to these. It is in those contexts where the knowledge of ancestral spirits is salient that Western knowledge is deficient.

In this chapter I have dealt in general terms with some of the dilemmas which face contemporary Korafe, whose 'knowledge' is shaped by the continuities of their lives with those of their ancestors on the one hand, and by their experiences of a wider world within which their own lives take place on the other. The changed status of magical knowledge in contemporary ideology has important consequences for the practices relating to the transmission of this knowledge. Ideological ambivalence has added a further dimension to the politics involved in the transmission of ritual knowledge to the younger generation. This will be the focus of the next chapter, in which I follow the tribulations of a group of people faced with the deaths of important ritual leaders, and with the prospect of renouncing their powers in favour of a 'Christian life'.
1 Cf. Lewis 1986:422-3.

2 By this I do not mean that Korafe are never successful in the modern enterprises they attempt, or that they are incapable of operating in the 'new' world. Many Korafe are successful in what they set out to achieve. What I am referring to are the kinds of explanations which Korafe give to themselves when unrealistic expectations of a 'new' enterprise are not fulfilled.

3 Thus when they introduced me to someone, my Korafe hosts would say that I came from Italy. Rome, or the Pope's home, they would explain, is in Italy. That made me a Catholic. From that they were able to reconstruct a 'genealogy' through the 'break-away' Anglican church and the Anglican missionaries who brought Christianity to Papua, thus linking me to themselves on the basis of my origin in the country where the 'owner' of Christian knowledge has his home.

4 See chapter 4.

5 This is true at the collective as well as the individual level; for fear of the sorcery of the dominant Korafe, members of the autonomous Kerebi group, who have lost political status and the use of their language through assimilation into Korafe groups, are cautious about broadcasting their knowledge or even admitting that they are in possession of esoteric knowledge.

6 Such conflicts, as seen in chapter 4, can transcend clan boundaries when, due to demographic accidents, the ownership group is too small to come up with suitable candidates.

7 Schwimmer was writing during pre-independence years, when the association between government and Europeans was more concrete than it is today. As an institution, however, Korafe continue to regard it as Western, particularly as the Queen is seen to be its ultimate source of authority.

8 Cf. Langmore 1982:110-5 on the influence of cultural evolutionism on missionaries' attitudes to Papuans and on their role as missionaries.

9 The reference to the ancestor securing the Government boat to his own leg was made in the context of speculations regarding which clans would be eligible for compensation. It was rumoured that the Government intended to compensate traditional landowners for land which was originally bought with steel axes. The Gobe clan elders wanted to claim that they brought the Europeans to their clan land on Cape Nelson peninsula, thus proving that the Government Station was built on Gobe land.

10 Monckton 1920:10, also Le Hunte 1901: appendix HA.

11 Le Hunte 1901: XIV

12 Cape Nelson, North East Division, monthly reports, patrol reports, station journals 1900 - 1932 microfilms held at Australian Archives, G91 items 111a to 154d, Rolls 8-11.

13 This dilemma was perpetuated throughout the period of Australian administration, and continues today as it is illegal to be in possession of sorcery paraphernalia.

14 This episode is also remembered in the oral history of the descendants of those whose village was burned. They claim the sorcerers were Maisina kinsmen who were hiding in their village. As a result of the police raid they left the burnt village and moved to the mountain where they built another village, Dedebuna Firiamata. A newborn boy acquired an unusual name as a result of the incident: he was named Orodungari (dungari means to ignite a fire and oro is the clan platform).

15 See Elijah's account of the origin of his lineage's powers in chapter 4.

16 Cf. Chimney and Haddon 1917:454-6; Williams 1928:7-8; Williams 1930:293,303; and Oelrichs 1912:129. See chapter 4 on Arere powers.

17 See below for discussion of contemporary sevaseva healing.

18 According to Wetherell (1977:180) biblical subjects which elicited the most interest from
Papuans were the death and resurrection of Christ, the destination of spirits after death, and Christ's healing miracles. Korafe also seem to have a fascination for the miracle of the multiplication of the loaves and of the fish, which resonates with some aspects of garden magic (see chapter 4).

19 This process of assimilation of new religious imagery within the context of traditional concepts is common. Kahn (1983:105) tells of a Wamiran's interpretation of the resurrection of Christ as akin to the behaviour of the spirits of the dead. Also the construction of heavenly imagery based upon converts' experience of Westerner's life was commented on by Stephen (1982:112).

20 St. Luke's church was built in Goodenough village after the cyclone of 1974 destroyed the previous church in the village of Karikari.

21 Kahn also mentions that Wamirans' pragmatic approach to magic led them to conclude that the 'European's magic' could not help them deal with the problems they were concerned with (Kahn 1983:105).

22 See chapter 4.

23 The verb asugari normally refers to wearing (of clothes); a literal translation of the term used to describe spirit possession would be 'to be enveloped'.


25 Burying the dead in a piece of land consecrated by the church instead of in the village was a practice associated with Christianity, but also with the other source of Western power, as it was enforced by patrol officers.

26 Cf. Schwimmer 1967

27 As among the Maisin, Korafe elders often refer to adult men and women as 'young boys' and 'young girls'. Barker attributes this to the cultural definition of 'full social adulthood' as depending on the individuals demonstrating that they are capable of raising a family and meeting exchange obligations. It is at the time of their first-born child's adolescence that they begin to influence the political life of the village (Barker 1986:94).

28 The number of native medical orderlies increased from 47 to 350 during the War years (Newton 1985:48).


30 See Newton 1985:48-51 for a historical account of the Cooperative movement and cash cropping in the Northern Province, and Barker 1984:133-5 for their local implications in neighbouring Maisina territory.

31 See chapter 1.

32 Barker (1984:152) also expressed his surprise at finding that Maisin discussed 'modern issues' such as the financial problems of local business in 'traditional' terms, by reducing them to problems of division within the community.

33 See Barker's paper (1990a:194) for an analysis of the contrasting practices in Maisin villages and the mission station as an instance of 'Maisin biculturalism'. Like the mission station Barker refers to, it is the 'Western nature' of Tufi station which accords it symbolic value.

34 Australian Board of Missions 1937b.

35 There is a striking correspondence between territorial groups and parishes, as a church has been built on each peninsula of Cape Nelson.


37 In Poreporena the transformation of competitive exchange feasts was more radical, involving a complete substitution of the hekari 'gifts-to-men' system for the contemporary 'gifts-to-god' system; see Gregory 1980.

38 Schwimmer showed the association made by Orokaiva between the figure of Jesus Christ and the dema, or spiritual sources of power; Jesus Christ was construed to be the Westerner's dema and this places the church in a mediatory position with respect to development (1973:70,75-6).
INTRODUCTION

Korafe have been exposed, in the course of this century, to those aspects of the Western world which are conspicuous in colonial and post-colonial contexts. Social and cultural life have been, and continue to be, shaped by individual and collective experiences of that world. In the years since villagers first encountered the newcomers on the social and political scene their relations to neighbouring tribal groups were transformed, and their social networking extended to follow those of their fellow villagers who joined the growing urban population. In the process, Korafe re-evaluated their conception of themselves.\textsuperscript{1} They have come to share some colonial ideas about the relative value of traditional ways and ancestral knowledge in relation to the practices and ideologies introduced by Westerners. They have been keen to learn ways of acquiring for themselves desireable features of Western life. The persistence of what Korafe have come to consider 'primitive' or even 'evil' ways of their ancestors is perceived as a major obstacle to securing a place in heaven, the attainment of local 'development', or the achievement of 'civilisation'.

In reflecting upon the persistence of devalued 'traditions' in spite of their aims and efforts, Korafe resort to the truism:

\textit{It is our custom, the way our ancestors lived, the way they taught us.}

Despite its platitudinous ring, this explanation deserves to be taken seriously, not just pushed aside in a hurried search for an alternative line of questioning. Its relevance becomes clearer when the other side of the problem is considered by villagers. The knowledge which they have acquired through participation in education, wage labour, and Christianity fails to bring with it the powers with
which it is associated, and which they hoped to attain for themselves. By switching
referents, Korafe use the same idea to explain the gap between acquiring Western
knowledge and attaining the European’s cash and carry paradise:

These are the white man’s customs, it is their way of life, their
knowledge. It doesn’t belong to us.

Together, these explanations suggest that Korafe consider the problem to arise
from the political importance of knowledge ownership.

Korafe 'own' most important knowledge corporately; clan elders 'guard' it
carefully and 'look after' it for their clan. Knowledge, which is passed with
ancestral relics from one clan elder to the next, links the living to their clan's
ancestral spirits. It is on this relationship of each clan's living members with its
ancestral spirits that their magical powers, social identity, and political role
depend. The exclusive ownership of specific powers by different clans assigns
social responsibility to those individuals in possession of knowledge. The possessor
of specialist esoteric knowledge is morally obligated to share the advantages which
it brings him with members of his clan and their allies. Possession of such
knowledge is also linked to a position of seniority in the clan and an index of the
clan’s political standing.

Thus, the explanation that Western knowledge does not belong to them
expresses Korafe assumptions about the political nature of knowledge and the
inequality which they perceive in their relations to Westerners. In order for
knowledge to be empowering (in both magical and political senses), its possessor
must be acknowledged to be in a specific relationship with the spirits from which it
derives. This relationship is mediated by the transmission of ancestral relics from
elder brother to younger brother or to his eldest son, and is expressed in terms of
patrilineal descent and fraternal cooperation. In this conceptual context, the
missionary rhetoric that all Christians are children of the same father has
persuasive power. Membership in the 'Christian brotherhood' would legitimate
villagers' claims to knowledge associated with Westerners and give them access to
the same powers. However, part of the Western knowledge acquired by Korafe is
that belief in ancestral powers is a sign of ignorance, and the practice of magic is
evil. To become true members of the Christian community, ancestral spirits must
be renounced. Thus, when Western powers are seen to elude even those Korafe
who are considered to have acquired Western knowledge, the blame falls on the
persistence of ancestral beliefs and practices in the community.

This view conflicts with the indigenous one in which ancestral knowledge
and powers are essential for survival in the face of other people's magic. This
necessity can be reinterpreted in political terms: magical specialisation underlies
the cooperation between clans in a territorial group, whose political unity is
predicated on the exchange of magical services to mutual benefit. Keen to acquire
new powers, Korafe are, ultimately, reluctant to give up those which they rely
upon. In this view, it is a delict for a clan elder to misapply or dissipate the
knowledge of which he is the sole caretaker, and on which his community depends. And yet this is precisely what is required of contemporary Korafe who wish to become 'good Christians'.

Tension arises between individual and collective interests. Each person, in the interests of his or her soul's salvation, should forego practices involving ancestral spirits. Korafe continually reinforce each other's pronouncements regarding the desirability of living like Anglican Christians, and encourage each other to give up practicing magic. In contrast, there is massive collective pressure on the caretakers of shared patrimony to preserve and use those very things which link them to ancestral spirits. These dilemmas are most strongly felt by clan elders. Like everybody else in the community, they too wish to achieve for themselves the benefits of Western knowledge, but their social and political position is coterminous with control over their clan's ancestral knowledge. By assuming the status, privileges and responsibilities of clan elders, these men become associated with both beneficient and maleficient powers. Elders risk becoming scapegoats, thus freeing the junior members of their clan to pursue success in the 'modern' context. Then, according to Korafe social ideology, the benefits of both worlds should be shared among clan members.

This Korafe solution, however, ignores the individualistic bent of Western knowledge. Thus the failure of local businesses is attributed to elders' abuse of malevolent powers to coerce the 'managers' of business enterprises to share their capital too widely. On the other hand, by assuming responsibility for magic, elders are precluding themselves from the ultimate reward of Western knowledge: access to paradise. This is an individual matter, not a benefit which one can share with one's brothers. This preoccupation leads some magical experts to attempt re-casting the powers in their possession in terms which they consider to be justifiable in terms of Christian morality.

Interestingly, this tension does not engender a polarisation of the community in two distinct camps such as 'Christians' versus 'traditionalists'. The values of both traditional and Western knowledge are asserted equally by people of all ages and social standings in different contexts. In the remainder of this chapter, however, I wish to narrate a series of events which caused the underlying tensions to come to the surface as individuals and collectivities grappled with issues of continuity and change. Individual choice, the rejection of ancestral powers, and striving for the Christian way of life on the one hand, are played against the underlying shared fears of the dis-empowerment that such a move would entail.

In retrospect these events appear as the culmination of a period of crisis brought about by a drought and revolving around the death of a prominent ritual leader. Joseph Bomboru was the eldest member of the senior Javosa lineage and was responsible for garden magic, and he was also a Church Councillor. The unusual circumstances surrounding his death, which occurred at the height of a drought, problematised the transmission of his ritual knowledge and powers to his sons in a context where those attributes are ambiguously valued.
The potential for a radical break with tradition in keeping with their aspirations to renounce magic, created an atmosphere fraught with tensions as people gathered to mourn Joseph's death. As events unfolded, they came to implicate more than just his close kin: the resolution of ideological and moral dilemmas, with wide-ranging consequences affecting the future status of magical knowledge in and beyond their clan required a wider participation in processes of mourning and conflict resolution. The gradual involvement of a widening group of people was reflected in the mourning processes. Different people made their appearance on the scene of the bereaved village and aired their views and preoccupations.

The resolution which was reached in this process prevented a complete break with ancestral knowledge thus assuaging the immediate fears of the community. At the same time, it allowed the recipients of Joseph's heritage to maintain a certain ambiguity which would allow them leeway to deny possession of magical powers in the future. If, on the other hand, they should choose to act as ritual leaders, they would be able to do so according to their understanding of magic, in a different context from that which had determined Joseph's choices during his lifetime.

As in a drama, these processes made people confront some underlying contradictions of the ideologies they subscribe to. Until then Korafe were not concerned with magical powers, particularly in their descriptions of themselves to me. They talked of magic as a dying aspect of their heritage, mostly superseded by Western and Christian knowledge, which sometimes caused problems when irresponsible people returned to its use for personal reasons. It was when the drought became a problem to be solved that sorcery, garden and weather magic all became implicated in its explanation and management. It was necessary to tap into those powers which they had been trying to deny (to me as an outsider but also, I believe, to themselves as members of the wider, modern world). Joseph's death, and the events which followed, brought those who relied on his powers as garden magician to face up to the contradictions involved when, as Christians, they professed a negative view of magic.

I take this dramatic analogy from Victor Turner, who defined 'social dramas' as social processes undertaken by people in order to reach resolution to conflict situations (1957). A gradual unveiling of covert conflicts takes place, as layers of cover are successively removed. First to be exposed is the current conflict. Then the underlying relations are revealed. Beyond these, social dramas uncover other conflicts, such as those resulting from the colonial situation (Turner 1974:38-9). In the processes of crisis resolution certain rules, norms, and structures may have been transformed, while others may have been reinforced. Whatever the outcome, these changes become incorporated into the category 'tradition' and assume the 'look of eternity' associated with it. By their public nature, dramas draw attention to covert underlying tensions in the system, and to the mechanisms which operate to accommodate conflicting elements within it.
The active involvement of a wide range of people in the processes of crisis resolution implies that, although it is possible to draw an analogy with drama, these events cannot be isolated from the rest of Korafe history. Joseph's death did not occur on a stage and the mourners were not actors controlled by a script. Individual and collective responses to the crisis brought about by Joseph's death and to the processes which followed were coloured by other situations in which the same actors were involved in alternative roles. If considered in another context (the death of another elder perhaps, or the history of a dance feast) these same events and experiences could be seen as tangential, or to play a minor part in the plot. My selection of these particular events is determined partly by the fact that they occurred towards the end of my fieldwork, at a time when I was best equipped to understand the social dynamics involved, and partly because it was by witnessing these events that I became aware of the ambivalence of Korafe's attitudes to magic. Nevertheless all dramas are linked together by the permeability of their boundaries to actors: different strands of one plot being developed in different ways and to different extents in other dramas with different events as their climax (cf. Young 1983a:268-9).

THE DROUGHT AND THE DRAMA

This drama began with the realisation that Joseph was going to die. I begin by relating those events through which my own awareness of Joseph's impending death developed. This was shaped by my interaction with those Korafe with whom I lived or whose knowledge I deliberately sought out. Since I lived in Goodenough village, and spent most of my time with one Ameta and two Kandoro households, I will narrate the acts in this drama as I perceived them from the perspective of those particular participants. The multiplicity of their social roles as members of a number of different groups organised according to alternative criteria (residence, descent and affinity) is partly represented in figure 1.
(Numbers indicate village of residence)
The drought

July and August are the driest months in Tufi but, in normal years, they are also in the middle of the season of plenty and feasting. Feasts of different kinds and scale occupied the time and attention of Goodenough villagers. Joseph does not feature in my fieldnotes for that period; being sick he did not play a prominent role in the feasts. My only recollection of him at this time is when, with some other women from Goodenough village, I went to ask his permission to use a source of water on his land, as the stream which we normally used had dried up.

During September it rained for a couple of days. People began planting the taro suckers which they had been nursing in the moist patches of ground near water holes. They planted them in the new gardens which they had cleared and burnt during the dryer months. No rain followed those first showers and, by October, people were becoming concerned for their gardens. Most of the newly planted taro was burnt by the sun. The more careful women who had managed their gardens judiciously were able to supplement their pots of tapioca roots with rare produce from their sāngu (old, overgrown gardens). However people were beginning to tire of tapioca and sago, and money for rice was running low.

Concerned for the absence of rain, people began questioning Godfrey's competence as weather magician. As elder of the Arere clan, he was in charge of garēva (weather magic) and of the relevant ancestral relics. However, he had only recently taken on this responsibility from his classificatory brother. He had been living away from Tufi when his father died, and one of his sister's sons had been given Godfrey's ancestral relics to keep. When Godfrey realised that the drought called into question his position as garēva-embo, he consulted with his sister's son. Having established that the younger man had returned all the garēva implements and was not meddling with its powers, Godfrey went to seek advice from weather magicians belonging to a neighbouring territorial group.

Godfrey was not the only ritual specialist to show concern for the state of the gardens on Kabuni. The two Javosa garden magicians, Sirus from Baga and Joseph from Lelioa, discussed the issue and decided that they should do something about it. As Joseph was sick, it was Sirus who took the initiative to summon all Kabuni people to a meeting in Goodenough village. That Sunday there were more people at the Church service in Goodenough village than there had been for weeks.

Sirus brought with him an old clay pot and some bundles of grated leaves, barks, and roots. After the church service he sat with other elders on a platform. Sirus prefaced his actions by reminding people that each clan had knowledge and responsibilities of different kinds. He was doing what was in his powers, as elder of his lineage. It was his clan's kotōfu to know about garden magic. His words were sanctioned by his ancestral patrimony. In this matter his clan had the kotōfu and the say. Joseph's eldest son, Albert, who was sitting next to Sirus, added the contents of a few bundles of his own to the mixture prepared by his classificatory father. Formen, a Bubu elder, reminded the gathering that Sirus' garden magic was
not meant to substitute for work: the magic would only be effective if people also worked hard to clear, plant, and weed their gardens. Another Javosa elder offered to make a portion of his land available for all Kabuni clans to make a communal garden in the higher reaches of the mountains, where land was fertile and moist.

Godfrey took this opportunity to raise the subject of his role as weather magician. He began by disclaiming any credit for the rain which had fallen during his short absence. Then he said that he was aware that his own brothers (referring to some of the elders present) had criticised him for spending too much time fishing. These rumours referred to one of the well-known ritual precautions taken by the garéva-éombo of the past, of avoiding contact with water except at such times as they wished to cause a rainfall. It was thought that Godfrey's powers as garéva-éombo had suffered from the hours he spent in the sea every day, and interfered with his ability to stop the drought. He reminded the gathering that he had left the village as a young man and had spent most of his adult life working elsewhere; as a result he had not had the chance to learn about garéva, and had never chewed betelnut from his ancestors' limepot. His classificatory brother had been responsible for garéva. Now he was dead and Godfrey was 'looking after' the ancestral relics of both lineages. Nevertheless, since he had never chewed with lime from the garéva limepot, or made use of his clan's powers, it had not been necessary to follow ritual restrictions.

Godfrey explained that only when he heard that people were commenting on his fishing had he become shamed into taking an interest in garéva. After reassuring himself that his nephew was not responsible for the drought, he had decided to ask for help. He had discussed his predicament with the weather magicians in Bauwame, and they had tried out their magic together. Although it rained that night and the following night, he emphasised, it was not his magic which had caused the rain, but God's will. Since his return the sky had cleared again and no rain seemed forthcoming. He would try again, but he stressed that he was not as powerful as his predecessors, since he was not in the state of ritual preparation which was customary to them.

By admitting his incompetence and inexperience as garéva-éombo Godfrey was protecting himself from the possibility of being suspected of causing the drought. By telling of his visit to Bauwame he also circumvented allegations that he was avoiding his responsibilities as elder of a clan with magical powers. At the same time, Godfrey avoided deflecting suspicion onto his nephew, whom he cleared of responsibility. This was a humbling experience, however, as it undermined Godfrey's status as clan elder. Javosa elders, who recognised themselves as the authors of the rumours concerning Godfrey's liking for fishing, apologised and assured him of their understanding.

After they shook hands, the discussion returned to garden magic. Although Albert's addition of fityógha (medicine) ingredients sent by his father was taken to mean that Joseph approved of Sirus' actions, his absence was felt by the elders who were unsure of the ritual proceedings and fearful of making a blunder. Sirus explained that he would put some burning embers in the mixture and let it
smoulder. The smoke would be transported by the wind, spreading its beneficial effects around. Each village on Kabuni should keep the clay pot burning continuously for two days and two nights, before bringing it to the next village. People were nervous about harbouring the magical pot in their village and questioned him about who should have it first. Sirus said it was not important, as long as each village on the peninsula kept the mixture alight for two days: his own village of Baga would be last.

Goodenough villagers, who were the first to be entrusted with the pot, spent two anxious days. They were not convinced that there were no specific ritual restrictions to observe. They worried about unwittingly offending the spirits associated with the magic, and snapped at children who approached the pot in their games. Sirus's only recommendation to them was not to go fishing or to the market while the pot was in their village. For maximum benefit they should stay at home or go to work in their gardens. A feeling of restlessness pervaded the village, which turned to anxiety when it was reported that Joseph had been angered by reports that the pot of magic had gone to Goodenough village first. People said that he thought the pot should have started burning in Kabuni, the highest village on the ridge, and home to the Kotofu clan. As news of Joseph's reaction spread among other villages, apprehension about harbouring the pot caused a hitch in Sirus' plan. No one was willing to come and take it from Goodenough villagers. Famadara, Godfrey's village, was next on the planned route, but its inhabitants would not come to get the pot. Finally, one day late, Godfrey asked his nephew Inoch to bring it to him.

Despite Godfrey's and Sirus' efforts, the rain held off and many of the newly planted gardens showed signs of dying. As their own new taro plants died, people were reduced to buying seedlings from Maisin women at Tufi market, or asking their kin in Uwe to supply them with suckers from their gardens. Invidious comparisons were constantly made. Each person contrasted the poverty of his or her own garden with the bounty perceived or suspected in those of neighbours, members of different clans or villages, and especially those of different territorial groups. Women carefully concealed the little they harvested from their gardens in bundles of tapioca, to avoid provoking the jealousy or suspicion of the less judicious.

Visiting the sick and then the healer

The first indication I had of the fact that people were worried about Joseph came in December. Jessette was a member of the Mother's Union. This organisation was not always very active in Kabuni, but periodically its members would decide to visit sick people. I had accompanied these women on various such visits. One day Jessette asked me to buy some flour, as she wanted to bake some scones for Joseph and Sebastian, who were both sick. This was her initiative, and it struck me as strange that these elders had not been visited by the Mother's Union as a group.
Sebastian was Joseph's younger classificatory brother, and also a Javosa elder living in Lelioa. He had been infirm for a number of years and rarely left his house.

Our visit did not take the form of a *guméma* or of a Mothers' Union visit. Jessette and I alone went to Lelioa late in the afternoon, carrying two dishes of scones. While she spoke to Sebastian and his wife, Jessette asked me to take one of the bundles to Joseph's house. As I approached his veranda for the first time in months I was shocked by his emaciated appearance. I exchanged a few words with him and his wife expecting Jessette to come and join us, and was surprised when she motioned to me to follow her. It was dusk and we were going back to our village. She did not go to Joseph's house herself.

The next day I accompanied Noah (Jessete's husband; Joseph's and Elijah's sister's son) to visit Elijah. For months now he had left his house in Lelioa to live in a solitary house which his sons had built him on the point of Komoa, overlooking the beach and his apprentice's house. Elijah himself was frequently ill during this period. He suffered from 'short wind' and had trouble walking up the steep paths from the beach to Lelioa.

Noah, after making sure that we were alone in the house with Elijah, told his uncle that he was worried about Joseph. He told him of Jessette's impressions and asked him whether he could do anything to cure him. Elijah's answer surprised me. He did not say that he lacked the skills or knowledge to cure Joseph. In fact he did not talk of symptoms and remedies at all. Instead, he told Noah that when some people had suggested finding out who was making *ktie* on the gardens in order to retaliate with sorcery, only Joseph rejected the proposal. He reminded Noah that when Sirus made *fyogha* for the gardens, Joseph did not participate. Then, changing the subject, Elijah remarked that Stonewigg, elder of the Javosa lineage settled in Maruta, was also sick. His case was complicated and serious, but Elijah reassured Noah that he was working on the case and believed Stonewigg would recover. He was only concerned to find a solution quickly, as he wanted to go to Port Moresby. He had received a letter to say that his turn had come to collect his war pension.

Later I asked for some clarification. I remembered that Joseph was already sick when Sirus had brought his pot of garden magic to Goodenough, and that he had sent some of his own ingredients with his son. Was Joseph being blamed for the poor state of the gardens? It was explained to me that nobody was blaming Joseph for causing the gardens to die, but he was the most senior among garden magicians, and the fact that gardens were still in a wretched state was attributed to his refusal to seek out and punish the culprits. This indicated either that he did not wish to punish them or that he was no longer capable of it. Either way he was not fulfilling his responsibilities as ritual leader.

Elijah implied that he was powerless to cure his brother in the face of such accusations, but it seemed that he would not even attempt to. Puzzled, I asked whether Elijah (as sorcerer) was actually responsible for Joseph's sickness. This
was denied; it was believed that an unrelated sorcerer would have used sorcery against Joseph, but that the general consensus among elders was that the illness was deserved in the light of the state of their gardens. This was demonstrated by the unusual fact that nobody had been to Lelioa on a *gumêma* visit in all the months that Joseph had been sick, a very unusual neglect for such a prominent elder. If all the other elders and sorcerers had come to the conclusion that Joseph should die, Elijah was powerless against them. That was why he had refrained from visiting his brother and trying to apply his *fyôgha*. This explanation made me think again about Jessette’s reluctance to make a formal or even conspicuous visit to Joseph’s house when he had made the scones for him. Shielded by what would be considered a normal concern on my part, as Westerner, she had constructed our visit so she could see for herself how sick he was, without exposing herself to censure.

I had been talking to Elijah about sorcerers’ committees (see chapter 4), so I asked whether there had been a meeting at which Joseph was sentenced to die. Although a secret meeting could have taken place, it was not believed to have been necessary on this occasion. They had voted with their feet, so to speak, by keeping away. Joseph himself had asked his classificatory son, who was a medical officer, to stop giving him injections against TB since he realised that he was getting no solidarity from other clan elders and he would die anyway.

A meeting of the sorcery committee

During the following week Elijah convened a public meeting of the *kde* committee to discuss Stonewigg’s illness. All the most renowned Korafe sorcerers attended, as well as elders of most *Kotôfu*. Elijah was concerned because every time that he relieved his brother of one symptom, a new one developed; this had happened six times already. He wanted to find out who was responsible and why they would not allow his cures to take effect. The discussion was long and complicated as many past events involving people and places with which I was unfamiliar were brought into it. It was concluded that Stonewigg had been subjected to sorcery, by people whom he had visited in a distant part of the district, because of the association made between his clan and garden magic. After his visit, the villagers noticed that their gardens were looking poorly and blamed him. The committee agreed that the accusations were unfounded and that Stonewigg should be allowed to recover. They would collectively put pressure on the people identified as responsible, and if that proved insufficient, they agreed to take the case to court.

That matter settled, Elijah introduced the subject of Joseph’s illness. He said that they were probably wondering why such a powerful and respected elder should lie sick for such a long time, while his knowledgeable brothers made no apparent effort to cure him. His justification this time was of a different order from the explanation he had privately given to Noah, but its implications were equally damning for Joseph.
He related that when Joseph was a young bachelor, his father, a very powerful man, decided with two other ritual specialists (elders of the Arere and Fioga clans respectively) to mix their kiie in the same pot to make a deadly poison. For each of the kiie ingredients the specialists would have set aside an antidote and remedy (fiyógha). Although the three magicians had mixed their ingredients together they had kept their ingredients and the corresponding fiyógha secret from each other. Each of the elders then gave a small bottle of the new kiie to one of his sons. One of the other young men disregarded the elders' instructions to leave the poison unused. He made irresponsible use of it while visiting a tribe on the Musa river. As a result the elders took the poison away from their sons and it was never used again.

Joseph's symptoms, according to Elijah, indicated that it was the same káe which had killed the people on the Musa. Somehow, he said, Joseph must have been contaminated by the káe all those years ago. The antidotes for all three clans' kiie were necessary to cure him. Although Elijah and Joseph knew the antidote for the Javosa ingredient used by their father, and the Fioga clan elders could tell them their own father's antidote, the Arere clan's knowledge of sorcery had long since died with the last of its practitioners. For that reason he was unable to cure Joseph.

This is an exemplary case of what Korafe call kasia sári, in which statements are made in such a way as to obscure their real meaning and implications to those without access to the same knowledge as the speaker and his intended audience. While talking of events of the past, the story established the futility of trying to cure Joseph. The point was also made that Joseph was to blame for his own illness, resulting from his incautious use of powerful substances beyond his competence.

While the sorcerers at the meeting went inside to see Stonewigg and consult about medicines, those elders who had been asked to attend the meeting in their capacity as respected and uninvolved Kotófu and thus giving legitimacy to the decisions taken, continued to talk. The theme which ran through their discussions was that problems always arose when men meddled with spheres of competence to which they were not entitled. The elder of the Gaso clan from Bauwame summed up their feelings: each clan had its own role to play, with its concomitant kotófu (emblems and relics), sári (knowledgeable talk), virónu (authoritative speech), éko (bad), and evéva (good). As long as men kept to the sphere of knowledge and authority to which they were entitled, which they had inherited from their ancestors, there were no problems. Now, however, he complained, everybody's 'evil' and 'good' were mixed up and Kotófu elders could no longer control their Sabtia to ensure that their powers were used appropriately, as no one was sure about who was responsible for what magic. He suggested that in order to solve the problems besetting them, the different clans should sort out their kotófu, good and evil, from those belonging to other clans. Having picked up Elijah's theme that meddling with powers to which one has no right leads to unforeseen dangers, these elders broadened its conclusions to include the 'mixing up' of different clan's kotófu, with dire consequences for the community as a whole. The subtext of these
elders' discussions was a confirmation of Elijah's assessment: Joseph had, in some way or another which it was not necessary to spell out, failed as a leader.\textsuperscript{11}

'Guméma'

Although the Committee meeting concluded with a public 'washing of hands' regarding Joseph's illness, this did not prevent those people who were closer to him from demonstrating their concern. Joseph's classificatory sister Alma began visiting him daily, and reporting back to Goodenough villagers on his conditions. A few days after Elijah's departure for Port Moresby, the first \textit{guméma} was held in Lelioa. Apart from the villagers of Lelioa and Goodenough, only Godfrey from Famadara participated with his family. The genealogical links between the members of these three villages are complex and multiple (see fig. 1).

One notable feature of this time was the way in which the links between Goodenough and Lelioa villagers were explicated and reinforced on the basis of relations deriving from the brother-sister bond (see chapter 3). Throughout this period the relationships of mother's brother to sister's son, of cross cousin (ghd\textit{t}o), and those derivative of them, were emphasised as the operative ones.\textsuperscript{12} Thus, although the whole village of Goodenough spent considerable time in Lelioa, those individuals whose participation was more public, as opposed to those who were there to help out their fellow villagers, were all able to trace their relation to Joseph as sister's son.

At this stage it was taken for granted by all that Joseph would die of this illness. It was not a mere warning. As people commented on the general neglect of Joseph by his peers, his nephews advised his sons to ask a renowned sorcerer from a different territorial group who was an affinal relative, to treat him. They replied that he had promised to visit Joseph but had not come yet. In the course of the afternoon Joseph's brothers, sons, and nephews agreed that once Joseph died they would 'close' the village. Since nobody came to see him while he was ill, nobody would be allowed to mourn for him. They also agreed that neither of his sons (Albert and Frederick) would take on his role as garden magician since it was that which made him a target for sorcery.

Joseph dies

One morning Joseph's son came to Goodenough village announcing his father's impending death. Goodenough villagers changed their plans for the day, assembled a few things, and followed the short path to Lelioa in small family groups. Joseph was lying on a mat on his veranda, surrounded by a small group of close family members. Women rubbed his arms and legs, while his sons and nephews took it in turns to sit next to him, helping him to shift position or supporting him in their arms when he wanted to sit up. Other visitors sat with Sebastian who was too weak to go to his brother's house. One of his nephews was holding Joseph when he
died. In the hush which followed, Joseph's wife brought out a new jăvō (small stringbag for carrying personal belongings) and a quick choice was made of the objects which should be placed in it, to go in Joseph's grave. Since he had been a church councillor, his silver cross was added to his personal belongings.

While Joseph's body was being laid out inside his house on a new mat and sheet brought out by his daughters-in-law, his brothers and nephews made speeches confirming the decisions which had been discussed in the preceding days. Since Joseph had been left to die alone, only his sister Mara Joyce, his classificatory brother and close friend Hobart from Baga, and his wife's sister should be told of his death. Apart from those three individuals, only those already present would be allowed to mourn that night. At dawn they would take Joseph to the Church where a funeral service would be held. Sorāra (crying and chanting mourning laments) would cease after the burial and Lelioa would be closed to mourners, thus excluding those who were absent at the wake from the mourning process.

The women gathered around Joseph inside the house. His widow, the wives of his brothers, and his daughters-in-law started to cry softly, chanting formal sorāra mourning words. It was only when Joseph's sister Mara Joyce arrived from Konambu that the mourning process really began. She entered the house shouting angrily at the wife of one of Joseph's brothers, whom she accused of neglecting Joseph during his illness. Her shouting startled the crying women into momentary silence. Mara Joyce hit the woman she was scolding over the head, knelt by her brother's body, and started the chorus of sorāra.

Hobart, summoned from Baga, arrived after nightfall; he and some of the men already in the village joined the women in sorāra for a while. When they came out onto the veranda the men communicated to Hobart their intention to make a public statement to the effect that none of Joseph's sons or brothers had acquired his knowledge of magic, as he had not selected a successor. One of the younger men suggested that nobody should let their hair or beard grow in sign of mourning, or follow kanāngara (a self-imposed prohibition to eat a particular food in memory of the deceased) because Joseph was a man of the Church and those mourning customs were frowned upon by the Anglican mission. Hobart agreed in principle but added that, for his part, he would refrain from visiting Lelioa after the burial, since he used to come there to see his brother and friend, and no longer had reason to come.

Before daybreak Joseph's nephews, instructed by Sebastian, warned the women to get ready as people from neighbouring villages would have heard the wailing and would start arriving soon. Another Church Councillor went to collect a cross from the church; it would precede Joseph to the cemetery in recognition of his status as Church Councillor. Everyone else went inside to have a last look at Joseph. The mourners broke down in tears as they intoned farewell verses. Their weight, as they crowded around the body, made the floor beams crack and the floor sagged under them. In the surge of people pressing through the door, Albert's wife began shaking and making guttural sounds. Another woman took the baby she was carrying from her arms while Albert shook her, scolding her for taking part in
soràra. Then he addressed Joseph's spirit, who he thought was trying to communicate through the woman. He asked his father to calm down so they could understand what he wanted to say, but the woman's words were unintelligible. Suddenly she lay down and seemed to be asleep. She was left there while the preparations for the burial continued.15

Meanwhile the cross had arrived and young men put Joseph's body on a stretcher to carry it to the Church. Everyone in the village followed them except for Sebastian who cried from his veranda as his elder brother's body was carried past, 'Go Joseph, go peacefully'. They placed Joseph's body in the church and began waiting for people from other villages to come to the funeral service. Some among those present wanted the service to be performed as soon as the Evangelist arrived, to exclude as many people from the other Kabuni villages as possible. After some discussion it was decided that since this was a Christian service, all parishioners (i.e. from Kabuni peninsula) should be given the chance to participate. Meanwhile young men dug a grave in the cemetery which lies between the villages of Goodenough and Lelioa.16

At this stage in the mourning process, the actors' main concern was with their own anger and grief at Joseph's death. The mourning was closed to outsiders: those who had not attended the guméma and who were all, to varying degrees, considered to share in the responsibility of his death. These declarations of closure by the recently bereaved are expected reactions, associated with a feeling of betrayal by the larger community for having allowed the death to occur. By preventing people from taking on mourning restrictions and participating in soràra, Joseph's close kinsmen were, in effect, refusing to commit themselves to future exchanges with outsiders, thus precluding themselves from re-entering a network of sociality with those they blamed for the ignominious death of Joseph.

Joseph's restricted circle of close family and kin, those who had been present during the previous day and night, defined themselves on the basis of their commitment to Christianity in opposition to those who had neglected Joseph. In their resentment they defined all outsiders as committed to the evil forces of sorcery responsible for Joseph's death. Having created an artificial boundary between themselves and the others, they attempted to restrict participation in mourning along those lines. Throughout this process Joseph's involvement with garden magic was played down in favour of his leadership role in the Church context. His involvement with magic was seen as the cause for his death, and rejected as such by his sons. As 'good Christians' his sons wanted nothing to do with Joseph's magic. They emphasised Joseph's role as Church Councillor by including Joseph's cross in his javo, holding a funeral service in the church, and by their choosing to prevent mourning practices disapproved of by the church. It was in his capacity as church leader that they chose to commemorate him: they would follow in his footsteps as Christians, not as magicians.
Forcing against closure

As soon as the funeral service was over most of the women and some men followed Joseph and his close family to the cemetery singing hymns. Once Joseph's body was placed in the grave singing gave way to weeping as the mourners cried their last greetings to him, the older among them urged Joseph's spirit to go peacefully and reminded him that they would join him soon.

The people from Lelioa went straight back to their village, to discourage those who had attended the service from following them to Joseph's home. However, those who had come to the service from other villages on Kabuni did not show any intention of going home. After some uncertainty they sat on the verandas and platforms of Goodenough village, looking as if they would settle down there. Eventually Joseph's nephews gave in, and told them that there was no point in staying there: if they insisted on mourning they may as well go to Lelioa despite the wishes of Joseph's sons and brothers. Young boys were sent to Tufi station to get some tea, sugar, rice, and tinned fish to feed the mourners.17

In Lelioa the women's sorāra had already started. Some of the newcomers went inside to join Lilla (Joseph's widow), most of the men arranged themselves outside: some on Joseph's veranda, some around Sebastian, still sitting in front of his own house. The women from Goodenough village took charge of preparing some food for the visitors, while Lelioa women joined the widow and visitors in sorāra. Joseph's two nephews, acting as spokesmen for their uncles and cousins, made public Albert's and Frederick's renunciation of garden magic. Neither of Joseph's sons, they said, had acquired his ancestral knowledge and powers. From then on, those concerned for garden magic would not be able to rely on anyone in Lelioa: Joseph had taken the Lelioa magic with him when he died.

Robert, the eldest among the nephews, delivered a damning speech. He did not know why Joseph had died, whether it was because of a fault which he had committed in his youth, or whether he was being punished. He did not know why his uncle was left to die alone, whether it was because Joseph had no money to pay the sorcerers, or whether they had wanted him to die. The fact was that he was left to die alone like a mangy dog. As nobody had bothered to visit Joseph during his illness, as there had been no guméma, there would be no proper mourning. After they had eaten the food which was being prepared, the mourning would be closed and everyone would have to go home. There would be no yāura avāri (sleeping in the cold), no rovārova (letting hair and beard grow unkempt, wearing special armbands or legbands, or black clothing, in mourning) and no kanangara (giving up of a particular food associated to the memory of the dead person).18

The visitors who responded to these speeches were all of Joseph's generation, chronologically older than the men who had spoken for Joseph's family, and either afa (father) or ebe (uncle) in relation to them. They were the elders of the Kabuni clans. They referred to the fact that their generation was dying out and the next generation was coming to assume positions of leadership. They enumerated those
among their generation who were dead, and their peers who, still alive, shared their leadership role with leaders of other clans who belonged to a younger generation - 'young boys' were beginning to have the authority to speak for themselves, and even for their elders. This was a reference to Robert's position as elder of the Kandoro clan in Kabuni despite his youth in comparison to the majority of clan elders. Although uttered as a mere observation of the changes brought by the passage of time, it could have been taken as a warning to Robert not to overstep his mark. Their speeches went on to elaborate on the theme of transformation: Joseph's death, and his sons' refusal to practice garden magic, would result in the demise of yet another aspect of traditional knowledge. Yet Joseph himself, they remembered, represented a change from ancestral ways. As well as garden magician he had been a Christian and a Church Councillor, and it was in that light which they interpreted Joseph's family's decision to forgo customary mourning customs.

After the visitors had left, the Lelioa men declared that all mourning was now over. They agreed that nobody should sleep outside, they should all go inside their own homes and close the doors, and the next day would be free for all to go back to their own business. Hobart said that, in keeping with Joseph's position as Church councillor, Lilla should not be secluded. Godfrey agreed, he said that seclusion was an old custom which was stopped by the Mission. He suggested that Joseph's widow, who could be heard lamenting inside the house, should continue to cry until Sunday (three more days) when the women from the Mothers' Union would come and fetch her to go to the church service. Sebastian, who was still sitting in his own house and therefore could not hear the conversation, addressed the village. He said that Joseph's widow and her sons had been alone during the course of Joseph's illness, she had been a good wife and looked after him well, therefore he would not tolerate any suggestion that she should be secluded. After establishing general consensus about that, all the visitors except Godfrey returned to their own homes that night. Joseph's sisters took the widow to the stream, helped her to wash and gave her some black clothes to wear, then escorted her once more to the cemetery, before she returned inside the house.

Washing and dressing the widow with new clothes is part of the traditional end-of-seclusion ceremony; it is the deceased's sisters' privilege to choose the right time. By performing these services so soon, the women were complying with the decision that Lilla should not be secluded. They performed the ceremony at the conclusion of the first day of mourning, thus attempting to short-circuit the intermediate stages.

Following Joseph's death, his nephews became more closely involved in the events. From the marginal advisory role which they had performed in the last days of their uncle's life, they began assuming more responsibility. Their families provided most of the food for visiting mourners. Joseph's brothers and sons, distraught by grief, were not considered fit to talk for themselves, so it was his nephews who had to do it for them. For that reason it was important that they had talked with their cousins and uncles before his death, to make sure they understood
what position they should take when talking to outsiders. However, their attempts to exclude outsiders from mourning had failed. They had allowed their fellow-parishioners to attend the Church service. Once they too had defined themselves as Christians by attending it, the opposition constructed on the basis of commitment or not to the Christian way, was invalidated. Joseph's nephews had no grounds on which to keep them away from Lelioa without resorting to outright accusations of sorcery. By ignoring their interdictions, members of other villages in Kabuni ensured that, once the worst of the grieving was over, Lelioa villagers would be reintegrated in the transformed network of exchange and interaction.

The following day, Goodenough villagers were alerted by the sound of wailing to the arrival of a new group of mourners in Lelioa. These were people from different territorial groups who, having heard the news of Joseph's death, had travelled since dawn to participate in the sorara. Noah sent one of his sons to Tufi station to get some more trade store food for the visitors, while he, accompanied by his own nephew and Sebastian's son, went fishing. In the afternoon Joseph's nephews and their families returned to Lelioa and the women cooked for the visitors. They went inside to wail alongside the widow, then the men joined Joseph's sons and brothers on the veranda. For the first time since Joseph's death, Lelioa women helped to cook for the visitors. The decision taken by Joseph's sons (to renounce their magical inheritance) was reaffirmed in the presence of the newcomers. Once again the mourning was declared finished that evening, as soon as the visitors left.

**Monangi has a vision**

On the second day, a crucial actor in this drama arrived with his wife, to mourn for Joseph. Monangi, of the neighbouring Yega tribe, had been living and working in Popondetta for many years. His relations to the cast of this drama are multiple: as Godfrey's classificatory mother's brother, he was referred to as *abua* (grandfather) by the men of Goodenough village. Monangi's, Joseph's, and Sebastians's wives were sisters; the three men were thus *tománi*. He was referred to as *afa* (father) by Joseph's sons; see figure 2. Monangi was therefore in a very peculiar position, occupying at the same time an outsider's role (belonging to a different clan and even language group, and having lived for so long in Popondetta he was detached from the recent events in Tufi); one of friendship to Joseph's brothers; and one of authority to their sons and nephews. The ambiguity of his position allowed Monangi to act as a catalyst of events, precipitating the crisis to a point where the underlying ideological concerns of the people involved were brought to the surface. His capacity to intervene at this juncture is explained in Korafe terms by Monangi's renowned faculty to communicate with the spirit world.19
After spending the first day of his arrival inside Joseph’s house, crying and lamenting with Lilla, Monangi had a vision. In this vision, Joseph was leaving, taking with him the vēkaga (seedlings or shoots) of taro, yams, sweet potatoes, sugar cane, and bananas. This was interpreted as a warning that Joseph’s spirit, in resentment for his death, would prevent gardens from producing any food whatsoever. As garden magician he was venting his anger on those who, because of his powers, wanted or permitted his death. Alarmed by the implications of Monangi’s vision the elders of Lelioa asked him to get in contact with Joseph’s spirit again, and plead with him to relent. All attempts to persuade Joseph’s spirit were unsuccessful that night, and the elders decided to summon all Kabuni elders to a meeting for the next night.

**Court case with spirit**

As we reached Lelioa after dusk, we joined a crowd gathered around the platform outside Joseph’s house. Elders and their wives were sitting on the platform, at one end of which were Monangi and his wife. Instead of being arranged around the edges of the platform as usual, the men sat in two rows, facing Monangi. Everyone else crowded around the platform or sat on the veranda of the nearest house, straining to hear the medium’s words. His voice was very low and hoarse, due to his exertions during the sorārta of the previous day. Mothers and elder sisters tried to pacify the children in their care, and village dogs squirmed their way in between people’s legs, sniffing for dropped morcels of food. A pressure lamp, and the extra kerosene needed to operate it, had been found and readied; it hung in the centre of Monangi’s platform, creating a circle of bright light around the elders and leaving the rest of the village in darkness.

Monangi’s preparations were simple: he lit a cigarette and arranged it with some betel nut, lime, and mustard leaf as an offering. Reclining back with his head
on his wife's lap, he called Joseph's name, summoning him and other ancestral spirits to take part in this 'court case'. Godfrey spoke for the living, pleading with Joseph to take his magic but leave the seeds behind for them:

Joseph you died of hunger, or something... I don't know. So you, well the important possessions, our great things that you are holding... those kotōfu things, they're yours. Those are for your name, hold those in your hand. They're yours! You could take just those things, those, the things stored in the basket, you could take some of those and stand with them: one of them you could give to us, our possessions. If you would take that one thing. That's what I am talking about. If you take these... what they said to you but now can't tell you, well, now 'Albert or Frederick were given theirs'[people will say]. So now they will come to your children and accuse them. So, my elder brother, I don't want the bad things you suffered to come to your children. There is nobody here to prepare the taro seedlings! So, I say the things... well, unwrap them and give us ours. We'll take it and you, the things which you were given, those... well, okay store those away! The children will get those things for planting, they will take the seeds to plant! Sugar-cane shoots. Banana seeds. Sweet potato seedlings. Taro suckers [...] don't take those away!

One should go with dignity! We... you went down and we, honest you came down, so tomorrow we will make a start. You came down when we called you, so now we will place the things, plant the seeds and you will give us the things without wrangling. So, give us the things. We'll take them, my elder brother. All right.

Monangi, who was now perceived by the audience as a medium through which Joseph's words could be spoken to them, replied that he was taking the garden seeds away because he was angry and resentful at the way in which he was left to die. Nobody helped him and he was left to die alone like a dog. Only the people closer to Monangi could hear his reply, because of his hoarse whispering. Nevertheless, everyone could tell from the angry tone of his voice that Joseph was not willing to relent. When the medium stopped talking, Godfrey started again.

I am going to talk of another thing: Your stuff, that which, when blown on the seeds makes the sugar cane twist and turn. 'What did we do?' That is what they asked you when we were here together. That stuff came from your forefathers so, when they said that, you put charms with tobacco, called your ancestor's name, prayed [...] and thus we came to our time. 'Grandfather, what did you do it with?' You asked that yourself, 'What did you say?' But you, did you tell Albert or Frederick, did they understand? Did you show them, did they learn? Therefore where... if the sugar-cane twists, he... how is he going to know to call out? That's what I don't know, therefore that stuff just give that back, then your family will be left alone. Now if that twists people won't know, they will be desperate, and will come to ask Frederick or Albert. That way, for the sake of those seeds, for sugar-cane seeds, Frederick or Albert will be the victims of sorcery. I am telling you straight, you see. Therefore, it would be good, my elder brother, the stuff, allright you brought it yourself but... well, you have the authority to give it. But... you could go like a true big leader. So turn... if you turned to go we would follow after you.... If you would, looking over us, go ahead, then we would remember you. That is big
men's way of dying! All right [...] The things, seeds, give them to us, we'll have them [...]. But the stuff, which you alone brought up when we were coming out [of the hole in the ground through which clan ancestors are believed to have emerged carrying their kotofu], well that, there is none like that here, so give us those things. We'll take them and when our people take their leaves and things, and put them in their land, look peacefully at them. Don't do as you said, don't make them grow tall and twist, and then turn back and crush us! Therefore my elder brother, I say thank you, we saw what you showed us, we came and discussed with you. You heard what we had to say, so now you will give us those things. All right.

The spirit's reply was long and convoluted, Monangi's voice was becoming more and more feeble. The other spirits, which had been asked to attend the 'court case', were putting pressure on Joseph to relent. Godfrey had persuaded them that, because of their ancestors' reputation as garden magicians, Joseph's sons would be considered responsible for any shortage of garden food. While he had known how to remedy things when the gardens stop producing, he had not taught his sons. They would not be able to remedy the damage caused by Joseph's refusal to return the seeds to the living, and would themselves become victims of sorcery.

Joseph apparently relented in the end, but he insisted that those assembled for the hearing should decide who should receive the seeds from him. It was up to the living, those attending the meeting, to nominate the person who should receive them. There was a murmur as the people crowding around the platform were informed of Joseph's request, people looked at each other and whispered tentative suggestions. It could be one of Joseph's brothers, although they were elderly men, or one of their sons. But the more suitable would be one of Joseph's own sons, despite their public renunciation of their father's magical heritage.

Godfrey, as spokesman, was hesitant to reply, and he showed how flustered he was by shouting in rising exasperation.

Well... I am going to say like this. For who shall I say? Who shall I say? I don't know, so... I am speaking... Listen! Give it to Albert, he will take it! ...Why do you ask who? Give it to him, he will take it then Frederick, Apollus, Forora, when people say ... if Albert says so, they will say your name, put tobacco down, and having said your name let them plant their banana seeds! So why did you ask?!

Joseph's spirit began talking through the medium again, this time addressing Albert and his wife. He told them to listen carefully. One day within the following week they should go to a new garden, one which they had cleared but not planted in yet, taking with them one seedling of each plant variety. Before planting them they should call out to him to let him know, then the seedlings would grow well, all gardens would prosper.21 Joseph then reminded his son and daughter-in-law of the responsibilities involved in receiving what he was going to give them. This would change their social status, and they should behave accordingly. They should act quietly, never raise their voices, avoid unnecessary noise and laughter, and be always friendly and hospitable to visitors.
Quite suddenly Monangi thanked the listeners and told them that Joseph's talk was over, then he sat up and the atmosphere became relaxed. Women cooked some vegetables with fish and people gathered in small groups to eat and talk quietly.

Monangi took the boat back to Popondetta on the following day. He had to return to work. During the second week after Joseph's death, Albert and Sebastian's son Apollus prepared some seedlings and planted them in their new garden, following Joseph's instructions. They did so in secret and there was no talk about the experience.

**Interlude**

Monangi, an outsider who nevertheless occupied a structurally privileged position, was able to intervene at the height of the crisis in a way that no inhabitant of Kabuni - closely enmeshed in relations and events connected to Joseph's death - would have been able to do. It is impossible to say through what processes Monangi, having spent but one day in Lelioa, was able to uncover and give expression to the feelings, fears, and preoccupations at the root of the tensions which beset the mourners. It was taken for granted by everyone I spoke to at the time that Monangi, a man renowned for his faculty of communicating with spirits, had experienced a vision on the first night of his stay, and had since acted as a medium for Joseph's spirit. The things he said were not thought to originate with, or even be influenced by, Monangi himself. Stephen describes such experiences (phenomena which are highly responsive to external suggestion and cultural context, while exerting special influence over mental and bodily processes outside conscious awareness and volitional control) as 'autonomous imagination' (Stephen 1989b:212).

The medium is complying with external instructions - the cultural expectations surrounding the possessing spirit's performance - and combining material stored in memory concerning social relationships and behaviour (but possibly not available in waking consciousness) with imaginative narrative - to create a performance that comes not from his conscious contriving, but from some invisible source - identified as the spirit world (ibid.:213).

I thought at the time that Joseph's refusal to choose among his potential successors was a function of Monangi's inability to make an informed guess (consciously or not), as he would not have been privy to internal relations among Javosa clansmen, or be certain about who would have acquired Joseph's knowledge of magic. However, I do not wish to impute an intentionality to Monangi for which I have no evidence. I will take these experiences at face value, as related by the protagonists. My purpose is to look at how these experiences affected the processes of crisis resolution, and the participants' perception of the issues which faced them. Monangi's vision provided a focus for the general sense of unease which affected people of Kabuni and beyond. It provided a context for discussion;
a concrete problem to be solved. In the process some of the underlying contentious
issues faced by contemporary Korafe were raised and dealt with in a public
context.

At one level, Joseph's anger was a damning indictment of the state of
'brotherly' relations in Kabuni. They had permitted the crisis to reach such a point
that one of the most respected elders in the community was left to die alone. The
lack of cooperation among brothers was evident at all levels of definition (see
chapter 1). At the village level, the fact that one of its founding 'brothers' had
moved to live in an isolated house was significant. At the clan level, discord was
implied by the failure of other Javosa elders (all classificatory brothers) to visit
Joseph. The state of the gardens was partly attributable to the lack of cooperation
between the two classificatory brothers who shared the clan's knowledge of garden
magic. A failure of brotherly relations was also apparent at the higher level of
'brotherhood', the one which sees all the clans within a territorial group as
brothers. As eldest brothers, the elders of the Kotófu clan are considered
responsible for maintaining harmonious relations among their Sabúa. That they
failed to do so was evidenced by the death of their garden magician.

It was as a protest for this lack of fraternal support at a time of sickness and
death that the tightly knit group which formed around Joseph on the basis of
relations between brother-and-sister, had tried to close mourning to outsiders.22
Now that the barriers which they had erected around Lelioa had been surmounted
by outsiders who insisted on participating in mourning, Joseph's threat forced all
sides to join forces to combat the imminent danger of starvation. All Kabuni
dwellers, including his own family, were faced with the same dilemma and were
equally threatened by Joseph's resentment. The spirit's refusal to relent the first
time Monangi interceded with him forced what seemed to be a matter of individual
choice to give up magic into the public arena. Conflicting beliefs and practices
could not be used as a feature for marking group membership. The issues to be
resolved, underlying the conflicts about the shape that Joseph's mourning should
take and his successor's reluctance to take on responsibility for his magical
heritage, was one which affected each and every individual, though to different
degrees. The issue was one of compatibility of values held by contemporary
Korafe: deriving from different world views and held simultaneously, but usually
operating in separate contexts.

During the course of the encounter between Joseph's spirit and his living
'brothers', brought together by the urgency of shared danger, Joseph's obstinacy
effected a subtle transformation in the pleas directed at him, reflecting a shift in
their perception of the issues at stake. At first Godfrey tried to persuade Joseph to
be content with keeping for himself his ancestral magical powers, but to leave the
plants themselves to the living. In the second part of Godfrey's appeal, after
Joseph's angry refusal, Godfrey was made to state publicly for the first time what
everybody was thinking: that Joseph's death was somehow connected to his powers
and position as garden magician. He admitted that, whatever they said, his sons
would be held responsible for famines just as he had. They would not be able to deny their heritage, whether they had been taught the magic or not.

In the process of re-defining the problem, Joseph's status in the perception of those present also underwent a subtle transformation: from 'eldest brother', 'uncle', or 'father', to 'ancestral spirit'. Only then did Joseph relent. The crux of the matter had been exposed. It was impossible for Joseph's descendants to comply with the Christian requirement to forego interaction with ancestral spirits without foregoing powers which they relied upon, and to which they had exclusive access. Godfrey realised that the seeds could not be separated conceptually from garden magic; the imagery he used in the second part of his address clearly referred to the magical context. Once his descendents came in possession of the seeds, he said, they would invoke Joseph's name before planting them. Then Joseph would truly be a big man, an ancestral spirit remembered by the living for his power over gardens. This implied that whoever was chosen would receive no ordinary seeds from Joseph's spirit: he would receive garden magic. Joseph's instructions to Albert made this clear beyond doubt.

But Joseph's insistence that his successor should be chosen by the living involved the resolution of other related issues. The gravity of these matters, fully appreciated by the elders, caused their spokesman's reluctance and anguish in responding. At issue here was the status of magic and magicians in the contemporary situation. The death of a clan elder foreshadows the succession of a 'young man' to his role. He, in turn, will be faced with the dilemma of living up to the expectations and responsibilities which his newly acquired role imply, while conforming to the Christian world view to which he is committed. This realisation makes it almost impossible for Korafe fathers to make such a choice among their sons before their own death. And now the elders assembled in Lelioa had to impose this predicament on one of the young men who, angered by their father's death, had publicly renounced magic.

Another issue at stake in the choice was the question of seniority, authority and legitimacy. Magical power involves social prestige and political power; its possession has the potential of causing jealousy and resentment. It is important to balance the possession of such powers with an attitude of modesty. Joseph's sons were still 'young boys' in relation to the elders of other clans. Their age was not considered equal to the social status of clan elder which is associated with the control of clan magic. Any of the sons who took it upon himself to claim knowledge of garden magic would become an obvious target of resentful older men. It was important that they were all seen to publicly refuse the position; that it was imposed on one of them by ancestral spirits; and that the choice be made by elders themselves, in the presence and with the consensus of all those concerned.\(^{23}\)

The difficulties of making a choice were compounded by the fact that it conferred a leading role to one brother over the others. Godfrey was careful to qualify his choice by reiterating the maxim that the eldest brother would be in possession of the clan's patrimony, but would make use of it only in cooperation
with and for the benefit of all his brothers. In doing so, he emphasised the principle that brotherly harmony and cooperation are essential for prosperity. The fact that Apollus accompanied Albert to the garden, in lieu of his wife, is indicative of the intentional involvement of both lines (the descendants of Sebastian as well as Joseph's) in the knowledge of garden magic. This, perhaps, was an attempt to counteract the tendency for lineages to separate following the death of important leaders.

The issues underlying the crisis - experienced as Joseph’s resentment for his own death - were in fact more general problems of succession and transmission of knowledge and powers in the contemporary context. Joseph’s threats forced the living to grapple with these issues which subsequently became the subject of many discussions. The elders' concern that night, however, was to designate a legitimate successor so that Joseph could hand him the seeds which they all needed. One question which puzzled me was that if, as everyone professed, Albert had not acquired the magic knowledge and powers directly from his father, how could he now be claimed to be the custodian of traditional knowledge? People answered that Albert had probably been around his father when he was preparing his magic anyway, or that he would be taught by Joseph's spirit. But I had the distinct impression that, at this stage, they were not concerned with the 'traditional' status of Albert's knowledge, as long as a legitimate successor had been found. They were not concerned with Albert's ability to know what to do, it was a question of 'politics of truth' (cf. Lindstrom 1984:294).

As elder brother, Albert would be the *tuturo-émbo* for his clan whether he wanted to be or not, and whether he had learned magic techniques or not. His rights and responsibilities in this respect had been confirmed in the presence of senior men and ancestral spirits. Although he could claim that all he received from his father was the spirit of the stolen seedlings, at a future time of crisis he would be expected to appeal to his ancestral spirits and use his clan's magical powers to restore fertility to the gardens of Kabuni. Or, like his father before him, he might die of sorcery. Perhaps Albert and his kin had lied, perhaps he had been taught by Joseph, or perhaps he had observed his father sufficiently to know what to do. In any case, having grown up in his father's house he would have a good general idea about what constitutes magic. The point is that whatever the source of his knowledge and the form of the magic which Albert will perform in the future, his position as *tuturo-émbo*, as clan elder in charge of his lineage's power and knowledge, will vouch for the authenticity of his knowledge. Whatever he does will be his clan's *kotófu*, 'tradition'.

Secluded by indecision

In the following weeks the mourning process continued, despite all that was said. Every evening the deceased's kin declared the mourning closed, and virtually every morning a new group of mourners arrived, from further afield, forcing them to break their resolution.
Once the issue of succession was settled, and the continuity of the Javosa clan's magic tradition entrusted to Albert's unwilling hands, the process of mourning could resume its ordinary course. Having settled the score with the ancestral spirits, it was a matter of reconstituting relations between men. According to Iteanu's (1983) analysis of Orokaiva mourning rituals, this is achieved at the same time as the annulment of grief, or what remains of a person's social relations after his or her death.

Groups of mourners arrived each day as the more distant villages received the news of the magician's death. They moored their canoes at Komoa, or another of the beaches at the base of Kabuni peninsula, and followed the climbing path to Lelioa. Their arrival was heralded in the village by the sound of their sorára. Each group would spend the day in Lelioa lamenting with the women, and talking to Joseph's brothers and sons. In the evening they would eat the food prepared for them and return home. As time passed Joseph's sons, brothers, and their wives took over more responsibility for fishing and cooking from the families of Goodenough village who had acted on their behalf immediately following Joseph's death. They continued nonetheless to depend on food from Robert's tradestore and fish and wild pig hunted by Noah and other men.

Despite the fact that Joseph's widow was not supposed to be in seclusion, three weeks after his death she still had not made a public appearance. She spent her time in the house, from which the sound of sorára could be heard at intervals. Although the members of the Mothers' Union felt it to be their responsibility to end her seclusion, they also felt that they had no right to do it, since traditionally it is the role of the deceased's sisters to organise the ghaséga and vujári rituals traditionally associated with end-of-seclusion (see chapter 3). Mara Joyce, the woman who had initiated the mourning process had left Tufi to spend some time in Rabaul with one of her children, and therefore could not organise this ceremony.25 I had no access to Lilla during this time, so I cannot say with certainty what her own feelings were about seclusion. I suspect that, having retired inside her house initially from a desire to mourn for her husband's death, she had in a sense foregone the chance to make a choice. She was secluded, and therefore in the hands of those entitled to release her. Like the rest, she probably felt uneasy about her position in view of her own and Joseph's commitment to Christianity, particularly as seclusion was seen as preventing her from performing her weekly duty of attending the church service.

One morning Lilla's classificatory brothers and his family pulled their canoes up on Komoa beach. They were bringing a domestic pig and some garden food to Lelioa to make a feast for the release of Joseph's widow. Before they could unload the pig, however, they were intercepted by Javosa men from Maruta village. They said that neither Stonewigg (the elder among the Maruta Javosa who was still recovering from his illness since the meeting of the kde committee) nor Elijah (who was still in Port Moresby) had been to Lelioa since Joseph's death. They had not cried for him yet or discussed matters with their brothers, it was therefore too soon to conclude mourning with the release of the widow.
On the third Sunday following the burial one woman took it upon herself to go and fetch Lilla for the church service, but although one of Joseph's brothers agreed, another told her to wait a few weeks longer. At the end of February Lilla was still in partial seclusion, although a compromise solution allowing her to attend church was found. On Sundays, if she wished to, she would be escorted to the church by the wives of Joseph's brothers. Shrouded in a black blanket, she arrived after the beginning of the service, knelt at the back keeping her face lowered throughout, and slipped out of the church as soon as the service ended, to return to her house. On occasion of her first attendance the evangelist made a point of mentioning in his sermon that 'good Christians' who really believed in God should not follow customary mourning. They should not grieve at the death of a loved person since they should know that they would meet again in paradise.

It is significant that the contentious issue of widow seclusion was taken up at this stage as the context for debate in which different parties expressed conflicting ideas and values. The tension between the Christian reproof of such practices and the essential role which they play in the reconstitution of a Korafe social and cosmological order, which was clearly expressed in the ambivalent attitudes to Lilla's seclusion, is another instance of the same set of dilemmas facing Korafe Christians. Although everybody claimed, as Christians, to favour her release, this position was not realised in the coordination of actions necessary to achieving it. The secluded widow had a role to play and could not be released until it was brought to completion.26

In this delicate period during which a network of relations was being reconstructed around the bereaved, great efforts were made by all parties to avoid confrontation and discord. It was sufficient for one person to voice an objection to a proposed course of action for mediation processes to be entered into; this resulted in the delay, postponement, or abandonment of the proposal. This, in turn, led to discontent among those people who were shouldeering the burden of supporting the mourning process. They were becoming impatient at deferring their own plans in order to feed the constant stream of mourners. These sentiments were not openly displayed, but formed a background of private grumbling and resolutions taken in the course of the nightly conversations between brothers or husbands and wives. Publicly they used the rhetoric of the 'Christian way' to argue for putting an end to Lilla's seclusion quickly and informally. Similarly, those who objected to her release never argued from a 'traditionalist' point of view. They did not insist on the widow's continued relegation as such, and always prefaced their speeches by saying that in the new era they were living in, pre-Christian restrictions were not to be adhered to. Their objections were phrased in terms of details of procedure: they declined taking the responsibility for proceeding, and warned of some third party which might be offended, and so on.

Underlying their arguments was a preoccupation with issues of leadership. Relations of authority among elders of the clan had not been reconstituted in the aftermath to Joseph's death, as they had not yet come together in Lelioa. The absent elders would be offended if mourning had been formally brought to an end
by someone else before they had a chance to dispel their grief and express their views, thus legitimising the emergent structure of authority and responsibility. In the phase or 'reintegration' (according to Turner's schema, 1957) the outcome of a crisis is recognised as legitimate, there is a return to life according to norms, albeit possibly changed norms. Elijah was now the most prominent among the Javosa elders and his approval was necessary before the choices made in his absence could become status quo. This explains the reluctance to release Lilla from seclusion, which would return the bereft village to normality.

**Elijah's return**

Elijah's stay in Port Moresby had been longer than expected because he had been seriously ill. On returning from the city he remained in Tufi station for a few weeks, living with his daughter and son-in-law, a government employee from another province. Rumours were heard in the villages that he was very angry with his nephews, the men from Goodenough village, and his classificatory brother Godfrey. One of his younger relatives had visited him in Port Moresby and, reporting on the events which followed Joseph's death, had told Elijah that Joseph's *yowa* shell (The ancestral relic necessary for making garden magic, see chapter 4) had been destroyed to finalise Joseph's descendants' refutation of their father's magic. According to the rumours, Elijah was enraged by what he heard and had sworn that if, upon his return, he found that to be true, he would kill those responsible.

Before the mourning process could be brought to conclusion, the misunderstanding about the destruction of the *yowa* had to be settled, in order for relations within the Javosa lineages to be reconstituted harmoniously. Elijah's anger at the thought that the *yowa* shell of the Javosa garden magic had been destroyed illustrates again some of the issues which were made apparent during Joseph's 'court case'. Although it is admissible to make personal choices about not practicing magic, the destruction of the ancestral relic essential to its practice would overstep the mark of individual choice, jeopardising the lineage's ability to claim those powers for its members. Such a grave decision, especially if it really had been taken in his absence, and voiced by men who, however closely related, belonged to different clans, would be a grave offence. Thus Elijah's return, instead of allowing the proceedings to progress, brought about a set-back as a subsidiary crisis developed from the rumours of his threats to kill those who had spoken on behalf of Joseph's brothers.

As a result of these rumours, and of the Maruta villagers' refusal to allow the widow's brother to bring the pig to Lelioa, the nephews who had participated in the initial phases of the mourning process felt that they were being treated unjustly. They felt threatened with sorcery and were offended for being criticised when they alone had 'shouldered the weight' of Joseph's death. It was because of the absence of Javosa elders immediately after Joseph's death that his nephews had to act as spokesmen - now they were being accused of interfering, and threatened with
death. Furthermore, they had provided tradestore food, wild pigs, and fish to feed the mourners, yet those who had not helped out were preventing the widow's brother from putting an end to their work. When members of the Javosa clan planned to organise a feast to conclude the widow's seclusion, now that Elijah was back and Stonewigg had recovered, the nephews refused to participate. Thus Joseph's widow continued to remain secluded as all the people who had a right to a say in the matter could not agree, and no one was willing to risk sorcery by taking the initiative.27

When Elijah had recovered some of his strength, he returned to his house on Komoa point. There he received many visitors and began taking the situation in hand, assuming the role of clan elder. More rumours were circulating that Elijah had spoken to someone who knew who was responsible for making the magic which caused their gardens to die. He was said to have met secretly with Sirus to discuss this. But Elijah was more concerned with the reconstitution of harmonious relations among brothers, and would not enter public debate concerning magic responsibility for past events. Now that Albert was acknowledged as the legitimate successor to his father despite his desire not to be, it was important that some pressure be taken off him by de-emphasising the role of magic. Elijah professed the view that magic was not to blame for the state of their gardens. The real issue was the lack of cooperation among the clans, lineages, and brothers on Kabuni. For that reason, he maintained, the clans on neighbouring peninsulae were beginning to see some growth in their new gardens while Kabuni people were squabbling with each other about the failure of their individual gardens.

Elijah's views were to be taken up in various forms every time people came together in the course of the following weeks. The issues of brotherly cooperation became a common theme for thinking about problems which people were faced with in various realms, and its re-instatement was seen as the only solution to them.

**Sebastian's death**

Late one night Sebastian became seriously ill and one of his nephews (this time Alphonse, Elijah's apprentice healer who lived in Komoa) was summoned to Lelioa. His efforts notwithstanding, Sebastian died at dawn on a Sunday. By the early afternoon people from all villages in Kabuni were gathered in Lelioa. While the women joined Lelioa women and Sebastian's sons inside the house, the senior men gathered around Elijah on the platform belonging to his old house in the village. This occasion was the first time that he made return to Lelioa since Joseph's illness. Although he had intended to spend some time in Lelioa upon returning from Port Moresby, he explained, he had been detained in Komoa by the presence of a Ubiri elder who had come to Alphonse's house to seek Elijah's help to defeat the 'poison' of a Waningela sorcerer. This delay meant that Sebastian had died before Elijah had a chance to see him after their elder brother's death.
This time there was no talk of closing the village to mourning. Sebastian's death was much less controversial than his brother's. He had not been directly implicated in the management of the lineage's magical powers, and since he had been infirm for a number of years, his death seemed to be accepted as the conclusion of a long drawn out illness. At least publicly, the men gathered in Lelioa that afternoon were not concerned with inquiring into the cause of his death or in making recriminations. In fact the point was explicitly made that the sorcery which was responsible for his infirmity and eventually his death, was not connected to the recent events. His original infirmity, dating to his youth, was attributed to jealous players of a rival soccer team. All emphasis was taken off suspicion of involvement with garden magic.

Elders of all Kabuni clans seemed thankful of an opportunity to come together to take stock of the situation following the months of famine and the death of two senior men. There was a sense of closure of an era. With Elijah's move to Komoa and the deaths of Joseph and Sebastian, three of the four brothers who had founded Lelioa and made its name, attracting visitors from all parts, had gone. Clifford, a junior brother, was left the sole representative of their generation. From what was said in the course of the afternoon it seemed as if the clan elders were expecting Lelioa to disintegrate as a village. The younger men, although all classificatory brothers, were not expected to stick together and cooperate now that their fathers had died. They would succumb to tensions and jealousies between them as they all strived for individual success as modern men. The phrase 'Lelioa is finished now' was reiterated many times that afternoon.

Beyond the nostalgia for 'old times' shared by the surviving elders, their speeches on this occasion were characterised by a peculiar sense of relief and unrestrained discussion. After the fear that Joseph would act upon his threats - or that the absence of a successor willing to shoulder his responsibilities would result in the permanent loss of powers from the collective repertoire of magic - had been dispelled, the elders were able to articulate the issues which were at the root of their dilemmas. For the first time since Joseph's death elders discussed the influences which their involvement in the 'modern' realms of cash economy and Christianity had on the politically crucial issues of knowledge transmission and acquisition, and on the processes of succession to positions of ritual power and responsibility.

The elder of a junior Bubu lineage observed that a lot of trouble had occurred because Joseph had not made it clear before he died which one of his sons should succeed him as garden magician. He suggested that all other elders in possession of clan powers should make their choice publicly known before they died. Otherwise, all the clans' kotófu would be lost and their descendents would be left without ancestral powers, as nobody would know who was responsible for them.

Elijah replied that making a choice was difficult since one could not automatically assume that the eldest son had all the necessary attributes. In making the choice, fathers had to take in consideration their successors' willingness,
reliability, and trustworthiness. The reason why their own generation's powers were weaker than they had been in their forefathers' time, was that they themselves had been unwilling to follow all the ritual prescriptions and prohibitions connected to those powers. Their children's quest for the Western way of life and Christianity made it even less likely that their sons would be willing to take upon themselves the burdens of ritual responsibility. Those who did probably had ulterior motives and could not be trusted with such powers.

Elijah suggested that Joseph had deliberately refrained from nominating one of his sons to spare them from the moral dilemma facing all of those who, like themselves, were caretakers of magical powers but were also striving to be good Christians. In the course of his reply Elijah made the point that on arriving in Lelioa he had gone into Joseph's house to check on the yowa shell, and had been reassured to find that it was in its place. As well as dispelling any doubts he might still have that it had been destroyed, he found that it was turned the right way up, proving that Joseph had not been making $kde$ on the gardens when he died.

Formen, senior Bubu elder, agreed with Elijah and added that fathers' choices were made more problematic still since the length of time that young men spent working away from Tufi had increased. It could no longer be assumed that the eldest son had acquired the necessary knowledge from his father. Further, elders were not able to observe young men's behaviour and attitude over a number of years to ascertain whether they had the appropriate attributes for positions of responsibility.

Then Elijah voiced his conviction that their gardens' poor state should be blamed on their own individualistic attitudes in the last few years. He suggested that all Kabuni people should cooperate in making a communal garden in the mountains and reminded them that Javosa clan landowners had agreed to allow their land to be used for that purpose. He emphasised that only a communal effort would allow all of them to profit from making gardens in the mountain where the land is more fertile. Alone, a man and his family could not build sufficient fences, or spend enough time in the gardens to discourage wild pigs. If they made a communal garden, however, they could build strong fences all around it, make traps, and organise hunting parties to get rid of the pigs. There would be somebody in the gardens every day and their presence would frighten the pigs away. And, more importantly, garden magicians could then perform their major fertility rituals to benefit everyone's gardens at once.

Bubu elders expressed their doubts about Elijah's proposition that no $kde$ was involved. They did not believe that all their recent efforts to plant taro would have been thwarted if there had been no magic involved at all. Elijah reiterated that the underlying problem was that, as clan elders, they had collectively failed to coordinate their followers' efforts to a communal solution. Because each person was dealing with it individually, they all suspected each other of foul play when in fact none was involved. Elijah reminded them of previous occasions when there had been food shortages which had been overcome when clan elders had organised
a communal garden. This time, however, the leaders had failed to agree, and each individual was left to fend for himself. The problem was, he said, that they had all grown old. Without their guidance, young men would not walk to the top of the mountains to make gardens. They preferred to spend less time on gardening so they could spend more time in money-making.

When they were warned that preparations for Sebastian's burial were complete, Elijah and Clifford led the visitors inside the house for the last farewell. Again one of the floor supports of the house cracked under the weight of the mourners, and young men rushed to strengthen the structure. Before Sebastian was taken to the cemetery, Elijah explained that he had to look after the Ubiri patient who was staying in Komoa, and therefore they would limit mourning to the next day only.

After the burial everyone returned to Lelioa. Elijah and Clifford made statements to the effect that Elsie, Sebastian's widow, had been a good and faithful wife, looking after her infirm husband for years. They did not want her to go into seclusion. This time Elijah, as Sebastian's classificatory brother, was obviously in charge of the mourning process and none of the people who had felt an obligation to take charge during Joseph's funerals (Godfrey, Noah, and Robert) stayed behind in the village. Some of the nephews organised a hunting party to provide wild pig for the next day's *guméma*. Only Alphonsus, from Komoa, remained with his uncles. A few days later Sebastian's daughter, his son, and Elijah's daughter arrived from Port Moresby, each arrival initiating a new round of mourning.

Among the visitors were some men from the Gaboru clan. They told Elijah that they had been invited to dance in a village in Oro Bay, and that they were organising a practice dance on the following Saturday to determine which dancers would go with them. All the elders present agreed that it was feast time and people should ignore the mourning in Lelioa and take advantage of the opportunity to dance and eat pork. They stated that, as Christians, they should not carry mourning to pre-Christian extremes. Lelioa elders assured the Gaboru representatives that they would not object to the practice and would not take the sound of drumming and singing as a slight to their grieving.

Elijah acknowledged his clan's past allegiance to Gaboru and said that although he, Stonewigg and Clifford were too old for dancing, and their sons too overcome by grief, it was their clan's duty to respond to a *Korófu* clan's appeal for supporters at a dance. He suggested that the lineages based in Baga should send dancers to represent Javosa under the auspices of Gaboru. An elder from Baga objected that it would be improper for their sons to dance while their brothers in Lelioa were mourning, but his doubts were drowned in a chorus of denial: this was no longer the time of their grandfathers, when mourning meant the ceasing of everything else; as Christians they knew that they should not punish people with mourning restrictions. This was the season for feasting and dancing, and people had had so much famine and grieving that they should take advantage of a feast. Further, the invitation came from important leaders of a foreign tribe, and therefore it was important that the Korafe show up in great numbers and
demonstrate their power and ability as dancers. It was felt that the time was right for reconstituting the social ties of the Javosa clan, by the participation of its members in a feast involving dancers from clans beyond the Kabuni territorial group.

A third death in Lelioa

Upon returning from Tufi after farewelling Sebastian’s son, Lelioa villagers found that another death had occurred in their village. This time it was an infant, daughter of a woman who was living in the house of her brother since divorcing her husband in Alotau. She and her brothers were living in Lelioa (their mother’s brothers’ village) since their father had died. The woman’s brothers (two young adults) had quickly buried the baby before the news of her death reached anyone outside the village. They were reproached for behaving as if they were resentful of their sister by burying her baby in such a rush. They replied that they had not wanted their cousins to feel obliged to help with yet another funeral. Despite their protests, their peers from Goodenough, Komoa, and Maruta villages decided that they should show their support and gathered what food they could for another gumeña. Elders gathered on the platform outside the house and the thread of previous discussions was taken up where it had been left.

It had escaped nobody’s attention that the village of Lelioa seemed to be singularly prone to deaths, but the elders wanted to defuse any suspicion of sorcery. The fact that the baby’s father was from Alotau was remembered and linked to the reputation of people from ‘Eastern Islands’ for witchcraft. Nevertheless this latest death was taken as another indication of the demise of Lelioa as a village of renown. It showed the decline of Lelioa’s standing, as the powerful and knowledgeable men who had contributed to its fame as a centre of power died, leaving behind them a fragmented group of young men incapable of continuing its traditions in harmony. The value of cooperation among brothers was again stressed and contrasted with ‘modern’ values.

Now, they said, was the time of money, and all young men were striving to acquire money. That was good, for the goods which money could buy were desirable, but it created problems for cooperation. The first problem was that if someone is employed or has a business, he cannot be available when he is required for traditional commitments such as feasting and mourning. The second problem was that in order to be successful in the sphere of business or wage work, a man had to give up a lot of time. They could no longer afford the time to make gardens for vasúi feasts, and the practice of communal gardening had been given up at the same time. Further, the values of business and saving were anathema to those of sharing among brothers.

Following the departure of Sebastian’s son, mourning would have become a quieter affair, restricted to Lelioa and concerning mainly the closer kin. The men from Goodenough village had been discussing the possibility of accepting Gaboru’s
invitation to join their dance group. However, following the latest death, they all came to the conclusion that it was still too early for them to take part in feasting.
Both clans in Goodenough are Bubu's Sabua, and thus traditional vasāi rivals of Gaboru and its followers. Despite the end of vasāi as such, the feeling of mistrust and antagonism between those clans is still felt. This, in addition to the recent events signs that Lelioa village and its inhabitants were under threat, suggested that exposing themselves to the dangers of participating in a dance in a foreign village without the protection of their own Kotōfu clan (Bubu) was too dangerous at the moment (See chapter 3 on the dangers of feasts).

The period of public mourning for the child was shorter than the previous ones, and involved a restricted network of kin. It was nevertheless significant that the generation of men which the clan elders referred to as their sons, overriding the reticence of the baby's uncles, came forth to organise a feast in her honour. Despite recent feelings of animosity between Goodenough and Maruta villagers, arising from the conflicting positions they had taken in relation to releasing Lilla from seclusion, they consulted with each other and decided to organise the gumēma jointly. By this action they demonstrated that, at that level of relations, brotherly cooperation and harmony had been re-established. Having once more established the links between the lineages of Komoa, Maruta, and Goodenough through their relations to their Lelioa brothers and cousins, it was too soon for any of them to reconstitute relations outside of these by participating in dance feasts. For that purpose they were still joined by grief.

Epilogue

This is when I left Tufi. In my eyes the drama was drawing to a satisfactory conclusion: Albert was responsible for garden magic; there was talk of organising the feast for releasing both widows and, now that all those concerned were cooperating again, it seemed likely to occur soon. The cliffs defining the bays of Cape Nelson were looking greener than they had in months, and communal effort to plant a large garden in the more fertile parts of Kabuni was planned, ensuring abundant taros for the feasts next year. However, the dramas of real life are not bound by scripts, stages, beginnings and ends. Different dramas flow and even nest within each other. Any resolution of a particular crisis may be the basis for a future one. In Turner's schema, 'reintegration' while appearing to be a stasis and permitting 'before-and-after' comparisons, is itself only a phase.

I was soon reminded of this when I opened the first letter I received from Tufi. Within a few months of my departure both Godfrey and Elijah had also died. Innumerable questions and possibilities raced through my mind, once I got over the sadness and admitted to myself that I had known when I had said goodbye to them. What was the context of these deaths? How were they interpreted? Who would succeed to these two ritual experts? What shape did their mourning take? I received a partial answer to the last question recently. Cynthia Farr (Summer Institute of Linguistics linguist) told me that she was in Tufi after Elijah's death. Before dying
Elijah had given one of the evangelists in the parish a letter in which he had listed all the mourning customs, including widow seclusion and the various voluntary restrictions, which he did not want to take place in his honour. His reasons were that he, the renowned sorcerer of Lelioa, wanted to be buried as a Christian. Had he made the choice between Power and Paradise?
1 Thomas (n.d.) describes a number of ways in which indigenous practices and beliefs which were simply done or held become 'substantivised' in the course of interaction with outsiders in colonial and post-colonial situations. Among the processes of articulation he describes 'inversion', in which customs which are construed as an obstacle to the achievement of modernity come to be ambivalently valued or rejected.

2 See chapter 4.

3 Cf. Young 1983a:160: 'Didiala's dilemma was that he could not deny responsibility except by relinquishing his claim to authority.'

4 Unlike the ritual ceremony described to me in which both ritual specialists participated, this occasion warranted no cooking and sharing of food; nor did it involve a ritual inspection of the gardens (see chapter 4).

5 These visits have their roots in ideas about Christian duty to the sick, but are also derived from customary gumëma visits of commiseration to villages where someone is sick or has died. The Mother's Union visits differ from ordinary gumëma visits in that instead of whole families it is a group of women with their small children who participate and prayers are said at the beginning and conclusion of each visit.

6 Despite its isolation, Elijah's new house was easily accessible and on the route of anyone going from Kabuni peninsula, or any territory to the South, to Tuft station. People often stopped to visit him as they passed Komoa.

7 On a separate occasion when I was speaking to Elijah about his diagnosing techniques I asked him if he sometimes knew that one of his patients would not recover, and what he did in those cases. He replied that in those cases he did not tell them that they would die, just that he did not know the cure, and refused to continue treating them. Perhaps his awareness of the futility of any attempt to cure his brother was one more motive behind Elijah's decision to leave Lelioa.

8 Young described a similar situation in Kalauna: 'But so many suspected that he was in some way to blame for his own misfortune that they avoided visiting him. The unspoken common denominator of their divergent diagnoses was that his sickness was due to a failure of leadership' (1988:125).

9 Although Korafe are aware that sorcery is an offence punishable by law, they are reluctant to bring such cases to court as this involves a definitive breach of relations between the parties involved. This drastic agreement by all elders at the meeting is indicative of their strong conviction that Stonewigg's illness was unjustified. This was in stark contrast to the fatalistic attitude to Joseph's predicament.

10 See chapter 4.


12 The reference term for a MB is ebe, different from that for father and FB (afa), but the term mandi applies to both son and for nephew, both BS and ZS.

13 See chapter 3.

14 In their accounts to me of mortuary customs, Korafe said it was usual for a dead man's sister to be angry at his widow, and show this by insulting or beating her. Mara Joyce's deflection of the ritually expected aggression onto another sister-in-law indicated her opinion that Joseph's widow had been a good wife, and that she was in no way implicated in his death.

15 Later I was told that Albert's wife had similar experiences whenever she cried too much at funerals. Nobody thought that what happened was remarkable, they just thought that she had been silly to join in the sorira, and said that when Albert died they would have to forbid her to cry or
she might have a bad fit and run into the bush (a symptom of madness).

16 In clearing the space for the grave the young men cut down a coconut tree. That allowed for the possibility that one of Joseph's young kinsmen would hide in its fronds to wait for Joseph's spirit to arise from the grave and tell him who was responsible for killing him, see chapter 3. As far as I know nobody did take up the opportunity in this case.

17 Joseph died in January when garden food is scarce anyway, the drought had made the situation worse and there was very little in the gardens which would be considered fit to feed visitors. The onus of providing food throughout the mourning process fell to the two men who owned tradestores at Tufi station. One was a Kandoro elder, one of Joseph's sister's sons, the other was his wife's classificatory son, from the Bubu clan.

18 See chapter 3.

19 Stephen shows that in Melanesia dreams and visions are regarded as 'uniquely convincing experiences in deciding between conflicting beliefs and values' (1982:120).

20 Godfrey's speeches are transcribed from a taperecording I took on the night. Unfortunately Monangi's hoarse voice was drowned by the sound of a pressure lamp. Although I was able to write down the gist of Joseph's answers, I cannot quote verbatim.

21 When I asked what would happen, it was explained to me that Albert's danghió (shadow, reflection, image of animate person or thing, but also visible image of dead person) would receive from Joseph's asisi (spirit) the danghió of the seedlings, which he had taken away.

22 See chapter 2 for a discussion of cross-sibling relations in the life cycle.

23 With the important exceptions of Elijah, who was still in Port Moresby and Stonewigg who was ill.

24 See chapter 5.

25 In view of so many key actors' departure from Tufi at this time it would be tempting to conclude that it was one convenient way of ensuring the following of customary traditions by being unavailable to end mourning, thus escaping pressure by those who wanted the mourning process to be curtailed. Nevertheless it should be remembered that these events were taking place in the context of a serious drought and food shortage. Many people, particularly older people, took any opportunity to spend some time with their wage-earning kin in town, where they could be assured of daily meals.

26 See chapter 3.

27 The tensions between Javosa lineages had not been resolved after Joseph's death and were evidenced when Sirus' daughter died. She had lived in urban centres for a number of years, and had died in Lae hospital after an operation. Her body was flown to Tufi for burial. Most of the Kabuni people, as well as Kadifu elders from other territorial groups, accompanied the coffin on its boat trip from Tufi station to Baga, and participated in the mourning rituals. In contrast, none of the men who had been alienated by the rumours that circulated after Elijah's return went to Baga for the mourning, although their wives did.

28 Javosa was originally Sabúa to Gaboru; it was only since the Korafe settlement on Cape Nelson that their ancestors had opted to settle on Kabuni peninsula, and switched their allegiance to Bubu.
GLOSSARY

*Abud*: grandfather, ancestor

*Afa*: father, father’s brother

*Afora*: sun-magic, song used in sun-magic

*Aga*: mountain

*Aja jighari*: tasks performed by newly-married person for his or her in-laws

*Ak*: older sister, senior female parallel cousin

*Ambari*: to die

*Ambo*: last (youngest sibling)

*Ari*: to do, to make (— *Ari*: a kind of action, e.g. *kae Ari*: to practice sorcery)

*Asisi*: spirit (*Asisi Kakara*: Holy Spirit)

*Avari*: to sleep

*Avia*: grandmother, ancestress

*Aya*: mother, mother’s sister

*Baimara*: season of hunger and famine

*Bego*: eldest, senior, firstborn sibling

*Bek*: true, real, essence (*Evetugenembo Bek*: real people)

*Bin*: news

*Boka*: tapa-cloth loincloth, (*Nanda Boka*: my brother, used by mourning sister to refer to dead brother)

*Bondo*: formal gift of taro (*Bondo Ghando*: structure on which taro bundles are tied)

*Dangi*: reflection, shadow, image, spirit

*Datu dighari*: marriage agreement

*Dika*: tooth

*Dü*: eye, pile of gifts

*Divari*: to dance (*Yaru Divari*: dance song)

*Doriri*: mountain
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_Ebe_: uncle - mother's brother, father's sister's husband

_éko_: bad, evil

_émbo_: skirt, women's tapa cloth _nanda émbo_: my sister used by mourning brother to refer to dead sister, _émbo_: collective name for people of one village or locality

_énda_: land _énda toutó_: land's people

_érari_: to arise, to incite

_étu_: bone

_éva_: ocean, rough sea

_Evétu_: woman, wife

_Evétugenémbo_: people

_Evéva_: good

_Evóvo_: custom, habit, clan emblem

_Evóvodae_: always, forever

_Fiyógha_: medicinal substance, beneficent magic

_Fui_: cowrie shell

_Fúka_: pig

_Fumbári_: to carry, to shoulder, to deliver a child

_Fúsari_: to blow, to spray chewed substances from one's mouth _fiyógha fúsari_: to apply medicine by chewing it and blowing it onto the patient's body

_Gagára_: girl, daughter

_Gagárako_: younger sister, junior female parallel cousin

_Garéva_: rain magic, songs used in rain magic, substance used in rain magic, _garéva árí_: to perform rain magic, _garéva-émbo_: rain magician

_Gavana_: government, government official, politician, boss

_Genémbo_: man, husband

_Gevéi_: jaundice, _gevéi árí_: to waste away

_-ghae_: with (dual accompaniment)

_Ghámo_: emotions _ghámo érari_: to become excited or emotional

_Ghaséga_: dance practice, mourning song

_Ghasóvu_: a male's sister
-ghatô: follows a group's name to indicate its members collectively

Ghâto: cross cousin

Ghatîmane: cross cousins

Ghêgâha: laughter, joking, fooling around

Ghôro ârî: to decorate or dress up

Gimâsa: bachelor

Gitôfu: enemy

Gogôre: mischievous, big-headed, conceited (gogôre ârî: to misbehave, to boast)

Gumêma: feast of commiseration for sick people, mourning wake

Ijijâri: to make accusations

Irâri: to be, to remain, to stay, habit, lifestyle

Isia: taro

Isôro: war

Jânje: breath, emotions

Jávo: name, personal stringbag

Jîghâri: to hold, to handle (Kâe jîghâri: to use sorcery)

Jôka: aromatic herb, worn by dancers and used in magic

Jokâda: inside

Jumbâri: to pull, to massage (fîyôgha jumbâri: to rub medicinal substance on the body)

Kâe: poison, sickness, substance used in sorcery or maleficent magic (Kâe êmbo: sorcerer, Kâe tambari: to become sick, Kâe jîghâri: to use sorcery)

Kakâra: sacred, holy, taboo (Kakâra ârî: to respect, Asisi Kakâra: Holy Spirit)

Kanângara: voluntarily forgoing a specific kind of food or activity in sign of mourning

Kanîdana: a portent, rainclouds which follow or precede rain magicians

Karîgha: mouth-piece made from a shell-plate, used in dancing and warfare

Kasia sârî: speaking in such a way that only those with the same background knowledge as the speaker understand the real meaning of the utterance

Kiki: story, myth

-ko: suffix which expresses endearment
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Koâna: ancestral relics
Komâna: friend, partner
Kômbo: lover, sexual partner
Komiti: committee, committee member
Kóro: older brother, senior male parallel cousin
Kotófu: high-ranking clan, members of high-ranking clan, leader
Kotófu: item of clan heritage
Kotâa gata: promising gifts or return gifts made on occasion of exchanges
Mándako: younger brother, junior male parallel cousin
Mándi: boy, son
Minó: price, return prestation, brideprice, (étu da minó: payment sometimes requested by deceased woman's brothers to allow her husband or sons to bury her)
Miringina: 'Merrie England', name of first government vessel to travel regularly to Cape Nelson
Múni: dance leaders occupying the central positions in the dance formation
Nimo: you (emphatic)
Oro: group, lineage, clan, tribe, etcetera, sitting platform, ceremonial platform
Oróso: dance leaders occupying the positions behind the múni
Rovárova: dark items of clothing, special armbands and legbands, long hair and beard, all worn in sign of mourning
Rúka: a girl's or woman's brother
Sabúa: junior clan, members of junior clans, followers
Sângu: old, overgrown garden
Sâoro: name of a tree, wood used for making house posts and drums
Sâra: festive coiffure, worn by brides and initiands
Sâri: to say, to talk, to speak knowledgeably
Sevdseva: spirit healing ceremony, song used in healing ceremonies
Simbira: dance leaders, the last men in the dance formation
Simbóra: spell, appeal to ancestors
Sorâra: cry, mourning
Sorobebégo: siblings between the eldest and the youngest, lineages between the senior and junior ones

Sovéni across, opposite side

Sukáro: spirit, malevolent spirit, Satan

Tambári: to meet, to find (káe tambári: to become sick)

Táno: boundary, end, mark of ownership, sign

Tata: aunt - father's sister, mother's brother's wife

Tatáya: fight (tatáya-kató: trouble-maker, bellicose)

Taubara: white person

Taváya: conch shell

Téfo: no, none, nothing

Tománi: agemate, good friend, dance or hunting partner, wife's sister's husband

Totófo: consanguine

Tuturo: beginning, unfinished manufactured objects, magician's implements and substances

vasá: traditional exchange feast involving clans in rival territorial groups

Vasá: vasá feasting partners

Véka: seedling, shoot

Virónu: speech, authoritative talk, the magic power of the Kotófu which makes their words persuasive (virónu sári: to make a speech)

Vujári: initiation ceremony and exchange feast for first-born child

Yáru: song

Yáura: wind, air, cold

Yéri: spell, magical song

Note: Korafe spelling and translations of Korafe words are largely based on the Korafe/English dictionary compiled by C. and J. Farr. This glossary also includes a few words and expressions derived from Motu, Tok pisin, or English which were commonly used by the people I worked with.
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